

BLESSINGS ALWAYS

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Association Minister Message

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SEARCH. “What are you looking for?” (John 1:38.) My cousins and I enjoyed going out to our aunt and uncle’s farm because there were so many places we could hide when we played *Hide ‘n Seek*. One time a younger cousin went out and hid in the cornfield and did not hear the call to come in. We then did a *SEARCH* to find him, calling him and no response. What we found out later was that he fell asleep out in the field and was oblivious to calls from us. We were sure that he had a secret hiding place and he was not aware how worried we were trying to find him. Finally, he appeared, and after that we put limits on where we could hide.

In John’s gospel we have a story about John the Baptist’s disciples in *SEARCH* to find Jesus. The Baptizer had many stories to tell about his second cousin Jesus and John was giving witness to the spiritual importance of baptizing Jesus and Jesus’ ministry that was now beginning to happen. John’s disciples saw Jesus physically but were *SEARCHING* for understanding as to who Jesus really was. We *SEARCH* for peace, justice, and goodwill; those things seem so elusive. Yet, they are in front of us, overlooked often because we are overwhelmed by anger, bitterness, and injustice. We are blinded by distrust and mistrust that draw our attention to the disruptions that interfere with finding solutions to the problems. It is so easy to blame certain groups of people or a person as being agitators or dissenters of so-called social norms. Racism, sexism, narrow-mindedness, and even religious intolerance are divisive.

“What are you/we/I looking for?” The *SEARCH* begins with us and within us. God’s indwelling Spirit can spring up and bring about God’s Realm that embraces the world with love through us and with others. The *SEARCH* realizes that disagreements can lose their power when we agree to disagree with respect for differing opinions, when we listen to one another with respect, and when there is respect for, to, and from one another. “Come and see” what God has done and what God calls us to do. God empowers us to be solvers, not disruptors. *SEARCH* and be open to the indwelling Spirit of God made known to us in Jesus Christ. **BLESSINGS ALWAYS.**