

(December 2018 Pastor's Letter continued)

This event dealt a lot with prophetic prayer and praying with authority, and also walking in such a way that we all can hear and speak God's message to the people. For instance, the speaker would be speaking and all of the sudden he would be pulled toward someone and pray right then over the person asking God for what they needed (healing, strength....). He said that if we listen to the movement of the Holy Spirit we can get those nudges that compel us to go to a person and pray over them. Sometimes we know exactly what to pray for and sometimes the Holy Spirit leaves that out. I truly believe this is something that not only clergy, but we can do as well. We can feel the Holy Spirit nudge us to go to someone. In fact, if you think about it, all you have felt those nudges. I KNOW you have. Because God, Christ, the Holy Spirit WANT us to go to people and talk to them or pray with them or help them. WE just talk ourselves out of it. In fact, the speaker said if we don't obey right away it takes about 3 seconds for us to talk ourselves out of what the Holy Spirit wants us to do. I can verify that it only takes a few seconds to ignore the nudge. I have done it too many times and each time I have regretted it.

I must admit I am pretty tired of feeling regret over a missed opportunity. And so I decided after this event to make myself more open to the hearing and feeling of the Holy Spirit. That is not what I expected to happen at this event. I expected to really hear God's voice and message. I expected to come away from the event being bathed in prayer and completely transformed in some way. So while I have not been transformed in the way I thought, I think the way I go about each day has changed. So, if I am making myself more open to hearing and feeling the Holy Spirit, this means I am more alert to those nudges that come from the Holy Spirit. I am working on just going with the feeling. I will admit it's scary, but it's also been fun.

The other thing that came out of the retreat was how we pray. Do we make the most of our prayers or do we just say words and hope all goes well? Do we pray every chance we get or only during our bible study time or meal time? I must admit after hearing the speaker I think I have gone about prayer all wrong. I have meekly asked and hoped for a good answer. I have never proclaimed God's victory before the victory. Now I know why I/we do this... what if the healing does not happen? Then our prayer seems a bit too bold and presumptuous. However, while our prayers may not be answered the way we would like or in the time we would like, I think we need to be bold! Our God is a god who created the world, so he can heal anyone of anything at any time. Now as we boldly proclaim the victory we should realize God's will, HIS will be done. But that should not stop us from being bold. I have tried to remember to keep my prayers bold when we pray during service time. You may have noticed I have said something along the lines of – we know you are working on so and so, we know you are mending bones or healing the illness..... and we proclaim that victory! I have also made it a priority to pray as I go for my morning walks. Why not! This town could use some prayer. Houses need to be bought, families need to be brought together, people need help... so I pray. Every step I take is not wasted anymore. There is a purpose to my walk.

Now all of this is not simply meant for a clergy person to do. It is meant for you to do as well. YOU are to follow the nudge of the Holy Spirit. YOU are to pray boldly over people you know or may not know. YOU are to pray together in this manner, as church, and on your own. YOU are to ask others, known to you or not, if they would like prayer. YOU are to pray in every silent moment you have.

My goal for the next few months is to get you to pray more powerful and effective prayers. I want you to pray **BOLDLY**, and I want you to pray **OVER** people and **WITH** people. I want this church so bathed in prayer that Satan will never have a chance to attack us, and we will be able to thrive as a church.

For those who may not know this, a group of us meet each Sunday at 10:00 am to pray over our community, over the church, over the worship service and the empty pews. I have already felt some good changes with just a few of us meeting, but think how much more powerful our prayers would be if we all gathered together before service. I invite you to join us at 10:00 am every Sunday morning to pray. It's the first step to get us closer to the Holy Spirit.

May God bless you in all that you do,

*Pastor Sharon*