

Pastor Anne's Message, August 2025

Hello Everyone! I hope and pray that you are enjoying your summer as August is already upon us! I share with you from the Gospel of Luke, the story about sisters Mary and Martha. Which sister do you identify with the most? Blessings to you! Pastor Anne

Jesus Visits Mary and Martha (Luke 10: 38-42)

When Jesus decided to drop in on Martha and her sister Mary, Martha's first impulse was to get something going in the kitchen. In doing this she was being faithful to the tradition of hospitality begun long ago when Father Abraham welcomed three guests to his tent (Genesis 18:1-10). Just like when Abraham turned to Sarah to assist with the making of cakes for his guests, let us look at Martha. She expected Mary to do the same. Martha's expectations did not include Mary's plopping down on the rug at Jesus' feet and leaving the work for her.

That, however, is exactly what her sister did. Mary was in no hurry to come into the kitchen. While Martha was flipping through the cookbooks, boiling the water, chopping up the vegetables, and setting the table for three, Mary settled down at the feet of their friend Jesus (and guest), attentive to what he was saying. In fact, by sitting at Jesus' feet, Mary had taken the posture of a disciple. Who could blame Martha for banging a few pots and pans together (okay ~ clay pots) and putting the plates on the table with a sturdy thump to get HER point across?

Perhaps Jesus heard the bustling around "back there" and, after a while, even the muttering. Martha was not one who kept her feelings under a tight lid. Since Jesus was pretty sharp at gauging what was going on in people's hearts, he knew what the muttering was all about, long before Martha's frustration exploded into words, but he waited until Martha spoke. "Lord," Martha began, "don't you care..." showing that Mary was not the only one under scrutiny; "don't YOU care," she repeated; and then looked at her sister Mary, "that my sister has left me by myself to do the serving?"

As a matter of fact, Jesus did not care. I like to think he smiled when he said, "Martha, dear friend, you are worried and distracted by many things." This is an important moment to notice in the story. He is not going after "Busy Martha," but "Worried and Distracted" Martha. He is speaking to his dear friend Martha who has worked herself into a state of anxious distraction over the meal she wanted to have for him. Jesus is gently calling her to refocus. Hospitality is not primarily about the food; more importantly, it is the focus in the room.

Is it possible that this story of two sisters offers us an ongoing plea from the Lord, to focus on him, to give him some "prime time," some continuous full attention, just as we do for our close friends? (At least, this is what we do if we want to keep them as close friends.) The same Lord calls us to focus on him when we gather on Sunday, to move from our place of being "worried and distracted by many things" to one where we are in touch with the one thing needed: the good part that will not be taken away. There, we will connect with the source that brings both peace and energy to all our undertakings in this world.

Jesus' acceptance of Mary (in a stance of a typical man at that time, at the feet of Jesus listening and learning) means full participation of women in the life of the church, something we certainly support! Martha also welcomed Jesus into her home. The frame for the story is hospitality. We can see from Genesis where Abraham welcomes the three strangers, that hospitality is not just "women's work." Abraham put out his very best food and drink for these three guests. Spoiler alert (they were angels.) The tradition is that when you welcome the stranger into your home, you may "be entertaining angels unaware." (As Abraham did.) Hospitality, then, was a mark of the Early Church that followed Jesus. At a different time, Jesus might well have commended Martha's hospitality. Jesus does not have a "one-size-fits-all template," but deals with each person differently.

The take home message is to listen to God, to Jesus, and to balance our "word" and our "work." There is a little of Mary AND Martha in all of us! And that is perfectly OK in God's sight! Amen



Trustees Report

The Trustees have been completing projects around the building. Mike Loftus installed the AED units. One is in the sanctuary and the other in the dining room. There may be training and discussion available on these new additions in the near future. We want to thank the Town of Collbran for providing grant funds which were used to pay for the AED in the public area in the dining room. Thanks for making the purchase possible.

It was found that there is a damp concrete issue in the room we often refer to as the 4-H Room. After looking over the foundation exterior and then the musty dampness in the building, it was decided to seal the exterior of the concrete and look at drying and refurbishing the room. That will mean everything stored in this room will have to be removed until renovations are complete. Presently, there are no immediate plans as to what will need to be done to dry out the space before work begins.



We are asking the 4-H, Lions Club, Cattlewomen, and Historical Society to not panic but please start discussing where your things can be moved during renovations.

We may be looking at 2026 as we need to be sure we have stopped the intake of moisture from snow during this next winter. There could always be other issues causing some of the problem.

The spirea has been trimmed around the building. Thanks, Robert. The lawn is looking good and the flowerbed might meet Nancy Karlson's approval. We keep pulling grass and weeds from around the flowers. Thank you to random community members who pull weeds when visiting the park.

Emily keeps the floors mopped in the dining room and the upstairs ready for Sunday. We appreciate the work you are doing.

Thank everyone for the things you do as you move through the buildings. It might be mopping the kitchen floor after an event, pulling a few weeds as you wait for someone at the park, or cleaning, dusting, and arranging books on shelves. There are always things that need to be done. Many hands.... You know.

Thank you,

Trustees Mike Loftus, Julia Cox, Tilda Evans, and Sue Bellotti



Vacation Bible School Program



Children celebrating the birthday of the church at Pentecost

When it comes to fraud, retirees are a common target.

After spending decades saving for retirement, older Americans lose approximately \$3 billion per year to financial scams. For most retirees, one of the best protection measures against fraud is simple: awareness. Learn more about some of the most common scams targeting seniors today, and tips on how to spot the warning signs.

How to protect yourself

Hang up the phone. Hang up on cold calls claiming to be from well-known contests or charities.

Take time to consider. Criminals urge you to move quickly, but “slowing down is always important. It helps you process the information.”



Talk to friends and family. Criminals may tell you not to tell anyone because they’ll want your money, or because it will deprive you of the chance of surprising your family with big checks.

They know it is hard to say “NO!” to someone asking for funds to support a well-known charity, natural disaster relief fund, or political candidate.

But speaking to someone else provides protection: “Most of the people who you do [talk to others] learn right away that these requests are not real.”

If collecting the prize isn’t free, pass. Don’t ever pay a fee to claim a prize you’ve supposedly won or to improve your chances of winning.

Protect your personal information. If during a phone call or email you are given a phone number to call you may very well be transferred to a fake bank, FBI officer, UPS or FEDEX delivery service, not realizing you are still within the criminal’s system.

Never provide personal or financial information to anyone who contacts you on the phone or through email. If it is your doctor or bank or credit card company they will have this information. Hang up the phone or close the email and call your doctor, bank, or credit card company with a known phone number or on the back of your card. Do not stay on the line with the scammer, no matter what they say. They can be threatening and demanding.

If you receive notice that a package cannot be delivered to you because of an incorrect address or Amazon is unable to complete your order because your credit card or bank information is incorrect, HANG UP! Go immediately to your bank by calling the phone number you know for the bank. If you make Amazon purchases, go directly to your Amazon account.

Never use or allow a telephone transfer from an unknown person for any reason.

Never allow an unknown entity to take control of your computer. NEVER!!

THE MUSTARD SEED
THE NEWSLETTER OF THE
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Remember!!!
Worship time stays the same



year round at 10:00 am