



Bible studies for disciples who make disciples

Loudonville Community Church

Volume 1 - Number 18
The week of February 28, 2016

Church Matters Ephesians 2:11-3:13

THIS WEEK'S CORE STATEMENT

BIBLICAL COMMUNITY: Fellowshiping with other Christians to accomplish God's purposes in my life, other people's lives and in the world.

The local church provides the context for Christians to practice Biblical Community. As we reflect upon church membership for the next few weeks, we will be using Thom S. Rainer's book, *I am a Church Member: Discovering the Attitude that Makes the Difference* as a resource for our Growth Group study guide. At the close of each chapter Rainer provides a pledge that captures one vital aspect of church membership. These are the first two pledges:

THE FIRST PLEDGE: I am a church member. I like the metaphor of membership. It's not membership as in a civic organization or a country club. It's the kind of membership given to us in I Corinthians 12: "Now you are the body of Christ, and individual members of it" (I Corinthians 12:27). Because I am a member of the body of Christ, I must be a functioning member, whether I am an "eye," an "ear," or a "hand." As a functioning member, I will give. I will serve. I will minister. I will evangelize. I will study. I will seek to be a blessing to others. I will remember that "if one member suffers, all members suffer with it; if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it" (I Corinthians 12:26).

THE SECOND PLEDGE: I am a church member. I will seek to be a source of unity in my church. I know there are no perfect pastors, staff, or other church members. But neither am I. I will not be a source of gossip or dissension. One of the greatest contributions I can make is to do all I can in God's power to help keep the church in unity for the sake of the gospel.

If you are already a member of Loudonville Community Church, I urge you to consider if these pledges reflect the kind of member you are and the kind of member you would like to be. If you are not yet a member of Loudonville Community Church, we ask you would embrace these pledges personally as you join this community. May God help us all to become members who work wholeheartedly to build the Body of Christ in the Capital Region!

This Week's Complementary Passage I Corinthians 12:12-31 (ESV)

¹²For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. ¹³For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit. ¹⁴For the body does not consist of one member but of many. ¹⁵If the foot should say, "Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body. ¹⁶And if the ear should say, "Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body. ¹⁷If the whole body were an eye, where would be the sense of hearing? If the whole body were an ear, where would be the sense of smell? ¹⁸But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. ¹⁹If all were a single member, where would the body be? ²⁰As it is, there are many parts, yet one body. ²¹The eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you," nor again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you." ²²On the contrary, the parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, ²³and on those parts of the body that we think less honorable we bestow the greater honor, and our unpresentable parts are treated with greater modesty, ²⁴which our more presentable parts do not require. But God has so composed the body, giving greater honor to the part that lacked it, ²⁵that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another. ²⁶If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together. ²⁷Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. ²⁸And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing, helping, administrating, and various kinds of tongues. ²⁹Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? ³⁰Do all possess gifts of healing? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret? ³¹But earnestly desire the higher gifts. And I will show you a still more excellent way.

appointed

baptized

Caesar

enemy/demons/Satan

eternal life

fathers & children [in one color
different from Moses]

Gentiles

gospel

grace

Holy Spirit

in the name of Jesus Christ

Jesus

Jews

Law (of Moses)

men of the council

Moses [in different color from
fathers & children]

prayer

repent (repentance)

resurrection (raised up)

salvation

suffering

the Way

the promise of the Father

witnesses

word of God

STEP ONE . . .

READING what the passage says
(Read it at least three times)

Ephesians 2:11-3:13 (ESV)

¹¹Therefore remember that at one time you Gentiles in the flesh, called “the uncircumcision” by what is called the circumcision, which is made in the flesh by hands - ¹²remember that you were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. ¹³But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. ¹⁴For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility ¹⁵by abolishing the law of commandments expressed in ordinances, that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace, ¹⁶and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility. ¹⁷And he came and preached peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near. ¹⁸For through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father. ¹⁹So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, ²⁰built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, ²¹in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. ²²In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.

¹ For this reason I, Paul, a prisoner for Christ Jesus on behalf of you Gentiles - ² assuming that you have heard of the stewardship of God’s grace that was given to me for you, ³ how the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I have written briefly. ⁴ When you read this, you can perceive my insight into the mystery of Christ, ⁵ which was not made known to the sons of men in other generations as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit. ⁶ This mystery is that the Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.

