

“Do Good and Share.”
Genesis 1:1-2:3 & Hebrews 13:16
Pastor James York
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Our stewardship theme is do good and share. Hebrews proclaims, **Hebrews 13:16 NRSV. "...do not neglect to do good and to share what you have for such sacrifices are pleasing to God"**

God always does good. The youth respond to: “God is good” with “All the time”. God is constantly sharing God’s goodness with us and the entire cosmos.

Genesis 1:1-5 NLT “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was formless and empty, and darkness covered the deep waters. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the surface of the waters. Then God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. And God saw that the light was good. Then God separated the light from the darkness. God called the light “day” and the darkness “night.” And evening passed and morning came, marking the first day.”

The Hebrew meaning is more encompassing than the earth was formless, empty, and dark; it was chaos. We would experience it as uncertain and fearful. God’s first act of creation was and is to share light, order, hope, and peace. Right from the start God creates the goodness of love in every aspect of the cosmos. We explored this earlier this year how science and quantum physics has discovered everything has relationships and rhythm. The Holy Spirit continually infuses love, goodness, and order into all of creation.

Faithful servants who reveal and share this goodness are Inez, Karen, and Roderick. Inez listens, perceives, prays and patiently waits for the Holy Spirit to inspire her; then, she speaks with a clear, prophetic voice that creates order, harmony, and love. The Holy Spirit flows through Inez into our meetings uniting us in love, enabling us to see the next step on our journey of faith.

In the midst of chaos, Karen remains calm and centered with God. At workcamp things get chaotic, yet Karen keeps us all on mission and together. Sometimes I get stressed out and overwhelmed with happenings here at church. Karen gives me perspective, wisdom, and encouragement. Karen receives the peaceful guidance of the Holy Spirit and leads others through chaos to joyful service.

Roderick faithfully nourishes his relationship with the Holy Spirit and shares God’s blessings through his speech, sermons, and prayers. Roderick depends on the Holy Spirit to help him gather our joys and concerns and the joys and concerns of the world. Together the Holy Spirit and Roderick gather up all of these prayers and weave them into a pleasing prayer of praise of God and requests to bring God’s healing to us and the world. Together they give voice to our feelings to God. Together they give voice to God’s compassion, grace, and transforming resurrecting care to us.

Do good and share. Whenever chaos, fear, or negativity finds you, open yourself to the Holy Spirit so together you can create, share, and bring the goodness of order into world.

Genesis 1:6-8 NLT “Then God said, “Let there be a space between the waters, to separate the waters of the heavens from the waters of the earth.” And that is what happened. God made this space to separate the waters of the earth from the waters of the heavens. God called the space “sky.” And evening passed and morning came, marking the second day.

Today we are in desperate need of this goodness, people who create and share space that honors opposing views. The space makes room and encourages everyone to be creative with new ideas, fresh perspectives and innovative ways of being and living. Space that makes room for each person in community and celebrates their uniqueness. Without space, a person is trapped, confined, limited saying there is only one way, believing that one way is better, determined to choose only the waters of heaven or the waters of earth. Space celebrates both the waters of heaven and the waters of earth. Space sees the goodness in different perspectives and holds space so the goodness of all perspectives can be shared, savored and celebrated.

A faithful servant who reveals and share this goodness is Cathy. Cathy invites us to move beyond binary; think, this or that, to the space of both and. A space where the Holy Spirit creates loving relationships, a space where our hearts and minds are expanded, we become more fully-alive, we embrace the mystery and enjoy the variety of creation. A space that savors goodness from a diversity of people and a myriad of

perspectives and unites that goodness with the goodness within our self to create goodness, a smile, meal, song, painting, career, writing, sport, hobby, compassion, love and acts of service.

Do good and share. Whenever you are tempted to choose one view and dig in to that perspective create space so you can share the goodness of all views and perspectives.

Genesis 1:9-13 NLT “Then God said, “Let the waters beneath the sky flow together into one place, so dry ground may appear.” And that is what happened. God called the dry ground “land” and the waters “seas.” And God saw that it was good. Then God said, “Let the land sprout with vegetation—every sort of seed-bearing plant, and trees that grow seed-bearing fruit. These seeds will then produce the kinds of plants and trees from which they came.” And that is what happened. The land produced vegetation—all sorts of seed-bearing plants, and trees with seed-bearing fruit. Their seeds produced plants and trees of the same kind. And God saw that it was good. And evening passed and morning came, marking the third day.”

Faithful servants who reveal and share this goodness are Thor, Ila, and Shirley. Thor cares for the land, plants, and buildings creating habitat for humans and animals. Thor displays the goodness of creation through landscaping. Thor abundantly shares his gifts and service with the entire neighbor. Thor maintains and refurbishes this church building in numerous ways, so we have a building to worship God in, a building to be inspired and equipped to go out and lovingly serve.

Ila gathers the goodness of foodstuffs, lovingly blends them together and cooks them to savory goodness that makes one’s tastebuds dance with delight. Ila shares this goodness by delivering her rice pudding to celebrate special occasions.

Shirley does good by preserving a beautiful moment and place in nature on paper. Her watercolors highlight the splendor of land, water, and trees. Shirley’s paintings transport you to beautiful landscapes throughout Minnesota.

Do good and share. Savor the goodness of land, water and vegetation, care for the earth and share creation’s bounty.

