

Sunday, Oct. 8, 2017

Series: Legos: Building a Unique Life with God

Series Bible Verse: 1 Peter 2:5 "You also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ."

Prep: Give each person a snack baggie with four candy Lego pieces in it.

Message: The Creative Creator Created You to Create Creatively!

Scripture: Exodus 35:29-35

Text: Proverbs 22:29 "Do you see a man skilled in his work? He will serve before kings; he will not serve before obscure men." (NIV)

Memory Verse: Ephesians 2:10 "For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do." (NIV)

Blurb: Creativity is spiritual. God has placed gifts, callings, wisdom, dreams, and passions within you. You do not have these things by accident, but it is the Creator showing up in your life. This Sunday we connect with our creative sides! Come hear your calling to be God's creative agent in our world!

Gathering Song: *That's Why We Praise Him* - Sanctify

Welcome: -David

- Good morning! I'm David, the pastor here, and
- Welcome to Forest Hills, where together we Love. Grow. and Serve. Jesus.
- First time guests invited to the welcome center
- Kids will stay in worship
 - The whole service will be worship for all ages
 - Kids bags, and kids table in the back.
- Insert: Church at home: use it this sometime this week.

PP: Memory Verse: "For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do." (NIV) Ephesians 2:10

On your way to worship today, did you notice the beautiful leaf colors? Isn't it amazing how God created this world so that in even the changing of seasons, when the leaves fall off the trees, that it erupts in amazing beauty?

- Our God is a creative God, who loves beauty!
- God created you beautiful. God thinks you're beautiful! Did you hear that, church?
- And God created in you a beautiful creativity!
- This morning, as we encounter God, I hope you hear God's affirmation of your creativity!
- This week, our Takeaway Verse reminds us of this. Let's say it together.
"For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do." (NIV) Ephesians 2:10

-This morning, I want to introduce you to **Cassi Betker**. Cassi, please come up here. You know her as our Director of Communication, and on the Lobby Design Team, and more recently as Director of Youth.

-But did you know that Cassi has other creative abilities, too? Most Sundays you'll find her as an artist decorating pages in her Bible. She's taught creative Bible journaling! Today I've asked her to take our memory verse, and do some creative artistic work with it. Welcome, Cassi! I'm excited at what you will be designing today! We'll have you get started, and check in with you later.

Worship Music Set: -Sanctify

Andrew intro.

This Is My Father's World

Good, Good Father

Sitting at the Feet of Jesus

Worship prayer - Andrew

Making Connections:

Bill the Builder - Seeing possibility in piles of leftovers.

Prayer: Prayers for the Las Vegas shootings.

As you know, the shootings in Las Vegas last Sunday rocked our world. As people of faith, we have hope. Today, we're going to stand on that hope, and pray together. We're going to do that a bit creatively. You'll need your pipe cleaners for our prayer time.

Step 1: [Acknowledge the reality of evil in the world.]

We begin by naming the evil in the shooting, and acknowledging the reality of evil in our world.

Flower: Everyone has two pipe cleaners, a green one and another color. Hold them.

Prayer: Let's pray. "Lord, we come to you acknowledging that there is great evil in our world. Evil is all around us, and it breaks out in so many ways. Sometimes it is when people do terrible things. We've seen that again this past week with the shooting in Las Vegas. Lord, we are horrified and sickened. We come to you in response."

Step 2: We also mourn with those who mourn.

Flower: Take a pencil from the pew, and coil your non-green pipe cleaner around it.

Prayer: As you do that, we take a moment of silence, in honor of the victims. As you wrap the pipe cleaner around the pencil, grieve in your heart at the pain and loss experienced by those who lost loved ones. We pray in silence.

Step 3: Next we pray for victims.

Flower: Remove. Take two ends and twist them with an end of the green pipe cleaner.

Prayer: Let's pray. "Lord, we lift up the victims of the shooting in Las Vegas this past week. 59 people's lives have been cut short. So much life wasted. We don't know how to make sense of it. We come to you. Hundreds more wounded and suffering. Lives dramatically changed. So much pain, physical and emotional. Lord, we lift those who grieve and those who suffer. We turn to you!"

Step 4: As people of faith, we proclaim God's victory over evil.

Flower: Make two leaves with green pipe cleaner, using twisting motion for each.

