

“First Watch” Touch Points for Evangel’s Prayer Vigil team

For the week of January 22, 2017

Mustard Seeds and Mountains (Matthew 17:19-20)

As Evangel faces change in 2017, we recognize how important prayer has been—and will continue to be—as we participate in the unfolding of God’s plan. For our Touch Points in 2017, we return to “The One Year Book of Praying Through the Bible” by Cheri Fuller (Tyndale, 2003), which was first used in 2013-14.

READ: The disciples asked Jesus privately, “Why couldn’t we cast out that [boy’s] demon?” “You didn’t have enough faith,” Jesus told them. “I assure you, even if you had faith as small as a mustard seed you could say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there,’ and it would move. Nothing would be impossible.” *Matthew 17:19-20*

REFLECT: Did you know that an average-size aspirin bottle holds more than 180,000 mustard seeds? One of those miniscule seeds, when planted in fertile soil, can produce a ten-foot bush within three months! How many times have we faced mountains and felt that our faith was small and insufficient? We might have asked ourselves how God could remove a mountain in light of the fact that our faith is so inadequate. Perhaps we’ve even considered surrendering to the circumstances that stand in our way.

When the disciples felt the sting of failure over their inability to heal the boy in today’s reading, Jesus directed them to place their faith—no matter how small—in him rather than in their own abilities.

The mustard seed is a reminder to walk to the base of the mountain hand in hand with the all-powerful God. It is a tangible symbol that it is not your strength that will move the mountain; rather, it is God in whom you place your faith that can move a mountain out of your way.

PRAY: *God, the mountain of my circumstances seems so large, yet when I look to you as the source of my strength, it becomes insignificant. My faith seems small, yet when I place it in the Creator’s hands, it can produce a greater harvest than I could ever imagine. Lord, take my tiny seed of faith and multiply it with your strength, wisdom, and guidance. Thank you for assuring my heart that nothing is impossible with you.*

QUOTE: Faith is to prayer what the feather is to the arrow. Without faith it will not hit the mark.
J. C. Ryle

ADDITIONAL PRAYER PROMPTS

- Use the Pause to Pray as a guide to focus on other concerns through the week. Copies can be found in the lobby and in the Archive section on the website (evbapt.org/archive).
- Reflect on this week’s worship service—the music, Scripture, Pastor Dave’s message* “Red and Yellow, Black and White . . .” (Acts 17:26)—that all will help as you go through this week; for your own walk with Christ, and that you may be a blessing and witness to people you have contact with during the week.
- Continue to pray for opportunities to invite people to our services and to become engaged in spiritual discovery with the people of Evangel in other ways as well. Ask the Lord to open doors of conversation, connection and compassion with others to enable that engagement this week.
- Pray that God will bless our succession planning efforts, particularly following news last week that one church dropped out of sale negotiations and we are turning to a second church that made an offer. The Succession Planning Group meets Tuesday evening, with an Open Forum scheduled at 11:15am next Sunday.

* a podcast and other materials from the service will be posted on the website by Monday.

Touch Points is e-mailed every Friday, posted on the website (evbapt.org), with printed copies available in the lobby. To be included in the weekly e-mail, use the Contact Us form on the website and request “add me to the Prayer Vigil list.”