

*This Week In Worship*

**Acts 10:9-16**

Peter was a rule-follower, one who perhaps was more interested in the letter of the law rather than the spirit of the law. So when he has this vision of God seemingly dismantling centuries of particular food laws it proved to be a radical departure from everything Peter had known. Up to this point in the Book of Acts, the focus of the church's mission was still a little insular regarding spreading the Good News. But this vision demonstrated for Peter and for the church at large that God's welcome is wide and that we, too, must ask ourselves in what spaces and in what places do we need to reach out to. By helping Peter see how to expand his understanding of true table fellowship, shifting certain barriers and to further embracing what Christ's resurrection meant for all people, we can begin to better understand that sometimes our own 'rule-following' must be examined so that we can be more effective proclaimers of the Gospel. Though today we don't think much about the significance of food laws, this little vignette was an important recognition of God's adherence to the spirit of things and God's focused attention on ensuring that all would know of God's love through Christ. Join us Sunday @ 10:00 AM as we finish our sermon series 'After Easter: Living Life in the Now.'

Peace,

Pastor Jeff

*A Note from Sabrina:*



**Bible Explorers**

**Bible Explorers,  
Sunday, May 2,  
4:00-5:00 pm, Lower-level, Outside**

Upper elementary (3rd, 4th, & 5th grade) students, Bible Explorers is for YOU! Wear a mask, bring your Bible, and join your friends.

This Sunday, join us for our last gathering of the 2020-2021 season.

Participants should stay home if they are feeling sick or answer "yes" to any of the Covid-19 Check-in Questions on the next page.\*\*

We'll be outside, on the lower-level patio for fun games & pizza.

## This Week at De Soto UMC

<b>SUN</b>	May 2	10:00am	Worship
		4:00pm	Bible Explorers
Mon	May 3	10:00am	30 Minute Bible Study Zoom Luke
Tue	May 4	6:00pm	D.A.R.
Wed	May 5	10:00am	Coffee under the Canopy
		12:00pm	Prayer and Devotion FB



### Items needed for the Hub Argentine community.

Through May 2 we are collecting 15 oz cans of vegetables or canned fruits for our neighbors at the Hub KC, a ministry of the UMC Kansas City District, housed in the former Metropolitan Ave Church in Kansas City, KS.



*Coffee in Courtyard has moved to...Coffee under the Canopy!*

*Join us Wednesday's @ 10:00am for conversation and coffee!*



### **\*\*Covid-19 Check-In Questions:**



- \* Have you been diagnosed with or tested positive for Covid-19 infection?
- \* Have you had any of the following symptoms in the past 14 days?
  - >fever or chills,
  - >sore throat,
  - >cough,
  - >headache,
  - >fatigue,
  - >diarrhea,
  - >new loss of taste or smell.
  - >shortness of breath or difficulty breathing,
  - >congestion or runny nose,
  - >muscle or body aches,
  - >nausea or vomiting,
- \* Have you had contact with any confirmed Covid-19 cases in the last 14 days?

Dear friends—

Over these past seven years serving as your Pastor we have offered prayers for many people in a variety of circumstances. It is a blessing to lift up our joys and concerns of the community, knowing that we are ready to share in this journey of faith together. At times I have also prayed for circumstances that have affected us nationally, including for victims of mass shootings and gun violence. Those events weigh heavy on my heart as they do yours.

These prayers have led me to discern that as a congregation I believe we need to widen the conversation. This April and May I've been participating in a preaching class titled 'Preaching in the Purple Zone' (henceforth PPZ). The main focus has been how to engage your congregation in worship to providing authentic space to furthering difficult conversations that is reflective of our faith tradition. Too often we reduce difficult topics to Red/Blue, In/Out, Us/Them. With the PPZ method, the aim is not further the divide through heated rhetoric from the pulpit but rather to utilize a 'sermon-dialogue-sermon' approach.

With the issue of how to lessen gun violence I know we likely are not of one mind regarding the best path forward. The issue itself is far too complex. I recognize I come with a set of assumptions and biases regarding what the best approach is, but I also need to widen my own understanding through conversation with you. My task is not one of persuasion but rather for us to better discern how we as Christians are to really engage in this difficult conversation.

In Worship on May 9 I'll be preaching a sermon titled 'Conversation Starter.' I'll be using the arrest of Jesus as our source text. It'll be an exploration on how we understand notions of security, the use of force, protection, the protection of others, etc., within our own cultural framework. Following worship on May 16 you'll be welcome to participate in a dialogue to present your own understanding. This will be a time of healthy conversation where the main task will be for us to listen and be open to the differing viewpoints knowing we all are coming from a place of authenticity.

Then on May 23 (Pentecost Sunday) I'll offer a follow up sermon based on our conversation. The aim for this process will be for us as a congregation to feel comfortable engaging in difficult but necessary discussions that can help us grow in our faith as well as help us to confront issues that impact our communities. Again, I will be utilizing tools learned from PPZ to help us remain faithful to our calling as Christians even as we may have a variety of viewpoints. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to reach out.

Yours in Christ,

Pastor Jeff