



**ONE ANOTHER**  
**Eastertide Devotional 2022**

# EASTERTIDE DEVOTIONAL SCHEDULE

The number of the Devotional is in the circle, the date is in the corner.

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
		MARCH	2 <b>1</b>	3 <b>2</b>	4 <b>3</b>	5
6	7 <b>4</b>	8 <b>5</b>	9 <b>6</b>	10 <b>7</b>	11 <b>8</b>	12
13	14 <b>9</b>	15 <b>10</b>	16 <b>11</b>	17 <b>12</b>	18 <b>13</b>	19
20	21 <b>14</b>	22 <b>15</b>	23 <b>16</b>	24 <b>17</b>	25 <b>18</b>	26
27	28 <b>19</b>	29 <b>20</b>	30 <b>2</b>	31 <b>21</b>	1 <b>22</b>	2
3	4 <b>23</b>	5 <b>24</b>	6 <b>25</b>	7 <b>26</b>	8 <b>27</b>	9
10	11 <b>28</b>	12 <b>29</b>	13 <b>30</b>	14 <b>31</b>	15 <b>GF</b>	16
17 EASTER						

## CLOTHE YOURSELF WITH HUMILITY TOWARDS ONE ANOTHER

1 Peter 5:5

*In the same way, you who are younger, submit yourselves to your elders. All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another*

When the pandemic hit, the 10-part series “The Last Dance” was a welcome distraction from the craziness of the world. It was the story of the rise of Michael Jordan and the Chicago Bulls. Jordan led the bulls to six NBA championships in eight years. They were a dynasty unrivaled in NBA history since the days of Red Auerbach and all because Michael Jordan had an insatiable thirst for winning. Jordan held each of his teammates to a high standard, publicly ridiculing those who failed to meet that standard. Everyone on the Bulls loved winning, few loved Jordan but Michael seemed OK with that arrangement. Jordan required submission but had no humility.

This verse requires a close reading because it is intentionally constructed with nuance. It tells one group to submit to another while at the same time it has a command for all parties to “clothe themselves with humility.” Submission does not imply superiority and leadership entails conducting oneself in a manner that encourages submission. This is not a recipe for domineering another nor is it a recipe for complete independence. Most often, when a verse presents nuance, people have the tendency of privileging one part over another: some people focus on the command to submit and minimize the command to pursue humility while others emphasize the egalitarian nature of mutual humility. Both of these approaches fall short of what the text expects: submission and humility in equal measure. One could even make the case that submission comes through humility: one’s humility encourages the trust need for another to submit.

At the end of the Bulls’ championship run, a young player joined the Bulls that seemed impervious to Jordan’s brutal style of leadership. Scotty Burrell took every piece of verbal abuse with a smile, responded positively to Jordan’s standard but never succumbed to the way by which Jordan set that standard. After Burrell’s championship with the 1997 Bulls, he never won another championship. To many, this would seem to vindicate Jordan’s approach, but I believe the apostle Peter would disagree. Scott Burrell “clothed himself in humility” while still living up to Jordan’s standard. Do we have the same humility?

**HMWK:** Conduct some honest self-evaluation. In what areas are you in leadership? Where do you exercise humility? In what areas are you under another’s authority? How well do you submit?

## PRAY FOR ONE ANOTHER

James 5:16

*Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.*

There seems to be much misunderstanding concerning prayer in the American church today. Some people think that prayer is like an election—if enough people pray then we can get God to do what we want. Other people turn to prayer to calm them in hard times, which may be a part of the purpose of prayer but certainly not its core purpose. The full purpose of prayer is beyond the scope of this devotional, but its core purpose is to commune with God, to connect with him on a personal level that transforms our life. This is very different than praying primarily to meet one's needs. If this is the purpose of prayer, why the command to pray for one another?