Prayer: Hear these words of the promise of God's victory over evil. Evil may be present now, but God is fighting against it, and some day, all evil will be defeated.

John 12:31, Jesus said, “Now judgment is upon this world; the ruler of this world will be cast out.”

Romans 16:20, “The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus be with you.”

Revelation 17:14 “Evil will wage war against the Lamb, [but one day] the Lamb will overcome them, because He is Lord of lords and King of kings, and those who are with Him are the called and chosen and faithful.”

Step 5: [Commit to live a different way, by a different reality, that God intends.]

Flower: [Exchange your flower with someone near to you!]

Prayer: Lastly, we, as followers of Jesus, we respond by living by a different reality than evil and hate and death. We commit to live a different way, God’s way, bringing hope, joy, and peace. We live by sharing love and life. So, I invite you now to exchange your flower with someone next to you, and as you do, bless them with a blessing from God. Say, “May the Lord give you life abundant!”
Amen!

Offering: *Living Stones* -Sanctify

Another way that we share life and love in our community is by the work we do together as a church. We love together. We grow together. We serve together. We’re going to collect our offering of monies, and the amazing thing is that our God will transform these monies into blessings. God turns them into words of love that conquers hate, into acts of hope that drives out fear, into gifts of community that brings new life. Give, as you are led.

[Ushers collect the offering as Sanctify sings.]

Message Bumper

PP#1/1: Legos: Building a Unique Life with God

The Creative Creator Created You to Create Creatively!

“Do you see a man skilled in his work? He will serve before kings; he will not serve before obscure men.” (NIV) -Proverbs 22:29

Legos: Building a Unique Life with God. The Creative Creator Created You to Create Creatively! Proverbs 22:29 “Do you see a man skilled in his work? He will serve before kings; he will not serve before obscure men.”

One of the amazing things about Legos is the endless possibilities you can do with them. As the company’s tagline says, “The only limit is your imagination!” But think about it. Legos are simply plastic bricks. That’s all they are: just bricks. The secret ingredient is the creativity you bring to them! Let’s take a look at some of the creative ideas people have made with Legos.

PP#1/2-4: 3 slides of images from Google images “creative designs with Legos” The first two slides made up of images such as: rack for hanging keys, tennis shoes, sushi roll platter, gift box, cake, soap dispenser, etc. Third slide is just the giant light bulb made from Legos.

[View the slides, naming what each of the creative creation is. End with giant lightbulb.]
What creative ideas!

I want to invite the ushers to come and pass around baskets. Everyone gets a baggie.

[Ushers pass around baskets with baggies of Lego candies.]

Some candy makers were very creative! They created candy Lego bricks. They are different sizes and colors, and different flavors! I know you want to try *that* out. But hold off on eating them...at least for now. Right now, take out your four pieces and play with them. Stack them. Have some fun. You each have four candies. This message has four points. We'll eat them as we go, one by one!

We've been using Legos to point out biblical truths that we as Jesus-followers live by. God is building a unique life with each of us. We build our lives with God. The Creator created you to create! We first learned about following God's plan for building our lives. God has a blueprint for each of us. We next learned about the foundation of our lives, how we build our lives on Jesus. Then we learned about how God is building us over time, and we have to persevere. We United Methodists talk about this as sanctification, the process by how God is making us holy. Last week we talked about how the Creator Created us to Connect. We are made to connect with God, and with others. We build a life of relationships and connections.

Today, we discover that in the Bible, God put His creativity in us!

OK, let's eat one of our candy pieces. Choose one and give it a try!

PP#1/5: The Creative Creator created you to create creatively!

1. God made you creative!

God is a very creative God. God is a God of beauty. You can see God in our world, whenever you see beauty, like in the changing of the leaves, like in a beautiful sunset—there is no scientific purpose for sunsets to be so beautiful!, like in the giggle of a little baby. As we face the ugliness in our world so often, we cling to a God who loves beauty, and who can create good out of anything, even bad. We proclaim hope, when we Jesus-followers declare that our God is creative!

And this creativity God made into us. You are a creature of beauty, and God thinks you're beautiful. He likes what He sees when He looks at you! He doesn't see all that you've done wrong. He sees the beautiful creation He made, and is making with you. And He's excited!

