

## **BLESSINGS ALWAYS**

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Association Minister Message

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*HEALTH.* “When Jesus arrived and saw a large crowd, he had compassion on them because they were like sheep without a shepherd.” (Mark 6:34, CEB) Mark compacts in chapter 6 details about Jesus’ ministry of presence, teaching and healing. It includes the story of the death of John the Baptist, Jesus’ cousin. Included is the questioning of Jesus’ authority of ministry by people in His hometown of Nazareth and then the commissioning and instruction of the twelve disciples. Mark is a master writer of supporting information to validate Jesus’ authority to what we might call “*authorization for ministry.*” Chapter 6 also includes the feeding of the crowd, as Mark describes, “*Those who had eaten the loaves numbered five thousand men.*” (vs. 46), and if women and children were included in the count there might have been fifteen thousand fed that day.

Mark is clear the crowds came out wherever Jesus was, especially those with diseases so that they might be HEALED. People who followed Jesus believed a miracle would happen, even by touching His cloak. Mark writes, “*Everyone who touched him was HEALED.*” (v. 56).

A major concern of societies today is the *HEALTH* of its citizens. Availability of *HEALTHCARE* is important and should be available to everyone. Many countries do not have access to doctors or other medical personnel and many follow some form of “*shamans, magicians or other mediums*” to help them find *HEALTH*. Our Christian faith cares about the *HEALTH* of the whole person: mind, body and spirit. When persons experience *UNHEALTHINESS* in any area, living can be miserable.

Someone wrote, “*HEALTH is not an end in itself, but a reason to save others.*” The United Church of Christ is actively engaged in *HEALING* ministries by establishing many communities that deal with holiness and wholeness of persons and society. It is important that we continue supporting those ministries. Thoughts and prayers plus community action do lead to the well-being of persons and society. Blessed are those who provide care and bring *HEALING* into people’s lives and the world. *HEALTH* of mind, body and spirit of persons and the *HEALTH* of the world can be accomplished through intentional ministries of all of us who have been touched by Jesus, with the help of God. *BLESSINGS ALWAYS.*