

The FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

GALATIANS 5:22-23



WOMEN'S REFUGE
OF VERO BEACH

March 2021

Recently I found myself in need of treatment at a minor emergency clinic. When I walked in, I was relieved to see only two patients in the lobby and anticipated having a quick consultation, medication prescribed and back on my way very soon.

I have often said that I try to have no expectations, so I won't suffer disappointments, but the truth of the matter is I find I have a lot of expectations. After a long wait in the lobby and my pain growing, I felt myself becoming impatient. I was finally called to an exam room and the pleasant nurse took my vitals then left the room, assuring me the physician would be right in. After 10 minutes, I found myself growing increasingly restless with the delay. I no longer heard anyone outside in the hallway, mentally figuring the two prior patients had been taken care of and . . . where was the doctor? My frustration was only fueling my pain.

But wait, where was that fruit of the Spirit we often read about? Sure, I could recite the Bible verse, but I certainly was fresh out of patience. And I was running low on another, self-control.

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control." Gal 5:22

Why was my patience so shallow in this minor suffering? Why was I so

self-absorbed and not trusting God to help me through this little inconvenience? When I finally met with the physician and he prescribed what I needed, my obliging husband drove me to the pharmacy. Along the way, I found myself complaining about the long wait, they had "forgotten about me" in the exam room and it took "forever" just to prescribe medication. The entire visit had taken an hour. It felt like three. My husband quietly listened to my rantings and finally said, "Dear, you aren't a very patient person."

That was a jolt to hear, but it was the truth. And it was spoken in love. Proverbs 27:6 reminds me that *"Wounds from a sincere friend are better than many kisses from an enemy."* And it was helpful for me to hear the honesty.

Just days later I read on the prayer list about yet another death in the church body from coronavirus. And the next day I was the one sending out a prayer request for a family whose loved one has been diagnosed with cancer. And here I had been complaining about a minor inconvenience and spouting impatience. How would I really respond to a life-threatening diagnosis in my life? It was clear to me I had a long way to go in my walk with God. It's great to think I would be strong in the Lord, put on this saintly countenance and deny

ever feeling disheartened, fearful, or succumb to anxiety and self-pity. Instead, I would be like the psalmist crying out to the Lord, *"O Lord, why do you stand so far away? Why do you hide when I am in trouble?"*

I desire to be more spiritually healthy. I have a need to be stronger in my faith. I want my life to be more fruitful. And this requires pruning. Cutting away of the impatience, the rebelliousness, the unwillingness to step out of my comfort zone. Eliminate those things that keep me out of God's word. This also requires choices. Be grateful. Search for ways to give back. Extend mercy and grace. Thank those around me. Give praise to God for all His blessings in my life.

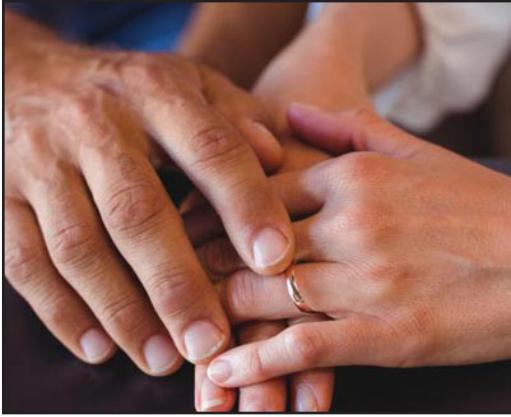
"Rejoice in the Lord always. Again, I will say, rejoice! Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your request be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." Phil 4:4,6

In His grace,
Diane



Diane A. Ludwig
Executive Director

Reconciliation involves forgiveness, rebuilding trust, and being open to change



I came to the Refuge seeking peace. I have received clarity from God about going back to the process of reconciliation with my husband. I don't feel pressured. I feel at peace. I know it may not work out, but I am finally willing to try. I have gone through many valuable teachings about forgiveness and brokenness and self-worth, all of which I appreciate SO MUCH!!! I believe my family will be happy with my decision to try and repair

the marriage.

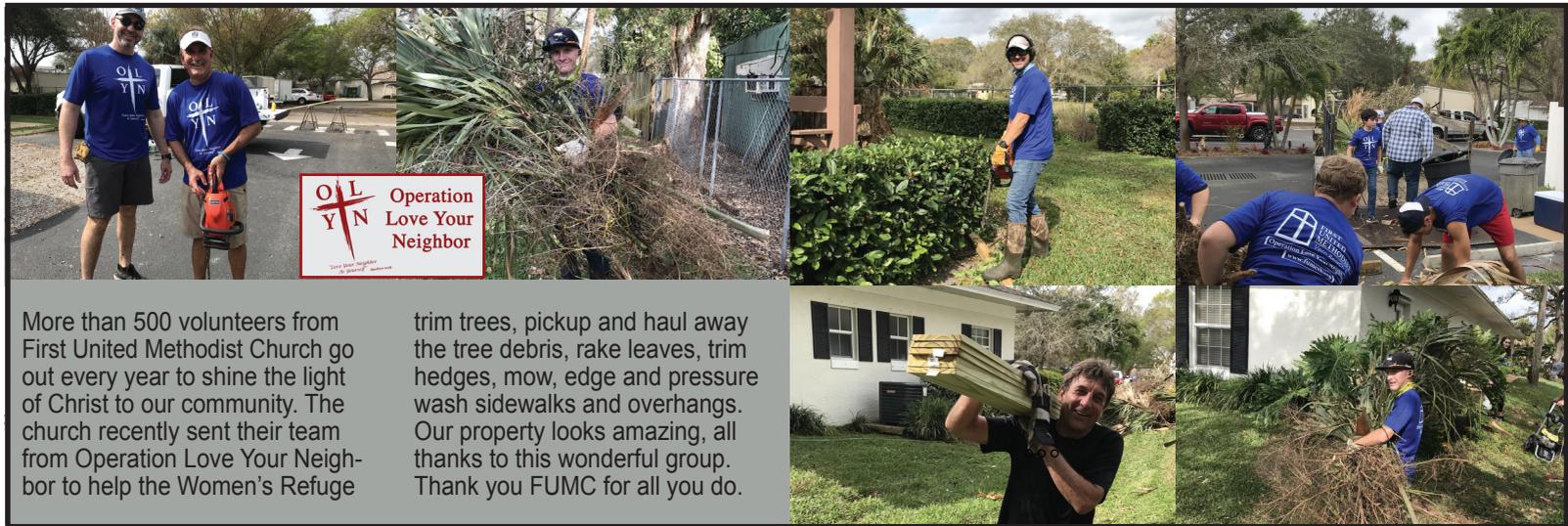
Before, I didn't trust God to protect me from myself and that I might decide to return to a bad marriage, return too soon, get a divorce – any number of choices. After the past month, I feel confident of who I am in Christ and the Spirit's leading. My husband and I are both changing and growing, and I have new hope for the future together.

Two week resident.



"And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love." 1 Cor. 13:13 Our hearts are full of thankfulness for the abundance of support we received at the Women's Refuge Love 5k

Run/Walk. There is power in community and there is power in love! A special thank you to our planning team, sponsors, volunteers, and participants for making this event possible. #togetherwearestronger!



More than 500 volunteers from First United Methodist Church go out every year to shine the light of Christ to our community. The church recently sent their team from Operation Love Your Neighbor to help the Women's Refuge

trim trees, pickup and haul away the tree debris, rake leaves, trim hedges, mow, edge and pressure wash sidewalks and overhangs. Our property looks amazing, all thanks to this wonderful group. Thank you FUMC for all you do.

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