And God created that creativity into you when He created you! The Creative Creator created you to create creatively! Wow, that's a mouthful! But hang on to that! Don't let that one go! This is key to your identity! God made us in His own image, and part of that image is His creativity. You are made in God's image! You are creative! And God thinks that what you create is beautiful!

We need to go back to the Lego movie one more time. The main character, Emmet, starts off thinking he's just an ordinary person, who just follows the rules. But then, he's told that he is a "master builder." Although he doesn't know it yet, he's told he has fantastic ideas and the ability to create amazing things, like all the other famous people, like the superheroes, and William Shakespeare, and Abraham Lincoln, and Shaquille O'Neal, and Michelangelo, and a bunch of ordinary-looking people like firefighters and street vendors.

At first, he doesn't believe it. But they press him...haven't you ever envisioned something new and different? Finally, he admits he has one, secret, creative idea. The movie switches to a dream-like world when Emmet tells his idea to his two companions. Have a look:

Video Clip: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G9UZv-egULY> (28 seconds)

Emmet introduces the double decker couch

That's his best idea? Wow, what a dumb idea. His creativity doesn't seem to have any of the amazing qualities of other master builders. Can he really be a master builder? Does he have those skills and gifts? It doesn't look like it!

We are like Emmet. We wonder about our creativity. Some people seem to have so much of it, like Cassi here. How's it going, Cassi? Wow, that's starting to look really amazing! You are doing all that just out of your head? Me...I would need to paint by number!

PP#2/1: The Creative Creator created you to create creatively!

1. God made you creative!
2. Being creative is spiritual!

But we aren't all creative in the same way. God's creativity is so big and amazing, it takes all of us, together, each in our own way, to begin to show it. Some are creative in art. Some in music. Others create unique candy. Others are creative in getting a truck to get better gas mileage. Others get numbers represented in a graph that really pops. Others create healing and compassion. Others see possibilities in piles of leftover paint cans. All these are part of God's creativity. You are creative!

Eat a second piece of candy. As you taste its sweet flavor, I want you to embrace your creativity, and to affirm that being creative is a spiritual thing! When you are creative, God's creativity comes out...it's a kind of worship, a way that you bring honor and blessing to God! This is why when you use your creativity at work, you are being a faithful Christian! How you work, how you play, however you are creative, it's a spiritual act.

PP#2/2-3 Exodus 35:29-35 (CEB)

29 All the Israelite men and women who were eager to contribute something for the work that the Lord had commanded Moses to do brought it as a spontaneous gift to the Lord.

30 Then Moses said to the Israelites: "Look, the Lord has chosen Bezalel, Uri's son and Hur's grandson from the tribe of Judah. 31 The Lord has filled him with the divine spirit that will give him skill, ability, and knowledge for every kind of work. 32 He will be able to create designs, do metalwork in gold, silver, and copper, 33 cut stones for setting, carve wood, do every kind of creative work, 34 and have the ability to teach others. Both he and Oholiab, Ahisamach's son from the tribe of Dan, 35 have been given the skill to do every kind of work done by a gem cutter or a designer or a needleworker in blue, purple, and deep red yarns and in fine linen or a weaver or anyone else doing work or creating designs.

Let's take a look at our Bible passage today. Pastor Peter Milloy pointed out the significance of this passage this past summer. He helped me see it in a new way: it's an example of this Biblical truth of creativity. It's about the time when the Israelite people have escaped from Egypt and are in the desert. God gives them the laws and rules to live by, and God also tells them to build a worship center. And in the middle of all the construction, Moses names two workers that God had chosen for their creative work. Let's read it.

Exodus 35:29-35 "All the Israelite men and women who were eager to contribute something for the work that the Lord had commanded Moses to do brought it as a spontaneous gift to the Lord."

Stop there for a minute. Do you see how every person had something to contribute to the project? Each person was involved. Each had gifts and offerings to bring. *Each of us* has gifts to share! Let's keep reading.

Verse 30, “Then Moses said to the Israelites: “Look, the Lord has chosen Bezalel, Uri’s son and Hur’s grandson from the tribe of Judah. The Lord has filled him with the divine spirit that will give him skill, ability, and knowledge for every kind of work. He will be able to create designs, do metalwork in gold, silver, and copper, cut stones for setting, carve wood, do every kind of creative work, and have the ability to teach others. Both he and Oholiab, Ahisamach’s son from the tribe of Dan, have been given the skill to do every kind of work done by a gem cutter or a designer or a needleworker in blue, purple, and deep red yarns and in fine linen or a weaver or anyone else doing work or creating designs.”

