



THE JOYFUL NOISE

UMW Newsletter

DESERT SKIES UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

JUNE 2020

Oprah's Book Club

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On January 24th, my daughter-in-law, Kim called to say she had signed us up for a taping of Oprah's Book Club on February 13 and she had already purchased the book – "American Dirt" by Jeanine Cummins. I had not heard of this book, but was certainly interested in attending the taping. On Saturday, January 25th an article was published in the Arizona Daily Star written by a Washington Post Columnist criticizing "American Dirt" and quoting a review by several critics questioning its accuracy in portraying migrants.

On Monday, January 27th, I received an email confirming my reservation for the Oprah taping. The only requirements were that we must have read the book, have a picture ID, wear bright solid colors for the TV, no logo shirts, and NO CELL PHONES!

On Thursday, January 30th an article in the Arizona Daily Star reported that the publisher of "American Dirt" had cancelled the remainder of the author's promotional tour, citing concerns for her safety. This included her appearance at the Tucson Festival of Books. However, Oprah was still proceeding with her interview for Apple TV.

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Coping with COVID-19

Patrick McDonnell frequently puts out a call via his syndicated comic to adopt from your local shelters. During this time of COVID-19 and the high unemployment rate, many families are unable to feed their pets. The result has been that many pets are being abandoned, left to fend for themselves on the streets of Pima County. In our neighborhood, several dogs have been left tied to fences at Udall Park since COVID-19

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Oprah Winfrey in Tucson

Profile

My name is Margaret Reasey, and on a very cold, blustery day, I made my entrance into my home in south central Pennsylvania. My family consisted of my parents and my eighteen-month-old brother. A sister would join us twelve years later. My childhood was busy; my social life revolved around school and church. We also had a very large garden which always needed tending. Growing up in the country near a very small town was a joy. Everybody knew each other. None of my peers had much in the way of material possessions, but we were not aware of the absence. I loved school and decided in first grade that I wanted to become a teacher. The problem was no one in my family had gone to college, and being a girl, it was not something my parents saw as part of my future. I, however, had faith it would happen. God was a real presence in my life even as young as 8 years of age. I felt as if this was the path He wanted for me. With that in mind, I took college prep. when I entered high school. I worked hard and saved every penny I could in order to pay college tuition. Against my parents' wishes, I became a college student and went on to follow my dream. I will not say it was easy, but I often wonder what would have happened to me had I not stayed focused and completed my dream. Again, I always felt God's presence with me. My career spanned my entire adult life with the last twelve years being a school administrator.

I married very young and had two daughters, one of whom is deceased. My first mother-in-law was a United Methodist pastor's wife. I remember telling her that was a duty I could never perform. Moving ahead to 1982 and with foot placed securely in mouth, I became a United Methodist pastor's wife. I cannot say that I performed the duty well, but I certainly enjoyed the journey. That journey ended in 2003 when my husband died from pancreatic cancer.

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Margaret Reasey

So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand. **Isaiah 41:10**

Seeking Happiness

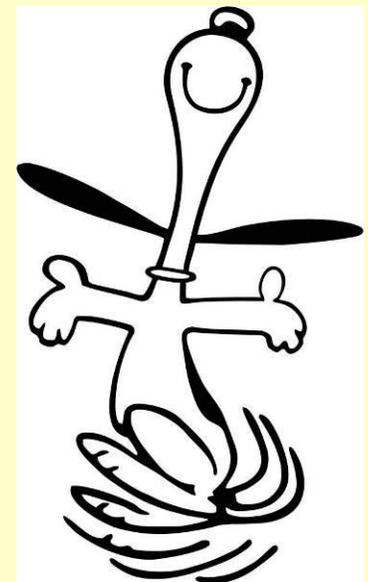
A recent Wired Word discussion centered on the topic of *happiness*. The jumping off point was Yale University's on line "Happiness Class" and a "happiness and leadership class" offered by Harvard Business School. The underlying belief is that happiness studies can motivate people to look for meaning and purpose in working for goals that are bigger than themselves, such as the common good.

