

March 31, 2022

Cleaning Out the Closet

[Colossians 3:12-17](#)

“Put on, then, garments that suit God’s chosen and beloved people: compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, patience. Be tolerant with one another and forgiving, if any of you has cause for complaint: you must forgive as the Lord forgave you. Finally, to bind everything together and complete the whole, there must be love. Let Christ’s peace be arbiter in your decisions, the peace to which you were called as members of a single body.” -Colossians 3:12-15

There is a lifecycle of wardrobe rejuvenation that goes on in my house every year, especially during the wintertime. When I’m confronted with extra time cooped up inside and am forced to face the consequences of my expanding waistline, I find myself examining my closet with a more critical eye.

Will I ever *really* fit into those pants again? Does this shirt really match anything else I have? Have I *ever even considered* wearing this tie of questionable taste that I was gifted ten years ago? So into bags things go – the too small, the out-of-fashion, the never-worn – to make their way to the local thrift shop for donation.

At the same time, I’m also forced to think about those things I *could* donate, but if I’m being honest really can’t be of use to anyone else anymore - the jeans with holes in both knees, the jacket with the broken zipper, the comfy but paint-spattered T-shirt I’ve kept since high school – I’m sure you have similar things you can cite. Sometimes the wintertime wardrobe cleanse involves knowing when it’s time to “put off” certain garments and for things to go away for good.

Colossians asks us to clothe ourselves in garments of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience.

That means knowing the difference between the characteristics we reflect in the world – the useful garments we know can be helpful and useful to someone else were we to donate them to a thrift store – and the ones which really can’t serve anyone much anymore.

The Lenten season asks us to put on garments that make us better individuals, yes, but not just for our own sake. All those characteristics mentioned above are of most value when they are reflected from our lives into the lives of others. In this way, the love we show “binds everything together and complete(s) the whole.”

Prayer: *O Peacemaker and Peacebringer – remind us that this season of holiness misses the mark if it serves no one else but ourselves. As you have forgiven us, help us to forgive one another and to live a life clothed in garments that suit all of God’s chosen and beloved people. Amen.*

Brett Miller

First United Methodist Church, Clarksburg, WV

miller_bt@wwwc.edu

Director of Music and Conference Archivist