Isn’t it interesting that right in the middle of the grand story of the Exodus, the Bible names two unknown people as leaders of creativity? They’re not prophets, or priests, or miracle workers. But they are named in the Bible as people God has called. It says that God put that creativity within them. They trained their skills, for sure, but that creativity in doing behind-the-scenes stuff is a gift from God. Designers, architects, draftsmen, metalwork, stone cutters, word carvers, carpenters, gem cutters, jewelry makers, needle workers, weavers. All these are God-ordained-creative people using their normal creativity for God’s glory! Notice how it says that God gave them the ability to teach others these crafts. Teaching is creativity! And all the people not named—thousands—used their creativity on God’s plan.

PP#2/4: The Creative Creator created you to create creatively!

1. God made you creative!
2. Being creative is spiritual!
3. Identify your creative abilities.

This obscure and overlooked passage tells of the creativity that God put into ordinary people, like you and me, to do what we do, as a gift from God, and for God’s glory. Time to eat another piece of candy!

You have God-given creativity. Take out your bulletin insert, the colored paper. In the note section, I want you to write down at least three ways that you are creative. Identify, name, and write down at least three ways that you have skills that God uses. Think about how you like to fill your time, to play during free time. Think about how you solve a problem. What do you do? Think about what other people say you’re good at. How do you create? Get in touch with your creative side. Be a bit right-brained for a bit. Write down at least three ways you make new things, and make things new.

We need to check back in with Emmet, our hero in *The Lego Movie*. Remember his dumb idea? Well, he and his friends suddenly are discovered, and just before they are captured, they each scramble and make something to help them escape. They are each master builders, remember, and they each create. It’s intense: the goons are closing in. Quick, make something..anything! In the pressure, guess what Emmet created. You guess it.

Video Clip: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uJlsA0y6DrY> (3:17 min.)

Lego Movie: Emmet Creates Double Decker Couch

Emmet’s dumb idea ended up being just the thing that saved them. Emmet begins to realize that maybe his ideas aren’t so dumb after all. Maybe he can embrace his creativity, and use it to make a difference.

PP#3/1: The Creative Creator created you to create creatively!

1. God made you creative!
2. Being creative is spiritual!
3. Identify your creative abilities.
4. Stop being the missing piece!

Our text is Proverbs 22:29. “Do you see a person skilled in his work? He will serve before kings; he will not serve before obscure men.” It’s saying that when you use your skills in your daily life, God will use it in amazing ways. God will lift it up and make something amazing out of it.

God has placed gifts, callings, wisdom, dreams, and passions within you. You do not have these things by accident. It is the Creator showing up in your life. The key is that you need to be willing to build with God. You need to use your creativity!

Time to eat the last piece of candy!

God has plans underway in the world around you, plans that include you. What you bring, your creating, your creativity, is needed. Are you ready to create? Are you willing to create? Are you willing to do it even when others call your ideas stupid? It can end up being exactly what’s needed, even if you don’t know it. My mail delivery friend in Duluth told me of a day when he was so depressed about his daughter that he could hardly carry on his work. Then, he opened a mail box, and in it was a little plate with three cupcakes. The note from the homeowner said, “Thanks for what you do. I hope this brightens your day.” He said that was the best cupcakes he ever ate—he ate all three! It changed his world, put a spring back in his step, and the homeowner never knew how timely it was. Baking cupcakes for random people is being creative!

So, are you ready to create? Are you willing to create? On your note sheet, write down one thing you will do this week to use each of your creativities to as a blessings. One thing you will do, for each one you listed. Write it down.

God is making something amazing. And you are the missing piece! Without you it is incomplete. You are needed.

In the movie, Emmet, and everyone else, finally discovers that the missing piece is not an actual piece. It’s he. He was the missing piece, because he didn’t believe he could be creative. And when he finally did, things changed.

“All the men and women who were eager to contribute something for the work that the Lord had commanded brought it as a spontaneous gift to the Lord.” (Exodus 13:29)

“For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.” Ephesians 2:10.

Amen.

Closing Song: *Those Who Trust* - Sanctify

Memory verse: “For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.” -Ephesians 2:10

Check in with artist: Let’s see how it looks. Way to be creative!

Benediction