

Knox News

The Beatitudes

"Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me." Whoever believes that old adage has probably not heard Shakespeare's King Lear performed. The play includes this famous put-down: "Thou... art a base, proud, shallow, beggarly, three-suited, hundred-pound, filthy worsted-stocking knave; a lily-liver'd, action-taking, glass-gazing, super serviceable, finical rogue; one-trunk-inheriting slave." Whoever believes words do not have the power to injure has surely not read John Updike's the Witches of Eastwick. In that novel, a female character says this to a man: "I think... no, I am positive... that you are the most unattractive man I have ever met in my entire life. You are physically repulsive... you're morally reprehensible, vulgar, insensitive, selfish, stupid, you have no taste, a lousy sense of humor, and you smell. You're not even interesting enough to make me sick." Words can cut and cut off. "You are not welcome here." "We don't want you." "I want a divorce."

But words can also elevate and empower. "You got the job." "You made the team." "You must be the smartest person on the planet." "You are absolutely, astoundingly gorgeous and that's the least interesting thing about you." "Welcome to the family."

When it comes to words that elevate, it is hard to beat the beatitudes. As Jesus begins his famous Sermon on the Mount, he names some categories of people we associate with the down and out. In the celebrated beatitudes of Matthew 5:1-12, Jesus speaks of the poor in spirit, the meek, those who mourn, and those who are persecuted and reviled. And his words lift up precisely such people, naming them "blessed." Jesus identifies other people known not for their high social position, but their high character: the merciful, the pure in heart, the peacemakers, and those who hunger for righteousness. And Jesus's words elevate such individuals as well, pronouncing them the happy recipients of the blessings of God.

Since the beatitudes were spoken to Jesus's circle of disciples, we imagine his words held special poignancy for them. The disciples had each left home and hearth to follow Jesus's call. And in so doing, Jesus names them a part of God's blessed family. He links them with God's call to Abram and Sarai back in Genesis 12:2: "I will bless you, and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing." The disciples were named a part of God's called and chosen people, recipients and distributors of God's blessing. This is high praise, and a high calling.

This Lent, we will be going through the beatitudes together in worship. I hope revisiting these famous blessings of Jesus remind us of the God who "lifts us those who are bowed down" (Psalm 146:8). And I hope they remind us of our high call as disciples today. We are recipients and distributors of the blessings of God. May our words and actions elevate others this Lent.

Pastor Matt



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March

LENT AT KNOX

Lenten Small Groups and Bible Study

We will begin Lenten Small Groups the week of **March 5**. These groups will meet once a week for the six weeks of Lent. The groups will gather to eat, pray, and discuss a sermon or reflection on the Beatitudes. The resource, *Beatitudes Imagined*, is available in the Sanctuary Narthex for groups and individuals to use. To sign up for a Lenten Small Group contact knoxkids@knoxpasadena.org.

We also want to encourage folks to join Bible Study (**9:00 am**, NSH Lounge) for the 6 weeks Tommy Givens and Ally Lee will walk through parables of Matthew and the Jerusalem narrative. For more Bible Study contact Vince Caimano at vcaimano@gmail.com.



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the Sunday Morning Bible weeks of Lent. We will be and then for the last three lead us through the final information about Bible vcaimano@gmail.com.

Easter Lilies

If you would like to purchase an Easter Lily in honor or memory of a loved one, please fill out the order envelop that will be located in the pew racks in the Sanctuary starting **March 12**. The lilies will decorate our Sanctuary on Easter morning. You may take your lily home with you or it will be donated to Monte Vista Grove homes following the Easter service.



Holy Week



Maundy Thursday

On **April 13** we will gather together at 6:00 pm to share a meal catered by The Village Kitchen of the Good Shepherd Center for Homeless Women. After the meal, at 7:00 pm, the adults and youth will move to the Sanctuary for a Tenebrae Service (A Service of Shadows) that will include Communion. Childcare and children's programming will take place in the Atrium.

Experiencing Good Friday

Join us for an interactive walk through the stations of the cross with elements to see, touch, taste, and create around the Knox campus. Families come at 5:30 pm for a special family experience. At 7:30 pm we will have a second contemplative experience.



Easter Sunday

Our Easter Celebration will begin at 10:00 am. Following the worship service, we will have a potluck brunch, egg hunt, and scavenger hunt on our lawn. Sign ups for the potluck will be on the Welcome table in the Narthex starting March 26.

Missions Gathering on Immigrant and Refugee Ministry

The Missions Committee of Knox Presbyterian Church invites those interested to a gathering at 7:00 p.m. on **March 15** in the Northside House. We will be meeting for input and discussion on what a vibrant and timely ministry to immigrants and refugees might look like for us today. Joining us as a resource for our conversation and brainstorming will be Guillermo Torres, who works with Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, the Presbytery of the Pacific, and CLUE (Clergy and Laity United for Economic Justice) on a coordinated ministry effort to unac-



Branch Winter Retreat

On February 24-26 our middle school and high school students went away for an eventful weekend in Big Bear. With "Hope" as the theme for the retreat, students listened to each of their leaders share how they have experienced hope because of their faith. Alongside these daily sessions and small groups, students had the opportunity to try their luck and skill at archery and the "Leap of Faith" and then spend the afternoon and evening sledding. We had a blast getting away for the weekend to build community and deepen our



STEAM EVENT: CALIFORNIA DROUGHT AND CREATION CARE

On Saturday, January 21, we welcomed Dr. Bill Patzert, a JPL climatologist, and Dr. Tommy Givens, a professor of New Testament and Ethics at Fuller Theological Seminary for our first STEAM sponsored event. We had fun separating the DNA of strawberries and enjoying BBQ together. Thank you to Dr. Patzert and Dr. Givens for demonstrating how science and faith can come together in dialogue. A recording of the evenings talk will be available in the Spring. We will be announcing the date for our next STEAM event, a hike with a geologist and a theologian, soon.



BARNABAS ROBOTICS

In January, Mike Veerman and Isaiah Givens joined Barnabas Robotics at Elizabeth House to teach a class on robotics to alumni children. Barnabas Robotics is a for-profit company that teaches kids robotics. They also donate free lessons for underserved communities. Each Saturday in January they taught classes at Elizabeth House. The director of Barnabas Robotics, (name), will be at Knox on Sunday, March 26 to give a for Minute for Mission. For more information about Barnabas Robotics contact Mike Veerman at mikev.abc.123@gmail.com.

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