⁷ Of this gospel I was made a minister according to the gift of God’s grace, which was given me by the working of his power. ⁸ To me, though I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, ⁹ and to bring to light for everyone what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God who created all things, ¹⁰ so that through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places. ¹¹ This was according to the eternal purpose that he has realized in Christ Jesus our Lord, ¹² in whom we have boldness and access with confidence through our faith in him. ¹³ So I ask you not to lose heart over what I am suffering for you, which is your glory.

STEP FOUR . . .

UNDERSTANDING what the passage means

This commentary is intended to enhance your own study of the text.

Commentary on Ephesians 2:11-3:13

2:11 - "Remember." These Gentiles are commanded to continue to remember their previous alienation from God.

"At one time you Gentiles in the flesh." The term 'Gentiles' literally means "nations" (Greek word = *ethnos*). It refers to all peoples who are not of the line of Jacob. In the Old Testament the term "nations" (Hebrew word = *goim*) was a derogatory way of referring to all non-Jews.

"Called 'the uncircumcision.'" Even in the Old Testament, the rite of circumcision was an outward sign of inner faith.

2:12 - "Separated from Christ." This term literally means "on separate foundations." These next few phrases of this verse show the helplessness and hopelessness of the Gentiles without Christ.

"Alienated" This means "have been and continued to be excluded." In the Old Testament this term referred to resident non-citizens with limited rights (aliens). The Gentiles had been and continued to be separated, alienated from God's Covenant.

"From the commonwealth of Israel." This is literally "citizenship" (Greek = *politeia*). This word came into English as "politics." It refers to the chosen descendants of Abraham.

"Strangers to the covenants of promise." The New Covenant is like the old covenants in their demand for obedience and personal faith in God's revelation. It is different in content. The Old Testament covenants focused on human obedience and performance of the Mosaic code, while the New Testament focuses on the obedience and performance of Christ. This new covenant is God's way of uniting Jews and Gentiles by faith in Christ. The new covenant, like the old, is both unconditional (God's promise) and conditional (human response). It reflects both the sovereignty of God (predestination) and the free choices of mankind (faith, repentance, obedience, perseverance).

"Having no hope and without God in the world." Since there is truly one creator God and Israel was His chosen people, the Gentiles were cut off without any hope, lost in idolatry and paganism.

2:13 - "But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near." There is a contrast between the hopeless past of the Gentiles and their great hope in the gospel. The New Testament apostles have universalized the Old Testament hope. As the exiled Jews were apart from God, so too, the Gentiles were alienated from God.

"By the blood of Christ." This referred to the vicarious, substitutionary atonement of Christ. God's family is no longer national, but spiritual. The blood of Christ was also a sacrificial metaphor for the life of the Messiah. John the Baptist said of Jesus, "*Behold, the lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.*" Jesus came to die.

2:14 - "For he himself is our peace." The term 'peace' has multiple meanings. Jesus continues to be and to provide our peace. All that is necessary has been accomplished to unite Jews and Gentiles into one new entity, namely the Church. Peace between Jew and Gentile is the focus of this passage. This was the mystery of the gospel hidden in ages past. There is now peace between God and mankind and peace between Jew and Gentile. The term 'peace' also means to 'restore that which was broken or to reconcile.' Jesus the Messiah is called the Prince of Peace. God's peace in Christ has two aspects: personal peace with God and peace between fellow Christians.

"Who has made us both one." Believers are no longer Jew or Gentile, but Christian. This was the mystery of God as revealed in Ephesians. This has always been God's plan. God chose Abraham to choose a people, to choose a world. This is the unifying theme of the Old and New Testaments.

"Has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility." This is literally "the middle wall of partition." This was a rare term. In context it obviously refers to the Mosaic Law. Some commentators have asserted that it was an allusion to the wall in Herod's Temple between the court of the Gentiles and the court of the Women which separated Jewish and Gentile worshippers. This same symbolism of the removal of barriers is seen in the veil of the Temple rent from top to bottom at Jesus' death. Unity is now possible. Unity is now the will of God. "Flesh" emphasizes Jesus' humanity as well as His Incarnational ministry.