This becomes more clear when we remember the other “one another” commands: to forgive one another, to encourage one another, to build up one another, to bear one another's burdens. All these commands—including the command to pray for one another—is not primarily to fix one another's problems, but to live life together with one another. It is one thing to give money to a friend, it is another to share money with a friend; it is one thing to pay for someone's bus fare, it is another thing to ride with them on the bus. God's design for his church is that we do life together, to share with them, to ride with them. This is not something that is done at an arm's length. It is personal and often messy

The purpose of prayer is to commune with God, to become entangled with the life of God. This is described variously throughout the Bible: God dwelling with us, participating in the divine nature, being conformed to the image of Christ, to be hidden with Christ. Praying for and with one another is how we entangle our church in the life of God.

**HMWK:** Reach out to three people in the church and simply ask how you can pray for them. Then, pray with them right then and there before going home and praying for them.

## CONFESS YOUR SINS TO ONE ANOTHER

James 5:16

*Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.*

Being a parent isn't about not making mistakes, it is about what you do when you make mistakes. I joke around that my goal as a parent is to mess up my children differently than my parents messed me up. As parents, we all have shortcomings that affect our children, things they will need to process as they become parents. When we identify those shortcomings and mistakes we may have as parents and apologize when they surface, we give our children the ability to process those shortcomings well. But when we are unable or unwilling to identify and admit those shortcomings, then we do them a disservice. In the same way that confessing our mistakes is important for the proper functioning of our biological family, it is also true of our spiritual family.

We started off the devotional with maybe the easiest "one another" command—to love one another. It is easy because we all like to love and be loved; we all think that love is the missing ingredient to our lives, and it is. This day's devotion might be the hardest to convince you of its necessity because it seems like something unpleasant that impacts our reputation. But what we have to realize is that "confessing our sins to one another is a part of loving one another. Love is not just a fuzzy emotion but a commitment to one another that requires difficult things of us. We are, not only supposed to confess our sins to those we have wronged (including God), but confess our sins to one another.

This is inherently counter-cultural and probably always has been. Why is this important to God? A brief review of the major "one another" commands should shed some light. We are to "bear one another's burdens"; we are to "stop passing judgment on one another"; we are to "submit to one another"; we are to "forgive one another" we are to "bear one another's burdens." Being honest with select people in the family of God about our personal spiritual condition is a part of these commands. Being holy and sanctified does not consist of hiding our sins the best but being free of our sin. When we are not free of our sin, the a measure of honesty about it is the best way to become free. This is not a "let-it-all-hang-out-shout-it-from-the-rooftops" type of confession but a selection of a small group of trusted members of God's family. The best thing for your sin is for it to be known, identified, and confessed.

**HMWK:** Choose two people to discuss you sin with. Not just merely admitting to a specific sin, but an area of your sinfulness. Choose your confidants wisely.

## LOVE ONE ANOTHER

*1 John 4:11*

*Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another*

The apostle John recorded multiple instructions of Jesus to love one another. After Jesus ascended into heaven, John continued to repeat Jesus's instructions in his personal letters. In this verse, John tells us that God loved us first, and based on that truth, we are to love other people. Jesus created the template for what we are to do. This is easy when it comes to the things we like—loving sounds great and resurrection is a nice perk—but it can be hard when it involves things we don't like: sacrifice, persecution, even death on a cross.

We began with the command to love one another and we are ending with it. The sheer repetition of the command suggests its importance but there is another consideration. The command to love one another does not stand alongside the other commands; the other commands help explain what it means to love one another. As we discussed before, loving another is not the direction of an emotion towards him or her. It is a commitment to “bear their burdens,” to be “devoted to one another,” to honor one another,” to “build up one another,” etc. If the total of the commands towards one another explain what it means to love, it means that a failure to do any of the individual commands is a failure to love. Of course, learning to treat those in the family of God according to these “one anothers” requires study, encouragement, and practice.

It is never a bad idea to treat everyone we meet according to these “one anothers,” however, these commands are to be applied specifically in the family of God here at Union Church. The Bible says that our redemption unites us to Christ and through Christ we are united to one another (Gal. 2:20). The Bible tells us that our redemption is directed at conforming us to the image of Christ (Romans 8:28-29). In order to look more like Christ, in order to be united to one another through Christ, we need to practice these “one anothers.”