

Letters of ENCOURAGEMENT

God Loves You  No Matter What

August 30, 2023
A Note from Pastor Jon

Dear Friends,

This Thursday night and into Friday morning it will be time to turn the page. Like it or not, we will acknowledge that we are two-thirds of the way through this calendar year of 2023.

The page turn to September, however, is an exciting one for me. The excitement is not just because my kids are all back in school either.

I have always loved this time of the year. There's an excitement in the air. Kids, for the most part, are excited for a new school year. High school football and fall sports have started. The pageantry of marching bands is beautiful to watch and music to the ear. College football kicks off. Pumpkin spice fans... well, that's not too far away either.



It's an exciting season on the church calendar, too.

Having grown up around the church, I can think back to when I was a kid and I knew I would see my church friends more often. My favorite church activities would be starting back up. I felt the same way as a teenager about youth group. There was always a sense of September excitement. Now after serving nearly twenty years in the church, I get the same feeling.

In our natural calendar rhythms, the summer has become the slower season of programming beyond Sunday mornings, as families travel and folks enjoy the longer days and warmer temperatures. This has become our life rhythm, and it's not a bad rhythm of life.

However, as the days begin to rapidly grow shorter, the temperatures grow cooler (at least in theory), the church seems to have a sense of resurgence. There are so many opportunities to serve, to learn, to give, and to grow.

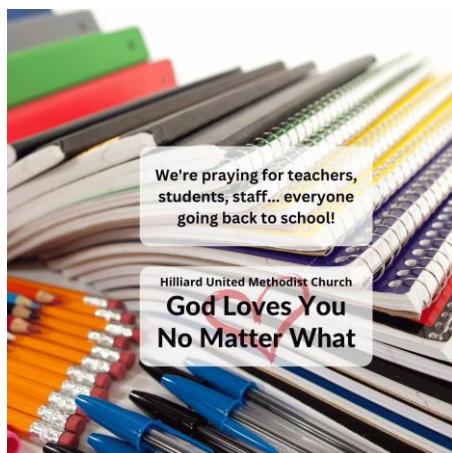
Choir practice has resumed, youth will begin to meet weekly again, Wednesday night meals kick off, Faith Kids and Faith Finders gather again, Feeding Hilliard Students is back, the Scouts are in full swing, preschool starts year 52, the new bell choir is ringing away, Warehouse 839 worship is meeting more regularly, there are new discipleship opportunities to develop our spirits and minds that are popping up, and the places to serve the Kin-dom of God seem endless.

At times, as a leader, I can get overwhelmed with looking at the calendar.

At HUMC , we have so much happening and so many spaces that need support. I often begin to wonder how we will ever get it all done. How will we feed those God is calling us to feed? How will we raise up our children and teens with enough mentors and guides to let them know they are loved by God? **How will we support all that God is leading us to and through? Are we being overly ambitious or are we trusting where the spirit is leading?**

When I ask those questions to myself, and quite frankly I've had some HUMC folks ask me the same, here's what I'm so often reminded...

THERE IS ENOUGH!



If you've been around HUMC these last couple of years you have heard me speak about God's economy of abundance. In the Kin-dom there is always enough. At times, however, that means we must turn inward and have that conversation with God: **What am I doing for the Kin-dom?**

God's economy of abundance says there's enough, but to tap in to all that God has given we must be willing to do our part, to give, to serve, to be, to learn, to mentor, to support, to pray. God's divine economy has blessed us to be a blessing.

So, do I worry that we just can't or won't be able to do all the things we are being called to do? Yes, I am only human, and even pastors worry. What I do, however, is pray and ask God, **"What is it that you are calling me to in this season?** God, are you leading me to new waters, to new pastures, or are you calling me back to the same spaces to dwell? Are you telling me I am ready to give more, to serve more, to do more? Are you telling me to step back or step up?"

I worry. I ask. I pray. I listen. I worry. I pray. I wait. I worry. I pray. I do. (And pretty much in that order.)

I want to ask you in this new season of the church calendar to do likewise. Maybe not as much worry but commit to the asking, praying, listening, and doing.

If we commit together and to each other to do this, we will see the fruits of God's economy of abundance unfold before our very eyes. I hope you're excited for this season. I hope you will join me and if you are willing but don't know where or how, shoot me an email and let's grab a coffee, a tea, a water. **I'd love to see your potential unleashed. You are enough!**

A comment by Saint Augustine deserves mention. He says that those asked to go into the Lord's vineyard early in the morning must not say: "Why should I tire myself out when I can go at the last hour and receive the same reward? When you are called, come. The reward promised is indeed the same but the great question concerns the hour of working. No one promised you that you will live until the eleventh hour. Take care lest what he by promising is prepared to give you, you by deferring take away from yourself."

Peace,

Jon



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