Genesis 1:14-19 NLT “Then God said, “Let lights appear in the sky to separate the day from the night. Let them be signs to mark the seasons, days, and years. Let these lights in the sky shine down on the earth.” And that is what happened. God made two great lights—the larger one to govern the day, and the smaller one to govern the night. God also made the stars. God set these lights in the sky to light the earth, to govern the day and night, and to separate the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good. And evening passed and morning came, marking the fourth day.”

Faithful servants who reveal and share this goodness are the choir, praise band, Kathryn, Paul, and Ann. The choir and praise band fill us with awe and wonder through their harmonious music. Some songs enable us to travel through time and space. Some songs stick in our ear giving us an extra bounce in our step for days. Others songs stir up joy and love in our soul.

Kathryn channels wonder in eloquent dance that reveals new facets of awe. Kathryn shares by teaching dance to others and dancing to inspire us.

Paul is energized by the awe he experiences through the music of U2. Ask any youth and they will tell you that Paul can illustrate almost any Biblical truth through a U2 song. It fills me with wonder to see Paul beam as he shares how God nourishes him through U2.

Ann gathers laughter and truth writing them into our youth dramas. Ann nurtures the wonder in our youth, giving wonder expression in their acting. Ann gives wings to wonder and awe by sharing the youth drama with all of us.

Do good and share. Enjoy awe and wonder and share the moments that cause your soul to soar.

Genesis 1:20-23 NLT “Then God said, “Let the waters swarm with fish and other life. Let the skies be filled with birds of every kind.” So God created great sea creatures and every living thing that scurries and swarms in the water, and every sort of bird—each producing offspring of the same kind. And God saw that it was good. Then God blessed them, saying, “Be fruitful and multiply. Let the fish fill the seas, and let the birds multiply on the earth. And evening passed and morning came, marking the fifth day.”

Faithful servants who reveal and share this goodness are the Stegmeirs, Dave, and Paul who shared the renewing grandeur of the Boundary Waters. They shared their home, food, gear, knowledge, and fellowship by

taking me on a trip. I shared a trip taking Garrett, Courtney, Spencer, Abigail, and Paul into the Boundary Waters Paul shared a trip taking his extended family. I wonder how many lives will be touched by the goodness shared from that first trip that has multiply into numerous Boundary Waters experiences.

Do good and share. Enjoy your favorite lake. Share the goodness of living water that flows freely from God.

Genesis 1:24-25 NLT “Then God said, “Let the earth produce every sort of animal, each producing offspring of the same kind—livestock, small animals that scurry along the ground, and wild animals.” And that is what happened. God made all sorts of wild animals, livestock, and small animals, each able to produce offspring of the same kind. And God saw that it was good.

Faithful servants who reveal and share this goodness are my father and loving pet owners. My Dad had a special place in his heart for every animal on our farm. He insisted that everyone honor every life by nurturing and caring for life. Every life from soil microbes to our largest bull were to be appreciated.

Loving pet owners share delight, laughter, and play with the pets. They discover that the care they give their pets returns to them in the pet’s excitement in being with them.

Do good and share. Celebrate and share the goodness of sharing life with animals.

Genesis 1:25-2:1 NLT Then God said, “Let us make human beings in our image, to be like us. They will reign over the fish in the sea, the birds in the sky, the livestock, all the wild animals on the earth, and the small animals that scurry along the ground.” So God created human beings in God’s own image. In the image of God, God created them; male and female God created them. Then God blessed them and said, “Be fruitful and multiply. Fill the earth and govern it. Reign over the fish in the sea, the birds in the sky, and all the animals that scurry along the ground.” Then God said, “Look! I have given you every seed-bearing plant throughout the earth and all the fruit trees for your food. And I have given every green plant as food for all the wild animals, the birds in the sky, and the small animals that scurry along the ground—everything that has life.” And that is what happened. Then God looked over all God had made, and God saw that it was very good! And evening passed and morning came, marking the sixth day.”

God has given all of creation to us as a gift to reign over. We are to reign over creation like Jesus reigns over us, as our gracious savior. We are called to be stewards nurturing all of creation. We are created from the soil, therefore we are related to all of creation. Caring for creation is caring for ourselves.

We are created in the image of God, a joyful relationship of three who love each other perfectly creating one. Being created in the image of God means we are designed to be in loving relationship with God and each other.

Each of us is a faithful servant who reveals and share this goodness. Each of us cares for creation. Each of us loves and rejoices. Do good and share.

Genesis 2:2-3 NLT “So the creation of the heavens and the earth and everything in them was completed. On the seventh day God had finished God’s work of creation, so God rested from all God’s work. And God blessed the seventh day and declared it holy, because it was the day when God rested from all God’s work of creation.

A faithful servant who reveals and share this goodness is Joni. She enjoys the unforced rhythms of grace. Joni rests, and encourages others to rest, to let the Holy Spirit renew us. Joni celebrates goodness and serves to enhance goodness. Joni affirms the goodness in others, builds others up, and unites us in community.

A rest gives one time to let go, reflect, and savor blessings. A rest enables you to see the familiar anew. My time of rest expanded my heart to feel more joy and love. I discovered more joy in serving. I fall deeper in love with Leslie. Resting is a way of doing good and sharing.

I wish I had time to mention each of you by name and thank you for the way you do good and share. Thank you for your faithful stewardship, your gifts of time, talents and money that enables this church to do good and share in your name. May your generous giving, doing good and sharing, invigorate you with abundant life, ever expanding your love and joy. Amen