2:15 - "By abolishing the law of commandments expressed in ordinances." This term "abolish" is a favorite term for Paul. It literally means "to make null and void" or "to bring to no effect." Jesus has totally eliminated the death sentence of the Old Testament Law. This does not mean to imply that the Old Testament is not inspired and important revelation for the New Testament believer. It does mean that the Law is not the means of salvation. The New Covenant is based on a new heart and a new spirit, not human performance of a legal code. Believing Jews and believing Gentiles now have the same standing before God - the imputed righteousness of Christ.

"One new man." This term means "new" in kind, not time. The people of God are not Jews, not Gentiles, but Christians! The Church is a new entity, in and through and for Christ!

2:16 - "Might reconcile us." The Greek term means to transfer someone from one state of being to another. It implies an exchange of contrasting positions. In a sense reconciliation is the removal of the curse of Genesis 3. God and mankind are restored to intimate fellowship even in this life, in this fallen world system. This reconciliation with God expresses itself in a new relationship with other humans and ultimately with nature. The reuniting of Jews and Gentiles is one beautiful example of God's unifying work in our world.

"In one body." This metaphor of unity is used in several

different ways in Paul's writings: (1) the physical body of Christ or the body of Christ, the church; (2) the new humanity of both Jew and Gentile; or (3) a way of referring to the unity and diversity of spiritual gifts.

"Through the cross." The Jewish leaders meant Christ's cross to be a curse. God used it as a means of redemption. Jesus became "the curse" for us! The cross became a symbol of His victory, giving believers victory over (1) the Old Testament curse, (2) the evil powers and (3) the enmity between Jew and Gentile.

2:18 - "We both have access." This phrase points to the idea that Jesus personally brings believers into the presence of God and gives them a personal introduction.

"In one Spirit." The false teachers were causing disunity, but the Spirit brought unity (yet not uniformity).

2:19 - The Gentiles who were estranged are now fully included. This is clearly stated by the use of four common biblical metaphors: they are (1) fellow citizens (city), (2) saints (holy nation set apart for God), (3) God's household (family members), and (4) a spiritual building (temple, vv. 20-22a).

2:20 - "Built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets." The foundation of our faith has been fully, finally, and completely laid by the Triune God. God's good news was proclaimed by the apostles and prophets. Jesus laid the foundation of the gospel. The Old Testament prophesied the coming Kingdom of God, Jesus' Spirit-led life, death, and resurrection accomplished it, and the apostles preached its reality.

"Cornerstone." This is an Old Testament Messianic metaphor. In the Old Testament God's stability, strength and perseverance is often visualized in "Rock" as a title. Jesus is called a rejected stone, a building stone, a stone to stumble over, and an overcoming and conquering stone. Jesus was the key construction item who was ignored in Old Testament ritualism and legalism.

2:21-22 - The collective or corporate idea of God's people seen in these verses was expressed in the plural word "saints." To be saved is to be part of a family, a building, a body, a temple. The concept of the church as a temple is expressed in the New Testament. This is an emphasis on the corporate nature of the church. The individual aspect is also expressed. Both are true! The verbs in these verses also have a corporate focus. God is continuing to build/add to His church. This one building is not finished. It is in the process of growing. The building metaphor alluded to the spiritual temple (the people of God).

3:1 - "Paul, a prisoner for Christ Jesus on behalf of you Gentiles." When Paul wrote this book he was imprisoned at Rome because of a riot in Jerusalem. The riot occurred when the Jews accused Paul of taking Trophimus, an Ephesian convert, into the Temple. The Jews knew him to be a Gentile and were outraged. Throughout his ministry Paul felt a specific call to the Gentiles.

3:2 - "The stewardship of God's grace that was given to me for you." Paul felt he had been entrusted with the gospel. God's grace came to Paul as a gift and as a stewardship. This is the twin aspect of God's covenant. As a matter of fact, all believers have been gifted by the Spirit and declared stewards of the Great Commission, which involves both intentional evangelism and Christ-like maturity. It is impossible to be a good and faithful steward and not comprehend the assignment!