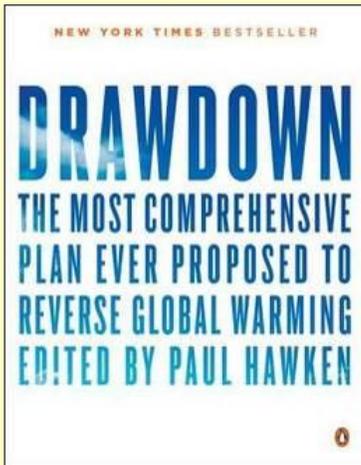
I find myself still contemplating both the subject and the reality of specific university classes on the topic. Where does one start on exploring *happiness*? With a dictionary definition of happiness? With a pursuit of Biblical passages regarding one's pursuit of happiness (and there are MANY)?

Or, as was suggested in our group discussion, introspection?

I find myself muddling around with introspection. The only time I recall wanting a "thing" to fulfill a happiness yen was when my first husband and I purchased a home in central Florida. It was two story, highly unusual in Florida at the time, had spacious bedrooms, large kitchen, and 2 huge oak trees in the front yard, and a large fenced backyard for our two children to enjoy. I loved that house.

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Drawdown Book Review

Some of our Desert Skies UMW members have been attending the book study, *Drawdown: The Most Comprehensive Plan Ever Proposed to Reverse Global Warming*, edited by Paul Hawken. This book study, co-facilitated by our own Brian Drummond MD and his spouse Barbara, was interrupted mid-way through its 6-week series, as were all church services and related activities, due to the Covid-19 pandemic. I have read the book and want to review its highly ranked solutions for reducing carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, as the many proven ideas over which we have control give us hope in times of uncertainty with this climate crisis.

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Coping with COVID-19 (cont.)

began. Did you know that you will pay a fee, which typically ranges from \$50 to \$75, to surrender your pet to PACC or the Humane Society? While I understand the need to finance the shelters' expenses, this fee is often a deterrent to surrendering a pet to a safe environment. I urge you to consider adopting or fostering a new "four-footed fur baby." We did our part! The newest Remaly is a 14-months-old, 60 lb. Labrador/Chow mix who was picked up as a stray by a Pima County Animal Control officer. In short, he was a mess when we first saw him - filthy dirty, matted coat, ribs showing. After a grooming, he is a gorgeous dog with a beautiful coat. Lucky us - he is housebroken, has a very sweet disposition and walks well on a leash. He needs obedience training which will start soon. If you have room in your heart and your home to provide a forever home or a temporary home for an unfortunate dog or cat, NOW is the time. Sent in by *Gail Remaly*

Oprah's Book Club (cont.)

We heard nothing more until 3:00PM Wednesday, February 12th when we received an email stating the event was to be held the next day, February 13th at the Harness Movie Theater off Contaro Road in Marana. Be there at 12:45, downsize your purses, and NO Cell Phones! I downsized my purse to my wallet (for photo ID), my eyeglasses, and Kleenex. We arrived in Marana at 12:30, stood in a long line and then were told - no purses allowed. I took our purses back to the car, keeping only my Driver's License, car keys, Kleenex - and the Book. After showing our photo ID we had to sign a nondisclosure waiver (which I couldn't read - not having my glasses) and then were ushered into the theater. After a long wait we were told to line up in groups of 40 and then 40 people at a time were led out of the theater. There were 200 plus people in attendance and our group was the very last one. When it was our turn, we were led out of the theater and across the street that was surrounded by sheriffs' cars with lights a blazing and sheriff deputies ushering us to the other side. Then we were met by a TALL gentleman in a black suit standing behind a barrel.

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UMW Event Calendar – 2020

June and July

Due to COVID-19, currently all church services, meetings, etc. have been cancelled. Because we don't know when they will resume, please look at other ways to physically distance yourselves without being socially distant.

Skype is free, Great for groups online - hold your meetings.

The telephone is still a great way to reach out and say I am thinking about you.

Letters and cards always bring a smile to the face of the recipient, and if you are running out of cards or stationery but have a computer, you can email your friends or relatives.

God loves us and will be with us through these difficult times. Once we can get together and enjoy great UMW food, we will.

Until then, pray for our world and reach out safely to say hi.

Prayer

A Prayer for Channeling God's Peace

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace.

Where there is hatred, let me show love,

Where there is injury, pardon

Where there is doubt, faith,

Where there is despair, hope,

Where there is darkness, light,

Where there is sadness, joy.

