

Jews, they just couldn't get past the embarrassment of a Messiah dying on a shameful cross. For the Greek Gentiles, they were so proud of their knowledge and wisdom that they couldn't grasp a God who was impacted by humanity and the incarnation seemed absurd to them. These world views were stumbling blocks to the Jews and Gentiles hearing the message of Jesus, crucified and raised from the grave. What are the stumbling blocks to your faith in Jesus the Christ? What doubts have you had as part of your faith journey? What needs to be clarified for you to fully embrace the "foolishness of the cross?" Write your response here.

Thursday, April 15

I Corinthians 1:18-31. Paul witnessed to both the Jews and the Greek Gentiles by saying that signs are unreliable and wisdom and knowledge fade. Paul shares the insight that God uses the weak and unlikely to prove God's love of the world and all humanity. Christ's death, as shameful as it was, was the way in which God reconciled the world unto himself, made possible by the great demonstration of love and obedience Jesus demonstrated. We are not likely to dazzle someone with our faith through our knowledge and promise of signs! Rather, when we demonstrate through our weakness, our connection with our loving God and Savior, then we are not boasting of our life, but of God's goodness, mercy and love! Praise God for these incredible gifts and for the opportunity to share them with others.

Friday, April 16

Pastor Jack shared a story of when he confronted a critic of the church through intimidation and a put down. Not his kindest moment. Now he simply shares his witness that his life is better having known the wholeness offered by God through Jesus the Christ. His boast of what God has done in his life has been far more effective than any amount of intimidation and put down. What about your "boasting of the Lord?" Write your thoughts here.

Message Notes – April 11, 2021

Holy Cheer! Christ is Here!*

- I. We've been live streaming since March 22 of 2020 – over a year now. So what you see is what you get – foibles and _____ and dead air.
 - A. We all _____ from time to time.
 - B. When we _____, it is exasperating and embarrassing; you feel so _____ and at times those around you are certainly not laughing with you – they are laughing at you.
- II. Paul's words to the Church in Corinth seem to be extolling the virtues of being _____!
 - A. In verse 26, Paul writes, "not many of you were _____ by human standards, not many were _____, not many were of noble birth."
 - B. Corinth became a very _____ city during the Apostle Paul's life.
 1. It became a center of commerce, as well as _____.
 2. It also became a city with certain _____; it was the _____ city of ancient Greece.
 - C. Paul offered counsel on how to speak to both the very _____ and savvy business people of Corinth as well as to those familiar with the _____ faith.
- III. Paul addresses a central _____ for many hearing about Jesus for the first time.
 - A. Jesus died on a _____.
 - B. It would have been unthinkable for a Jewish person to believe that God's Chosen One, the _____, would be hung on a cross.
 - C. The Greek philosophy of the day was that if God was incapable of _____.

*I Corinthians 1:18-31

- D. Paul challenged both Jews and Gentiles not to depend on _____ or on their _____.
- IV. Paul was confronted with a church that was worried about projecting a winning _____.
- A. The Corinthians, understandably, wanted to focus on what they believed were their strengths - their _____, their knowledge, their _____.
- B. Paul declared that the thing which the world perceives as their greatest _____ is actually what they should be cheering about.
1. God uses the _____ to shame the strong and the _____ to overcome the wise.
 2. That's _____ for the likes of you and me!
- C. We are to _____ in the Lord, to cheer for our God who loves, forgive, redeems and guides us.
- D. To a world that can only recognize brute strength as _____, the church and our cheers will remain a foolish-sounding proposition.
1. To those who are depending on knowledge and wisdom that will _____ away, our cheers will seem unfounded and weak.
 2. "But to us who are being _____ it is the power of God" (1 Corinthians 1:18).

Daily Devotional Guide

The following is a daily devotional and study guide meant to enhance your understanding of the message and grow as a Christian.

It is offered for your personal reflection or to share with others.

Monday, April 12

Waterford Central United Methodist Church has been live-streaming our worship services since March of 2020, when the Covid-19 Pandemic began. The only exceptions to that practice were our Christmas Eve Services. We decided to record those services as a means of making sure they were relatively without flaw and that our tech team and worship leaders could have a

respite on Christmas Eve. What came out of that experience of recording those worship services was a "blooper reel" of the gaffs and mistakes made while recording. We've had a good time sharing those funny videos. We all mess up from time to time! Most of us are fortunate not to have our mistakes recorded for all to see. When we mess up, we often are embarrassed and that embarrassment is followed by any number of emotional reactions; from anger to sadness to denial. How do you react when you "mess up?" Do you have an emotion that emerges when you make a mistake? How have the mistakes you've made affect your life and attitudes? Consider these questions and write your thoughts here.

Tuesday, April 13

Read I Corinthian 1:18-31. The letters Paul wrote to the various churches demonstrate the issues and challenges those churches faced. Corinth was a very wealthy seaport located on an isthmus that separated northern Greece from southern Greece. This hub of commerce and culture as well as vices and unsavory behavior was where Paul decided to begin a church. Corinth was the "sin city" of Ancient Greece.

Paul felt that there was definitely a need for a church in that city. That church was divided over issues of leadership and the meaning of the cross; they were more impacted by the culture around them rather than impacting the region with the message of our Risen Christ. How have you seen the church impact society? How had the prevailing culture impacted the church? What temptations does the prevailing culture present to the church? Contemplate these questions and write your ideas here.

Wednesday, April 14

Read I Corinthian 1:18-31. Paul attempted to address the stumbling blocks that prevented both Jews and Gentiles from truly understanding the meaning of Christ's death on the cross. For the