

GPS: Grow—Pray—Study - Sunday, June 29, 2014

“In the Beginning”

This morning at Galilee United Methodist Church, we welcome for the very first time our new pastor, Reverend Jason Duley. For Pastor Jason, this is a new beginning in a ministry that goes back to before his most recent appointment at Macedonia UMC in Winchester, and before he received his Masters in Divinity at Duke University in 1999. It is a new beginning in a ministry that began with a call from God.

For Galilee, it is also a new beginning. We haven't had a new pastor at our church for seventeen years, and we are all keen to hear what this new voice sounds like. What he will teach us. What he will share with us. What he will ask of us. This is a chance for our church to assess where we are as a congregation and where we can go.

New beginnings feel strange. But for us, who have faith, they should also feel natural. Because the God we believe in is the God of fresh starts. Our God creates and he also regenerates. He brings every day a new day. This is the God who created Adam, and redeemed creation through Christ when Adam fell. This is the God who told Noah to stop drinking and build the ark. This is the God who gave Sarah a child, Isaac, when even she laughed at the thought. This is the God who chose the church's persecutor, Paul, to be the great evangelist. This is a God who believes in new beginnings!

Pastor Jason has selected as his key scriptures this morning two very appropriate verses. They are the first verse of the Bible in Genesis and the first verse of the gospel of John:

In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

Sermon Notes

REFLECTIONS FOR THE COMING WEEK

MONDAY “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.” - *Genesis 1:1*

- We call the moment of Creation the beginning, but there is no time in God. There is no “too late” for Him, and no “too soon.” There shouldn't be for us, either. Pray and act without these limitations and feel the freedom of faith.

TUESDAY “Blessed is the man that walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of the scornful.” - *Psalms 1:1*

- We can't start anything, or not anything good, if we're stuck in old habits and the tired ways of unredeemed life. The gifts of the spirit go to free men and women, free in Christ.

WEDNESDAY “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” - *John 1:1*

- Be like the universe today: start with the Word. Take time to pray and know your Creator.

THURSDAY “In my thirtieth year, in the fourth month on the fifth day, while I was among the exiles by the Kebar River, the heavens were opened and I saw visions of God.” - *Ezekiel 1:1*

- God doesn't often give us a heads up. We don't always know when to expect Him in our lives. But we don't ever forget the day, the hour, and the moment He touches us, either.

FRIDAY “For you know quite well that the day of the Lord's return will come unexpectedly, like a thief in the night.” - *1 Thessalonians 5:2*

- Is God going to start a new beginning in your life today? No one can say yes and no one can say no. Are you prepared for Him if He does?

SATURDAY “Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us a new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.” - *1 Peter 1:3*

PRAYER FOR THE WEEK:

God of my life, I welcome this new day. It is Your gift to me, a new creation, a promise of resurrection. Dear Lord, I thank You for the Grace of being alive this morning; I thank You for the sleep that has refreshed me; I thank You for the chance to make a new beginning. Amen.