3:3 - "The mystery." Paul used the term "mystery" over twenty times with several different meanings. Often it is associated with the how and why of the union of believing Jews and Gentiles into one new community, the church.

"By revelation." This could refer to (1) Paul's Damascus Road experience; (2) Ananias' teachings in Damascus; (3) the vision in Jerusalem; or (4) Paul's training by God in Arabia.

3:4 - "When you read this." This probably refers to the public readings of Paul's letters in the churches. Remember that Ephesians was a circular letter.

3:5 - "Which was not made known to the sons of men in other generations as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit." God is now clearly revealing His age-old plan of the redemption of all mankind, Jew and Greek, rich and poor, slave and free, male and female. These verses show God's actions in the revelation of this great truth before time, in time, and through time. They are "holy" because they were set apart for a specific task. Apostles and prophets (along with evangelists and pastor/teachers), proclaimed this newly revealed mystery of the gospel, that believing Jew and Gentile now formed one new body, the church.

3:6 - What a startling revelation of the age-old mystery of God's redemptive plan. In Christ there is no more Jew or Greek.

3:7 - This verse could refer to Paul's initial salvation, but in context it seems to refer to God's special gift for his apostolic Gentile mission.

"A minister." We get the English word "deacon" from this generic Greek word for minister (*diakoneō*). The word originally meant "servant."

3:8 - "I am the very least of all the saints." This phrase could literally be translated "most least" of the saints. Paul was humbled by his previous life of religious self righteousness, and aggressive persecution. He was also amazed by God's love for such a persecutor of His church.

"Unsearchable." What a powerful word to describe God's riches in Christ. Mankind cannot discover God, but God has chosen to reveal Himself.

3:9 - "To bring to light." This is literally "to turn on a light." Only the Spirit can bring this revelation to a darkened heart.

3:10 - “The church.” The Greek word *ekklesia* was used as a synonym for the Hebrew term “assembly of Israel.” This is one of several uses of this term in Ephesians. Paul calls the church the body of Christ both in Ephesians and in Colossians. The early church saw itself as the true Old Testament people of God with Christ Jesus the Messiah as Head.

“The manifold wisdom of God.” This is a compound word stressing the “many-colored” wisdom of God and the great multi-faceted truth of God.

3:11 - “The eternal purpose.” This is literally “purpose of ages” and this term is used in the Greek Classics to refer to a set plan. God is not surprised and He has no plan B! What was God’s eternal plan? This is clarified in Genesis 1–3. God

created mankind for fellowship; that fellowship was broken by human rebellion. The restoration of God’s image and fellowship with mankind (Jew and Gentile) is the goal of God’s activity in the Bible. This goal is met through the work of Christ and the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

3:12 - “We have boldness and access with confidence.” The term “boldness” is used for freedom of speech, but it came to mean confidence in approaching someone in authority. This term may be used to depict a personal introduction to royalty. Believers approach the Father through Christ alone. He is their only mediator.

“Through our faith in him.” Jesus is God’s channel for all spiritual blessings. Believers trust in Christ. He is the trustworthy One!

STEP FIVE . . .

SUMMARIZING the message

In Ephesians 2:11-3:13 Paul gives four amazing reasons why the church matters.

1. The Church Matters because it Owes its Existence to the Sacrifice of Jesus (Ephesians 2:11-13).

If Jesus thought the church was worth dying for then the church must be worth living with.

2. The Church Matters because it is God’s New Humanity (Ephesians 2:14-22).

A whole new race of humanity was established when Jesus rose from the dead transcending our racial identities and cultural preferences.

3. The Church Matters because it Gives Insight into the Mystery of Christ (Ephesians 3:1-6).

Through the gospel we are heirs together of the promises of Christ and members together of one body.

4. The Church Matters because it Displays God’s Wisdom with Cosmic Implications (Ephesians 3:7-13).

God’s intent is to use the church as a demonstration of His wisdom to the vast galaxy of angelic beings, watching with great interest, as the church moves through life on its way to heaven.

