

Letters of ENCOURAGEMENT

God Loves You  No Matter What

May 12, 2022

A Note from Pastor April

Dear Friends,

On Tuesday this week, Pastor Jon and I gathered with many of the 1,500+ clergy in the West Ohio Annual Conference for clergy session. Our opening time of worship included the reading of the following scripture from 1 John 3:2.

“Beloved, we are God’s children now;
what we will be has not yet been revealed.”

Our colleague and preacher for the day, the Rev. Dr. Suzanne Allen, thoughtfully commented on how challenging this “process of becoming” can be... especially when we are in the middle of it. “The process of becoming can sometimes appear very unbecoming.”

Most of us have strong memories from our days of middle school. (Mine included very large 80’s hair and trying to find clothes that fit my incredibly thin frame.)

These years were filled with awkward, in-between moments when we were trying to figure out who we were, where we fit in, and what to do with all the changes in our bodies.

The process of growing into our future selves is slow and sometimes painful.

When we baptize someone in the church, one of the commitments we make to them (and to their family if it’s a young child) is this:

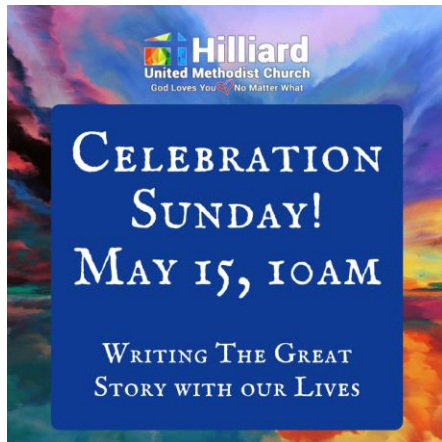
“Are you willing to love this child, support and nurture their family, helping them to see God’s love in themselves and others so that they can be a witness of God’s miraculous love, joy and justice?”



There are times in our journeys when it becomes hard to see our own beauty and goodness.

There are seasons when remembering that we are a beloved child of God requires the outside encouragement and nurturing and support of our community.

Sometimes, our ability to grow into a witness of God's love requires us to see this love embodied in those around us.



This Sunday, we have a special chance to honor the “process of becoming” happening for the children, youth, and young adults in our church.

The service will be one big celebration, starting with a baptism, honoring the transitions of our kids along the way, and then celebrating the accomplishments of our high school and college graduates.

I know you won't want to miss the opportunity to worship together and share in these special moments as a community.

We'll have one service only at 10am in the parking lot & livestreaming (no 9am or 11am services this Sunday).

As we all know, the work of growing and enduring challenging and awkward transitions doesn't stop when we graduate. **Our Christian journey is one big “process of becoming.”**

As individuals, as families, and as communities, who we are becoming has not yet been revealed. More than ever, we need one another to support, encourage, and help us to see God's love in ourselves and in others.

This is exactly what is happening in the midst of the Great Story right now. God's people are enduring the challenging and slow journey that helps them transition from slavery into a new kind of people. They are in the “process of becoming” who God desires them to be... a people who will embody God's love and share it with the world.

I'm grateful to be on this journey of becoming with all of you. **The good news is that we are all works in progress. It's OK that we aren't there yet.** It's OK if we have days when it's hard to see and find God's love



in ourselves and others. It's OK if we need our community around us to remind us some days that God Loves us... no matter what.

"Beloved, we are God's children now; what we will be has not yet been revealed."

Hope to see you Sunday, friends!

Pastor April



Rev. April Blaine
Lead Pastor
ablaine@hilliardumc.org
614.876.2403 (church office)



God Loves You  No Matter What

5445 Scioto Darby Road
Hilliard, Ohio 43026 | 614.876.2403
info@hilliardumc.org
www.hilliardumc.org