

GOD USES EVERYTHING
Preschool 25th Anniversary Celebration
September 20, 2015 –Exodus 2: 11-15 & Exodus 3: 1-11
The Church of the Covenant

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By the way, Moses is out on a hill tending the sheep of his father-in-law Jethro. Quite a come-down for a prince of Egypt. Sheep are stinky and ornery. They need constant attention. They can get into trouble easily and are prone to wandering off and getting themselves hurt. I am sure Moses hated every moment of being there out in the wilderness, in a place he never wanted to be, a simple shepherd instead of an exalted Prince. And yet, when you think about it, what perfect training for taking the Israelites through the wilderness. What perfect training for a PASTOR and leader of sheep. The slaves of Egypt would have died in the wilderness but for Moses' survival training on Jethro's mountain tending sheep. He was to guide these difficult sheep through the wilderness and poised them to enter the Promised Land, perfectly trained by God on Jethro's mountain. Why did he hate being out in the wilderness so? Why did he think it beneath this Prince of Egypt? See, God uses everything, everything, everything. Sometimes we do not know why we are in a particular place, but God does. "Sammy, God brought you to the New Testament Mission in LaCroix to teach you the things of your future ministry and to place before you all these children, these sheep, who need a shepherd they can emulate and look up to." All of your experiences, good and bad, God will use. All of the things you have done and all the things you are, good and bad, God will use. God's grace and mercy covers them all and HE has called you in love to serve HIM.

Back to the Preschool and back to the preschool teachers. I am sure that there are many frustrating days here in the preschool; many days where you think you are not necessarily making a difference; days when your energy is low and your patience is thin and the rest of your life is complicated and hard and the burdens of life seem heavy and the problems of life seem insurmountable. Please remember that GOD USES EVERYTHING. And the essence of what you are teaching these little ones, these little lambs of God, is that God loves them, God loves all of them, the good parts and the bad, the things they think are OK and the things they think are the "rap music" of their lives. Imagine, 25 years of planting the seeds of God's love into the hearts of little children. Imagine, all those seeds taking root. A child, who is now an adult, who remembers somewhere back in the dark recesses of their mind and heart, that they are loved by a presence that will never leave them nor forsake them, and on their worst, no good, terrible bad day, they pull that memory that they learned one day in preschool, that they learned from you, and they are OK, because they remember how God uses everything for good, that a loving God loves them, and that is enough to get them through whatever life threw at them that day. Imagine that, please. And celebrate 25 years of planting those seeds into the hearts of countless children, who are now adults. Can there be a higher, nobler calling than this?

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*By: The Reverend Dr. Stuart D. Broberg, The Church of the Covenant, Washington, PA
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GOD USES EVERYTHING
Preschool 25th Anniversary Celebration
September 20, 2015 –Exodus 2: 11-15 & Exodus 3: 1-11
The Church of the Covenant

God uses everything. Like a good preschool teacher, God uses everything. I watch your bulletin boards over the years; they are creative and engaging and wonderful, and I also notice that you recycle letters, and cut outs and images. Because like God, you use everything in order to teach little children they are loved and they are loved by a loving God. Today we are celebrating the planting of those seeds of God's love into the hearts of children and for 25 years.

I have shared previously about a young man, Sammy, who I met in Haiti through the New Testament Mission, the ministry of Pastor Pierre in LaCroix, Haiti. In prayer before I left I felt I would meet a young person who would be struggling with a call into ministry and when there I felt that the young man was Sammy. So we're riding up the bumpy road to the small village of Paul, two hours one way and two hours the other way, and I have my opportunity to engage Sammy in a discussion about ministry, the call of God, and the way God works in our lives. As we are bumping along (and I will never complain about potholes in Western PA ever again; I would have rejoiced to be riding over a road with potholes and not landslides, boulders and deep gullies crossing over open river beds) and it popped into my mind to share with Sammy the story of Moses' call as a leader of God's people the scripture we just read today from Exodus. There is a burning bush and a voice calling Moses by name; the call of God is always personal because it comes from a personal, alive God into real live people's hearts, personally. God knows our name and we are precious and beloved in His sight. Moses responds: *"Here am I"* (Exodus 3: 4) –Here I am, Lord. I am here for You; I am available to You; You may use me as YOU wish, Lord. When God calls, our answer is Yes; yes, Lord, I am here and available. Now the funny thing about this is that these are the very verses from the Bible that Sammy has read and are the very verses propelling him into a sense of call into ministry. I know nothing about this in advance but I have randomly picked out of the air the Bible verses that God popped into my head. They are the very ones that Sammy has read and from which he has discerned a sense of call. Amazing. I don't believe in coincidence anymore; I believe in "God incidence"; I don't believe in a random universe; I believe in a loving, purposeful God.

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