WHY BECOME A MEMBER

An Expression of Commitment

Becoming a member of LCC is an expression of commitment to join with other believers in this community as we work together to build the Kingdom of God. Although there is no verse in the Bible that requires a person to become a member of a church, the Bible clearly teaches that believers are to be involved in and committed to a local church. Throughout the New Testament, the fellowship pattern portrayed is one of Christians meeting regularly in local congregations (Acts 2:46; I Corinthians 14:26; Ephesians 4:16; I Timothy 3:15; Hebrews 10:25). The Biblical principle is that the church is a family of committed believers. Church membership is a way of expressing that commitment to the church family.

A Meaningful Sense of Belonging and Accountability

Two major images are given in the Bible of the fellowship of believers: the church is a family and the church is a body.

Family - The concept of family is used often and communicates the warmth of love that is to mark the fellowship of believers. We are sons and daughters of God now through Jesus (Romans 8:15, Ephesians 1:5); as children of God we are also brothers and sisters (Matthew 12:49). Learning to look at each other as brothers and sisters, and to think of ourselves as family, helps us realize why love truly is the mark of Christian fellowship.

Body - While “family” speaks to us of relationships, “body” speaks to us of working together in ministry. Ministry is how we fulfill God’s will for the church to worship Him and make disciples. In Ephesians, Paul tells us that Jesus is the “head of the body” (Ephesians 2:20-22). He directs us – we who serve as His hands, feet, eyes, ears and mouth – to continue His mission in our world. No one person is fully equipped with all of the spiritual gifts needed to serve in His will. Instead, each is given his own distinctive gift or gifts: each then makes his own unique contribution to the “common good” (I Corinthians 12:7).

A Way to Focus Beliefs and Priorities

The process of becoming a member of LCC provides you with an opportunity to clarify your beliefs and priorities. The membership covenant includes a statement of adherence to LCC’s statement of faith. Before committing to becoming a member, you need to work through your own understanding of basic doctrinal and faith issues. Since membership also involves a commitment to the work and mission of the church, the membership process helps you to evaluate your priorities for your time, energy, and resources.

A Requirement for Certain Positions

To ensure that people serving in key leadership and teaching positions agree with the beliefs and mission of the church and are willing to be accountable in those positions, church membership is required for some roles (e.g., member of LCC boards/committees, teachers, staff, etc.).

An Opportunity to Participate in Church Decision-Making

Membership allows you to have a say in what the church does and how it functions. In particular, church members approve the church’s budget and vote for the appointment of pastors and church officers. Only church members are invited to raise questions and make proposals about any issue at a church business meeting. If you want a voice in the way the church is run and the things it does, you need to have a vote. To have a vote, you need to be a church member.

STEP SIX . . .

EXPLORING the passage through discussion

1. The church is both an organized institution and a spiritual reality. Why do you think so many people are skeptical of organized religion today? What would you say to someone who said, "I can be a Christian without being a part of a church?"

2. Review the outline based on Ephesians 2:11-3:13 and discuss the following questions:

- Why does the church matter?
- What is the purpose of the church?
- What things should we look for in a church?
- What things are conspicuously missing from Paul's description of the church that we tend to give more attention to in our churches today?

3. What does Jesus think of the church? (cf. Matthew 16:18).

4. What is the value or importance of becoming a member of a church? List several reasons.

5. What did God say to you about your relationship to the church based on this study?

This Week's Memory Verse

¹⁷ And he came and preached peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near. ¹⁸ For through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father. ¹⁹ So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, ²⁰ built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, ²¹ in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. ²² In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.

Ephesians 2:17-22 (ESV)

THE MISSION OF LOUDONVILLE COMMUNITY CHURCH

We are committed to reaching and teaching people to become devoted followers of Jesus Christ, connecting them to one another and sending them to serve their families, communities and world.

10 CORE BELIEFS OF A DISCIPLE

Authority of the Bible *2 Timothy 3:16-17*

We believe the Bible to be the inspired, the only infallible, authoritative Word of God.

The Godhead *2 Corinthians 13:14*

We believe that there is one God, eternally existent in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

The Deity and Sinlessness of Christ *Colossians 2:9*

We believe in the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ, in His virgin birth, in His sinless life.

