



Raquette Lake Chapel Sunday Blast

July 23, 2023

"Like a Pebble Tossed into a Pond..."

"Finally, all of you, be like-minded, be sympathetic, love one another, be compassionate and humble. Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult. On the contrary, repay evil with blessing, because to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing." [1 Peter 3:8-9]

"Love Your Neighbor"

When I read or hear about "the Greatest Commandment," the parable of the Good Samaritan immediately comes to mind. You might say it is the Gold Standard for loving your neighbor. In this parable found in Luke 10:25-37, a man was beaten and left half-dead by the roadside, ignored by a priest and a Levite who passed by. However, a Samaritan, who was considered an outsider and stranger to the injured man's community, showed compassion, went out of his way to help him, and took care of him.



Certainly, that parable teaches us powerful lessons: to love our neighbors unconditionally, to choose compassion over ceremony, and to be proactive in showing kindness and mercy to those in need, including strangers. But, most of us don't encounter situations like this which require heroic acts of kindness. We might even find Biblical teaching to be "too high a bar" for us to meet. We can become discouraged when we encounter people in immense need, and worse, hesitant to even try to help.

No Act of Kindness is too Small

Day-to-day there are moments when we decide whether we want to offer a helping hand or a small kindness. While our simple gestures may feel trivial to us, sometimes they have the power to change the course of someone's life. It's like tossing a small pebble into a calm pond, not knowing where the ripples will ultimately go. In a moment of kindness, we cannot know and may never know the full impact of our actions!

"Unsung Heros" – NPR

This NPR website relates stories of ordinary people showing small acts of kindness to others, which can have a transformative effect. This Sunday we focus on the story "A Simple Act of Kindness Changed the Trajectory of a Young Man's Life." We find "lessons learned" in this story about Bill Price, who was 15 years old in 1972 and felt lonely and left out at a reunion for a summer program. He was invited to join a group of teenagers by Wendy Westman, who he barely knew. This gesture of kindness made him feel included and valued and inspired him to be kind to others in his life. He became a psychiatrist, and Bill claims his career choice and his personality were guided in that moment when Westman reached out to him. The story shows how a small act of kindness can have a big impact on someone's life.

Let us be sympathetic, compassionate...and keep tossing small pebbles of kindness to those in need. - God's Peace, Vance

Prayer box: let us pray for healing for Ed, Barb, Robin, Joyce, Lynn, and Bill; for those struggling in their relationships; for those suffering from extreme weather; and let us give thanks for all first responders! Lord, hear our prayer!