

“First Watch” Touch Points for Evangel’s Prayer Vigil team
For the week of February 19, 2017

Seed Sowers (Mark 4:14)

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. Our Touch Points reflections come from “The One Year Book of Praying Through the Bible” by Cheri Fuller (Tyndale, 2003).. Today’s reflection is especially appropriate as we have an Open Forum regarding our succession planning.

READ: The farmer I talked about is the one who brings God’s message to others. *Mark 4:14*

REFLECT: In West Africa people customarily sing as they work the fields. They lift their voices as they plant in anticipation of the harvest. Perhaps this is how the farmer in the parable appeared as he walked through the field. As he tossed seed, it fell in various types of soil—some hard, some weedy, some shallow, and some good and fertile. Not once did Jesus describe the farmer as anxious; rather, he portrayed the sower as faithfully carrying out his job.

Sometimes we treat evangelism as a heavy burden. Instead of cheerfully scattering seed everywhere, we become soil testers, trying to determine whether or not the seed will flourish even *before* we plant. We hover over the tender shoots, trying to thwart weeds. When a seed doesn’t produce the desired fruit, we may declare ourselves failures as farmers. But God has called us to plant the message of the gospel in whatever field he places us. It is the Lord of the harvest who nourishes the tiny seeds and causes them to grow. You may never see the bushels of souls that result from seeds you planted, but you can sing as you sow and anticipate a harvest of thirty, sixty, and even a hundredfold.

PRAY: *I can scatter seeds in my job, my neighborhood, my family, and plant seeds of hope in people I encounter every day. Help me to sing as I plant and be confident that many of those seeds will take root in soil that will someday produce a harvest.*

QUOTE: Plant a word of love heart-deep in a person’s life, nurture it with a smile and a prayer, and watch what happens. *Max Lucado*

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* “Days of Elijah—Top to Bottom” (1 Kings 19:1-7)—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. The Negotiating Team will meet Friday (Feb. 24) with the leadership of the local church whose offer for purchase we are currently considering. This is the second meeting and the leadership of both churches is encouraged by the progress so far.

* 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.”