The Sufficient Atonement of Christ *2 Corinthians 5:19-21*

We believe in His vicarious and atoning death through His shed blood.

The Resurrection and Return of Christ *Acts 1:3, 9-11*

We believe in His bodily resurrection, in His ascension to the right hand of the Father, and in His personal return in power and glory.

Salvation By Grace *Ephesians 2:8-9*

We believe that for the salvation of lost and sinful man, regeneration by the Holy Spirit is absolutely essential and that a person comes into a right relationship with God by His grace, through faith in Jesus Christ.

The Ministry of the Holy Spirit *John 14:16*

We believe in the present ministry of the Holy Spirit by whose indwelling the Christian is enabled to live a godly life.

Unity in Christ *Ephesians 2:14-17*

We believe in the spiritual unity of all believers in our Lord Jesus Christ.

Eternity *Revelation 21:22-27*

We believe in the resurrection of both the saved and the lost; they that are saved unto the resurrection of life and they that are lost unto the resurrection of damnation.

Stewardship *1 Timothy 6:17-19*

We believe that everything we have or own belongs to God.

10 CORE PRACTICES OF A DISCIPLE

Undiluted Worship *Matthew 22:37-40*

Loving the Lord God with all of our physical, intellectual, emotional and spiritual vigor and, my neighbor as myself.

Constant Abiding *John 15:1-11*

Abiding in Christ in order to be faithful and bear fruit.

Bible Study *Hebrews 4:12*

Reading the Bible to know God, the truth, and to find direction for daily life.

Desperate Prayer *Psalms 66:16-20*

Praying to God to know Him, laying requests before Him and, finding direction for daily life.

Biblical Community *Acts 2:44-47*

Fellowshipping with other Christians to accomplish God's purposes in my life, other people's lives and, in the world.

Spiritual Gifts *Romans 12:4-6*

Using my spiritual gifts to accomplish God's purposes.

Total Forgiveness *Ephesians 4:30*

Practicing forgiving others as God has forgiven me in Christ.

Tangible Compassion *Matthew 25:31-46*

Showing compassion to those in need and so minister to Jesus Himself.

Generous Giving *2 Corinthians 8:7*

Giving away my money to fulfill God's purposes.

God Space *Ephesians 6:19-20*

Increasing the quantity and quality of our gospel conversations.

10 CORE VIRTUES OF A DISCIPLE

Love - a sincere affection for others *1 John 4:10-12*

Love is acting in someone else's interest no matter who they may be, no matter how you feel, and no matter what it costs.

Joy - a delight unaffected by circumstances *John 15:11*

An inner delight in God that is sustained in spite of the changing seasons of life.

Peace - an abiding sense of harmony *Philippians 4:6-7*

Relationships are free from friction. Positively, it describes harmonious relations with others in the church.

Patience - a willingness to stick with things *Proverbs 3:3-4*

Being willing to live with a difficult situation for a long time—even if things are slow to change or never change.

Kindness - a sense of compassion in the heart *Job 6:14*

An inner disposition that puts others at ease and out of which kind actions flow.

Goodness - a goodness that flows outwardly *1 Thess. 5:15*

Choosing to do the right things in my relationships with others.

Faithfulness - an unwavering loyalty *Psalm 26:3*

Being the kind of people who keep our word to one another.

Gentleness/Humility - an attitude of humility without any entitlement; a lack of self-awareness *Philippians 4:5; 2:3-4*

Gentleness is power and strength under God's control.

Humility is considering others above myself, if I consider myself at all.

Self-Control - an ability to direct your energy wisely

Titus 2:11-13

The strength to restrain our desires, emotions, and actions has to come from within rather than from some outside source.

Hope - a certainty of what is to come *Hebrews 6:19-20*

Coping with the hardships of life and with death because of hope in Christ.

Each week this Bible Study will feature either a core belief, practice or virtue vital for growing disciples.

#OT in 52
(52 weeks through the Old Testament)

OLD TESTAMENT SCRIPTURE READING IN A YEAR

Monday, February 29 thru Saturday, March 5
Numbers 6, 7, 8-10, 11-13, 14-15, 16-17

Loudonville Community Church
374 Loudon Road, Loudonville, NY 12211

www.lcchurch.org