

BLESSINGS ALWAYS

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Association Minister Message

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BE KIND. “Therefore, with humility, set aside all moral filth and the growth of wickedness and welcome the word planted deep inside you—the very word that is able to save you.” (James 1:21, CEB). This is the season of yard signs as the political season is very active. Some signs depict just asking for a vote for a certain candidate, while many are contentious and use abusive language. For several months now, the Tiffin area five cluster of United Methodist Churches (served by two pastors) have erected green signs that declare “*BE KIND.*” What a wonderful message amid “*all moral filth and the growth of wickedness*” of those political signs which present such a jarring message of division and angry accusations against opposing candidates. James instructs the early church, “...everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to grow angry.” (vs. 19). *BE KIND* are words that seem so simplistic, yet they offer an alternative to the anger damnation of anyone who holds opposite opinions.

Candidates want to condemn their opponents while indicating how worthy they are to be elected to office. Painful and abusive words can be so destructive in relationships with one another and nations. It would be helpful to have signs that depict ways for healing our communities, nation, and world. How about signs declaring “*respect one another,*” “*love one another,*” or “*welcome one another?*”

James seems to indicate that there is planted within us a goodness that needs to be cultivated. To have peace we need to be peacemakers. To have freedom we need to share it with all people. To have healing we need to be healers. It takes a community to raise people of all ages. James reminds us that the intentions and actions of our hearts, minds, and deeds can be used for good or evil, blessings or cursing of God’s people and creation. *BE KIND* takes intentionality and commitment, and it makes all the difference in the world for healing, transformation, forgiveness, peace, and hospitality. There is a better and godly way of living life that is loving: *BE KIND. BLESSINGS ALWAYS.*