

## Scripture Lessons:

### Mark 2: 18-28

<sup>18</sup>Now John's disciples and the Pharisees were fasting; and people came and said to him, "Why do John's disciples and the disciples of the Pharisees fast, but your disciples do not fast?" <sup>19</sup>Jesus said to them, "The wedding guests cannot fast while the bridegroom is with them, can they? As long as they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast. <sup>20</sup>The days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast on that day.

<sup>21</sup>"No one sews a piece of unshrunk cloth on an old cloak; otherwise, the patch pulls away from it, the new from the old, and a worse tear is made. <sup>22</sup>And no one puts new wine into old wineskins; otherwise, the wine will burst the skins, and the wine is lost, and so are the skins; but one puts new wine into fresh wineskins."

<sup>23</sup>One sabbath he was going through the grainfields; and as they made their way his disciples began to pluck heads of grain. <sup>24</sup>The Pharisees said to him, "Look, why are they doing what is not lawful on the sabbath?" <sup>25</sup>And he said to them, "Have you never read what David did when he and his companions were hungry and in need of food? <sup>26</sup>He entered the house of God, when Abiathar was high priest, and ate the bread of the Presence, which it is not lawful for any but the priests to eat, and he gave some to his companions." <sup>27</sup>Then he said to them, "The sabbath was made for humankind, and not humankind for the sabbath; <sup>28</sup>so the Son of Man is lord even of the sabbath."

## Stewardship Message

My name is Dale Bernardoni. I have been a member of FCCOL for about nine years. I am a retired educator, having been a teacher, a principal and a professor during the course of my career. I live in the lovely town of Chester. I have three grown children and two beautiful granddaughters.

After retiring, I began to volunteer in educational humanitarian activities in sub-Saharan African villages. So the impressive list of local community agencies that receive FCCOL support as well as support given to far away communities in South Dakota, Haiti, Palestine and South Africa indicated to me that this is a place where members not only receive spiritual guidance, but are encouraged to develop meaningful relationships with others near and far in order to love and respect all people.

Then I came to know our incredible, brilliant and dedicated ministers who lead us through courageous and impactful initiatives while also maintaining a strong community dedicated to “staying human”. I’ve had the good fortune to be involved as a member of the Board of Christian Ed, the Board of Trustees and the Crosby Fund for Haitian Education. This year the financial leaders of the church along with the Board of Trustees worked to ensure that the church holdings were responsibly managed while also dedicating funds for COVID related needs such as improving air quality and increasing outreach funding to agencies in need. This has also included reintroducing the Diaper Bank in conjunction with the Food Bank offerings.

The past two years have presented enormous challenges that have required the church leaders and members to envision and enact new and creative ways to continue to stay strong as a church community. We have grown and improved in the process. The website was significantly enhanced. Church services continued virtually via video as well as in hybrid socially distanced models. Music continued to enhance all that we do albeit in new and creative forms. Members made phone calls to other members to ensure that everyone continued to feel included and cared for. We focused efforts to increase inclusion and respect diversity. Our engagement in supporting people in need, especially immigrants and refugees arriving in our state, is growing as plans develop for partnering to provide low income housing.

The list goes on. The point is that the purpose and functions of the FCCOL community have gone on in spite of the recent global challenges. We’ve actually grown stronger. Please reflect on what this church means to you and to countless others as you consider your pledge for your contribution to this year’s Stewardship drive. Thank you.