

## Come Home to Blessed Community

### “Fear Not—I Will Help You”

Please join us Sunday for Worship and Praise

Sunday, March 12 at 5:30 pm

10311 NE Hwy 99, Vancouver, WA

(Park in the back behind North Creek Church)

Preparing for the Crucifixion

#### Step Out

Jeannie was feeling uncomfortable. There was no denying the stone lying at the pit of her stomach, her slightly trembling hands clasped in her lap, the quickening beat of her heart. Jeannie was nervous. And all because of the children.

Well, to be fair, it wasn't their fault. They were the children who lived at Sanctuary House, a safe way station for homeless families who had a good chance to qualify for more permanent housing. The children she would see would all be under 12 years old, hardly a threat. And she had been a school counselor for years. What was she so afraid of?

She was afraid because she had no answers for these children. No social worker to call, no program to teach them new skills or behaviors. When she met with a child this time, all she would do is listen.

And as she sat quietly waiting for her first child to arrive one question kept running through her mind: *why did ever think this would do any good?* Okay, two questions: *whatever made me think I could do this?*

I was sitting next to Jeannie as she nervously waited for her first child to enter our room. I was the one who had assured her that she could do this. We had travelled to Colorado Springs together to become certified in this process for healing children. But unlike Jeannie, I had done this kind of work before. I had experience to draw from—a kind that is very different from what the world considers to be valuable. The thing is . . . it works.

When Jeannie expressed her fears to me the day before she asked if she could continue to observe me working with the children. I refused her request and gave her the same invaluable gift I gave the children: honesty.

It takes courage to do any meaningful spiritual work, for the results are often invisible to us, success coming long after our relationship with the person has ended. What you offer is yourself, all of it, with no reservations. You will be present to them as if no one else in the world ever existed. And you have no answers; only Christ has the answer they need, and it lives within them already. I'll sit next to you for the first child. After that, you are on your own. And there is no other way to do this.

*You must step out in faith  
and trust God to give you wings or a net.*

This has been my guiding principle throughout my adult life. And this principle relies on life's first and most important virtue: courage. As Aristotle said, "Courage is the mother of all virtues because without it, you cannot consistently perform the others."

It takes courage to drop all pretenses and be truly and fully present to another. It takes courage to offer the Light of Christ to others because it is only available to them if we reveal our truest selves. And it is the virtue most absent from our culture today. So many either hide behind snarky comments on social media, or withdraw from the fray to stay in their bubble of agreeable people. Neither choice allows the Light of Christ to illuminate the issue. As Brené Brown said, "We can choose courage or we can choose comfort, but we can't have both. Not at the same time."

So, what happened to Jeannie? After we prayed together the first child was admitted to the room. Jeannie got on the floor and played with him, allowing him to set the pace. And as she offered him the love of Christ by being truly present, he relaxed. Eventually that child opened to her, revealing deep inner pain he had been unwilling for anyone else to see, including his very skilled psychologist. Over time he was able to let go of the pain as God's love quietly replaced his fears with courage. He left Jeannie's care for a new home and school, and entered that new part of his journey stronger and with more self-assurance than anyone thought possible.

And all because Jeannie was willing to trust God, be uncomfortable, and have the courage to offer the Light of Christ through her presence.

*thoughts from the silence by Pastor Vivian*

#### This week - Embracing "Fear Not!"

Isaiah 41:15/Mark 1:40-45

"I Will Help YOU"

Jesus heals a leper.

**Are you feeling a little outcast?  
There is healing in Jesus' name  
for you too!**



**Blessed Community**  
A Free Methodist Ministry

Pastors Vivian and John Hiestand

[pastorvivian@blessedcommunity.church](mailto:pastorvivian@blessedcommunity.church)

[pastorjohn@blessedcommunity.church](mailto:pastorjohn@blessedcommunity.church)

[www.blessedcommunity.church](http://www.blessedcommunity.church)

(360) 984-1780