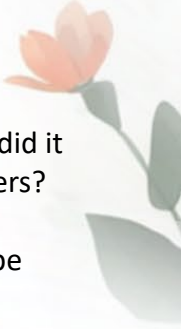


Renewal!

Discussion Questions

May 10, Justice Matters



1. Take some time to share how you experienced the “Philippians 2” practice from last week. How did it impact your daily life? How did it affect the way you think about belonging both for you and others?
2. What impacted you most during the service as a whole this past Sunday? How would you describe what you experienced? In what ways did you experience encouragement and in what ways discomfort?
3. Read Galatians 3:26-28. How would you describe the kinds of cultural and demographic barriers today that keep our society and our church community from experiencing the kind of oneness that Paul is talking about?
4. In the message on Sunday, we considered flocking behavior in nature as a metaphor for how shared values can hold a community like ours together. What struck you about this metaphor? How might its application help our community create equitable belonging for all cultures.
5. Read each of our community values overleaf and discuss the following for each one:
 - How does each value empower us to become a more culturally rich community?
 - What is challenging about this?
 - How can you embody this (“be the change you want to”) and what’s a step you could take?
6. After sharing, take some time to pray for one another with regard to these challenges.

Prayer Practice for the week:

Imagine a community of peace and safety where it’s possible to shelter from the frenzied pace of life in order to slow down and explore the mystery and meaning of our existence; where we can take time to address the roots of our anxieties and pain; a place of hope where we can find help and healing and the power to change, no matter how desperate our situation.

Take some time this week to quietly and honestly reflect on any fears you may have about our journey together towards cultural richness. What are the roots of these fears? Don’t judge yourself, just look at them honestly and openly. How could you let go of these fears? What kind of help and healing might you need?



Cedar Ridge Values

Love: This is our highest value and the one that undergirds all others. Love is what we see in Jesus, the way we define God, and the way we seek to relate to others. As followers of Jesus our journey is ultimately a progressive experience of oneness with God and oneness with one another. For us, love is our final authority and more important than being right. We will disagree on all manner of things, but we will always love.

Hope: We celebrate the reality embodied in Jesus that God never gives up on the world or any single one of us. This hope drives our commitment to transformation. As followers of Jesus, we believe we can all become healthier and more loving people, and the world can become a more just and loving place. We choose to believe the best about others, ourselves, and the future, and we work creatively and imaginatively to bring about new realities and possibilities.

Diversity: We welcome and treasure our differences embodied in race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, culture, age, and abilities and intentionally pursue a community culture where everyone has a sense of inclusion and belonging. We honor the different spiritual paths we have each walked and see our differences as a gift because we each have the most to learn from those who are least like us.

Humility: We adopt the servant-hearted posture of Jesus in putting others first. We are honest about our weaknesses and mistakes and authentically strive to change. We pursue vulnerability in relationships, and are committed to working through conflict, rather than walking away. While striving to act and speak with integrity, we seek new understandings of ourselves and others rather than proving ourselves right.

Justice: We seek to live justly and work for justice in our relationships, our communities, and in society as a whole. We express this personally (being the change we want to see in the world) through our behaviors, what we buy, what we consume, and how we treat both people and nature. We express this corporately through the struggle against systems that perpetuate racial, economic, social and environmental injustice.

Journey: We see life as a journey and all of us are in process. That means none of us are the finished article so we can have patience with ourselves and others. Transformation takes time, so we are committed to faithful practice and not giving up. We embrace mystery and acknowledge the role of both faith and doubt in our journey, recognizing that it takes us into both new understandings as well as new uncertainties. So, we remain openhearted and openminded: to God and to one another.