

We Are the Body of Christ

As you reflect on these readings this week, remember: you are seen, you are valued, and you are an essential part of the body of Christ. Together, we are the story God is writing.

The Daily Devotional for July 14: Every Part Matters

Reading: *1 Corinthians 12:12-27*

Paul's beautiful metaphor reminds us that in God's kingdom, there are no insignificant people. Just as a tiny hangnail can command the attention of your entire body, every person in the church matters profoundly. You may feel like you're just a small part, quietly serving behind the scenes, but God sees you. Your prayers, your smile, your willingness to notice someone sitting alone—these are not minor contributions. They are essential acts that make the body function as God intended. Today, resist the temptation to minimize your role. Instead, ask God: "How can I use my unique gifts to strengthen Your body?" Remember, Christ doesn't call you to be someone else; He calls you to be faithfully you.

The Daily Devotional for July 15: The Ministry of Noticing

Reading: *Hebrews 10:24-25*

When Bill Darlington shared why he chose Lakeview, it wasn't because of programs or facilities—it was because people noticed him. He felt seen, welcomed, and valued. This is the heart of Christian fellowship. We are called to "consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds." This begins with the simple, sacred act of paying attention. Who sits alone in your church? Whose name have you not yet learned? Who might be carrying a burden invisibly? God created us with expressive faces, tears that can be seen, and voices that can share our stories—all because we're meant to be noticed and to notice others. Today, commit to truly seeing someone. Learn their name. Ask about their story. In doing so, you become Christ's eyes and heart.

The Daily Devotional for July 16: Stories That Shape Us

Reading: *Psalms 78:1-7*

The psalmist understood something profound: our stories matter. They're not just personal histories; they're testimonies of God's faithfulness that must be passed from generation to generation. Your journey to faith, the moments when God met you in your need, the ways this church has shaped you—these are holy stories. They have the power to encourage someone who is struggling, to welcome someone who feels like an outsider, to remind us all that God is still at work. Don't underestimate the value of sharing your experiences. When you tell someone how God led you through difficulty or how you felt welcomed into community, you're not just making conversation—you're building the kingdom. What story of God's faithfulness could you share today?

The Daily Devotional for July 17: Belonging Before Doing

Reading: *Romans 12:3-8*

Our culture constantly asks, "What do you do?" But God first asks, "Will you belong?" Before Paul lists spiritual gifts and their uses, he establishes that we are one body in Christ. Your value doesn't come from your productivity, your abilities, or your contributions. It comes from your identity as God's beloved child and a member of Christ's body. This is especially important when age, illness, or circumstances limit what we once could do. You belong not because of what you offer, but because Christ has claimed you. From that secure place of belonging, gifts flow naturally. Some seasons call for visible service; others call for faithful presence and prayer. Both matter equally. Today, rest in the truth that you belong to God's family, and let your service flow from that secure identity rather than striving to earn it.

The Daily Devotional for July 18: The Story God Is Writing

Reading: Ephesians 2:8-10

Paul declares we are "God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do." You are not an accident or an afterthought. God is writing a story through your life and through your church community. Each conversation, each act of kindness, each moment of noticing another person—these are the sentences and paragraphs of God's ongoing narrative. The story of Lakeview United Methodist Church isn't finished. It's being written right now through the faithfulness of ordinary people who show up, who care, who serve in small ways that create extraordinary impact. You don't need to have all the answers or do everything perfectly. You simply need to offer what you have—your presence, your gifts, your willingness—and watch how God weaves it into His beautiful story. What verse will you contribute today?