

## **“Salt and Light”**

Pastor Greg Briggs, Interim

July 22, 2018

(Pastor Greg’s Last Sunday with FCUCC)

1. Prayer and Introduction
  - a. “May the words of my mouth, and the meditations of our hearts, be acceptable in your sight, our rock and redeemer.” Amen. (Psalm 19:14)
  - b. Briny and Bright
2. Transition
  - a. Wanting to go out with a bang
    - i. Then I read the Bible
    - ii. If you are going to steal, steal from the best
    - iii. These are good parting words
  - b. Ending of one part, beginning of another
  - c. Still just the beginning of the sermon on the Mount
  - d. End of beatitudes
    - i. You are the salt of the earth.
    - ii. You who are hopeless, you who grieve, you who are humble, you who hunger and thirst for righteousness, you who show mercy, you who have pure hearts, you who make peace, you who are harassed because you are righteous, you who are insulted, harassed, and spoken of badly all because of Jesus.
    - iii. THEY are the salt of the earth.
    - iv. THEY are the beacons on the hill. You, are the beacons on the hill
  - e. Beginning of the teaching
3. Salt
  - a. essential to body health
  - b. seasoning and as a preservative.
    - i. Salt brings out the flavor of what’s there
  - c. In addition, salt was used to disinfect wounds
  - d. essential part of offerings to God in Leviticus and Ezekiel
  - e. sign of covenant
    - i. eating salt is a sign of friendship
  - f. newborn babies were rubbed with salt – raised to have integrity, and always be truthful
  - g. In short, salt is a big deal, therefore so are all of you, the salt of the earth.
4. Stay Salty!
  - a. Be the spice in a bland, bleak world.
  - b. Salt brings out the existing flavor
5. You are the light of the world
  - a. Can’t hide it
  - b. People don’t light a lamp and then shade it

- c. Shine, be a beacon, don't hide
- 6. Cautions
  - a. What if it loses its saltiness?
    - i. Not a condemnation, but a reminder to not lose faith
      - 1. Harder to get back
  - b. What if a lamp is hidden?
    - i. Can't do what it is supposed to do
    - ii. Be a guide, a beacon
- 7. Be Briny and Bright
  - a. A good description of this church. There's a bit of flavor here. And there's a lightness here.
  - b. Welcoming, both theologically and individually
  - c. Once you get people here, they can sense that for themselves
- 8. Spreading Light
  - a. There are two ways of spreading light: to be the candle or the mirror that reflects it.
    - Edith Wharton
  - b. This church seems to function the best when it is challenged
    - i. Special collections, stewardship challenges, canned goods, and so on
    - ii. You seem to forget how strong your resources are, how deep your pockets are, until you are challenged to dig in
  - c. Challenge moving forward is to be a beacon – to shine so that others can find you easier.
    - i. Be a beacon on a hill
    - ii. Add some flavor in the community – go to where the people are
    - iii. You'd be amazed how many people out there are looking for something to add flavor to their lives and brighten their days.
- 9. You never run out of salt
  - a. Sure, the temptation is to focus on what you think you lack. To worry that your salt is losing your saltiness, or the lamp is covered, or running out of oil
  - b. Morale inventory – even the lowest scores fell into the solid self-esteem and healthy morale
    - i. Focus on enhancing strengths
  - c. Maybe it's about trying to focus on new salt, vs. bemoaning what no longer is working
    - i. Comment from a recent visitor, they stopped by because of the pride flags on the sign.
  - d. New members – reminder that just as things pass away, new life, new salt, enters
  - e. Help them stay salty and bright
    - i. Care for one another
    - ii. New members – not just extension of the Ramthums
    - iii. They will do the same for you.

10. This is a church people need to know about

- a. Be briny and bright!
- b. Add flavor to a person's life
- c. Shine so others can find you

11. Thank You

- a. So, thank you for being salt and light. For this community, for this world, and for me as well. It's been a blessing to walk with you. I know I've grown in my ministry, and I hope you've grown in yours as well.
- b. So again, don't focus on what you feel you lack. Take control of your responses. Don't lie to yourself either by being excessively optimistic or needlessly pessimistic.
- c. This has been, is, and will continue to be a vibrant, salty, peace creating house of God, so long as you keep that central in your hearts.

## **Readings**

### **Salt and light**

<sup>13</sup>“You are the salt of the earth. But if salt loses its saltiness, how will it become salty again? It's good for nothing except to be thrown away and trampled under people's feet. <sup>14</sup>You are the light of the world. A city on top of a hill can't be hidden. <sup>15</sup>Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a basket. Instead, they put it on top of a lampstand, and it shines on all who are in the house. <sup>16</sup>In the same way, let your light shine before people, so they can see the good things you do and praise your Father who is in heaven.