

Sermon Title: **Looking Forward With Faith 3 - With Servant Leaders**

Bible: Exodus 18:13-26, Acts 6:1-7

Where & When: Sunday Worship at Gilroy UMC on February 3rd, 2019

Audience: about 35 English-speaking Church Members

## **Opening Prayer**

God of Love, you gave us this beautiful church. And you gave us wonderful leaders. We all together co-create our church anew. Please guide us in your love and grace! In Jesus' name. Amen!

## **1. Leaders in the Bible**

Every group needs leaders, not just one but many. In Exodus, we read that Moses was not able to lead or judge all things by himself. If Moses had been the only leader, he would have had to work every day, probably 24/7. Following his father-in-law's advice, Moses chose officers to place over thousands, hundreds, fifties, and tens of people. In early church history, twelve apostles were leaders of the church. Twelve were not enough to take care of the faith community, as the population of the church was increasing. They needed more leaders, so the church selected seven, full of faith and the Holy Spirit, the first seven so-called deacons. In other words, according to the needs of the church and in order to be more effective, the faith community needs more leaders.

## 2. Leaders in our Church

How about in the 2019 Gilroy United Methodist Church? Based on the guidelines of the Book of Discipline, our church has many leaders, according to our own context. First of all, our church has an **Administrative Team**: Lay Leader, Lay Member to Annual Conference, and Recording Secretary. Lay Leader Valerie Kelly serves as the primary representative of our church. Lay Member to Annual Conference, BC Doyle, serves as the bridge between our church and the California-Nevada Annual Conference. Pat Freitas and Debbie Waller serve as alternative Lay Members to Annual Conference. Recording Secretary Kat Teraji records minutes for meetings.

Look at the church facility. Without Trustees, this beautiful church building cannot exist. In this year, 2019, we have **7 Trustees**: Steve Teraji, Cheryl McElroy, Lisa Ready, Bill Bartunek, John Warner, Howard Hall, and Shannon Kelly. Steve serves as Trustee Chair this year, and Cheryl, as Trustee Secretary, and Lisa, as Trustee Treasurer.

Sometimes it is hard to see, but our church has a wonderful **Finance Team**. To me, like the blood, the finance team flows and supports the whole body of the church. Our Core Finance Team is the following: Rosse Hemeon serves as Finance

Chair, Lisa Ready, as Treasurer, Loraine Fiori as Financial Secretary, and Darroll Newton as Financial Consultant.

Our Worship is planned not only by me, but also by the **Worship Team**. Pat Johns serves as Worship Team Chair. Janet Londgren, Steve Teraji, Lisa Ready, and Kat Teraji serve as the Worship Team.

Do you remember the Backpack Project or Christmas Project? Kat Teraji serves as our awesome **Outreach Team** leader, and Valerie Kelly and Howard Hall also serves as our outreach team.

Our church has the same leaders in **SPRC and Nominations and Leadership Team**. The Staff Parish Relations Committee identifies and clarifies the mission of our church, while supporting and guiding the staff, including me. Carolynn Warner serves as SPRC Chair, and Debbie Waller, Pat Johns, Valerie Kelly, and BC Doyle serve as our SPRC team. The Pastor is the chair of the Nominations and Leadership Team.

### **3. Servant Leaders**

As a pastor, I am so blessed to have these wonderful leaders. I am not alone. You are not alone. There are many different understandings about servant leadership, but I would like to share my interpretation. What is the best response to “I Love You!”? Is it “Yes, You Love me”? “I Love You, too” or “I love you more!” can be

the best ones. Love is not one-way, but two-way. What I mean is that it's a mutual relationship. Likewise, leadership is also a mutual relationship. There is a leader and followers. Without followers, there is no leader. Without leaders, there are no followers. So, I would like to hear this from leaders to followers: "I am your servant!" And I would like to hear this from followers to leaders: "You are our leaders!" What if followers say to leaders "you are our servants!" And leaders say to the church members "I am your leader!"? Can you see the different dynamics? I know that our leaders already have the spirit of Servant Leadership, but I would like to show it off. Let us try this. I will explain first. Leaders, if you are available, can you stand up and say to church members "I am your servant"? Church members, without followers, the leaders are nothing. We need you. Church members, can you respond with "No, You are our leaders!"? And then, leaders say, "No, I am your servant." Are you ready? Ready, Set, Go!

"I am your servant." "No, you are our leaders." "No, we are your servants."

### **Closing Prayer**

God of Hope, thank you so much for sending us your servant leaders and our awesome followers! In your love, with our leaders and followers, our church is here, and we will look forward with faith and grow together! Please keep pouring out your love and grace upon our church! In Jesus' name. Amen!