O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console

Not so much to be understood as to understand

Not so much to be loved, as to love;

For it is in giving that we receive,

It is in pardoning that we are pardoned,

It is in dying that we awake to eternal life.

~ St. Francis of Assisi



Drawdown Book Review (cont.)

The message of Pope Francis' Laudato Si to the Church is excerpted in this book. It is filled with compassion and direct in its analysis of the causes of global warming and its unjust, inequitable impact on the poor. He highlights climate change as a universal and moral issue, not just an environmental issue. He also maintains that many things must change course, but it is we human beings, above all, who need to change. The climate is a common good, belonging to all, a complex system linked to the essential needs and conditions of human life.

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Book Report

"American Dirt" by Jeanine Cummings is the story of Sebastian and Lydia, a middle-class Mexican family in Acapulco. He is a journalist/reporter, she owns a bookstore, and they have an eight-year-old son, Luca. Sebastian writes an expose on one of the powerful Cartels and is subsequently murdered.

The book chronicles the journey of Lydia and Luca trying to escape the long arm of the Cartel and get to the United States where Lydia has an uncle. It is a compelling page-turner – getting from Acapulco to Mexico City, trying to find a way North and suddenly realizing they are "migrants." It's the terrifying story of them hiding in sheds, leaping on trains, and trekking across the desert. There are locals who help them along the way, and always there is evidence of the Cartel at every juncture. It is also the stories of the other migrants they meet on this journey.

Reading this book will make you cry some and laugh some and hopefully will give you another insight into the plight of migrants and maybe cause you to be a little more tolerant. ~ Sylvia Flagg #1 New York Times Bestseller OPRAH'S BOOK CLUB PICK "Extraordinary."

God is our refuge and strength, A very present help in trouble. **Psalm 46:1**



Profile (cont.)



Hallelujah! It's a good thing to sing praise to our God; praise is beautiful, praise is fitting. God's the one who rebuilds Jerusalem, who regathers Israel's scattered exiles. He heals the heartbroken and bandages their wounds. He counts the stars and assigns each a name. Our Lord is great, with limitless strength; we'll never comprehend what he knows and does. God puts the fallen on their feet again and pushes the wicked into the ditch. **Psalms 147: 1-6**



Gluten Free Brownies

My surviving daughter is a retired Air Force veteran. She and her husband made their home here in Tucson. She kept asking me to move here. I was living alone, but was active in the church my husband had served. I had no family nearby. On one such phone call from Carol and her repeated request to move closer to her, I said, "yes." That was in August of 2012. She sells real estate, so I gave her a list of requirements I needed in a house. By October, I owned a home in Tucson. I bought the home based on her expertise and many photos. I have no regrets there. I moved in the beginning of December, 2012. Some of my Pennsylvania friends were worried I would miss my home state. I told them that when I missed the change of seasons, I would watch a Hallmark movie appropriate to the particular time. Enjoying vicariously is wonderful. I do not have to mow, rake or shovel anything!

I love it here—especially since I found a church which is full of wonderful people who love God as I do. I stay very busy with my hobbies—reading, cooking, painting miniature houses and needle crafts. My passion is Bible study. I also enjoy growing things. I have two spoiled felines who are wonderful company. Best of all though, is that I get to see my daughter and granddaughter almost every day. That alone is worth the move.

~ Margaret Reasey

Recipe

I have a delicious, moist, gluten free brownie recipe that I am sure everyone will enjoy. It is made with black beans. Yep! You read it correctly. Believe me, they are so good and healthy for you. The recipe is below:

15 oz can of black beans, rinsed and drained
 1/4 cup canola oil. I used Avocado oil
 1/2 cup sugar (or 1/4 cup sugar and 1/4 cup honey)
 1/2 cup unsweetened cocoa powder 3 large eggs
 1 teaspoon almond extract 1/2 teaspoon baking powder
 1 tablespoon cinnamon Cooking oil or spray

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Spray the insides of an 8" x 8" baking pan with cooking spray. Place the drained black beans and the oil in a food processor or blender. Process until smooth and creamy. Pour into a bowl, add eggs, sugar, cocoa powder, almond extract, cinnamon, and baking powder. Stir until well blended. Do not over beat. Pour into the prepared baking pan and bake 30 minutes. Cool before cutting.

Makes 16 squares.

Calories: 90, Total fat: 5 grams, Saturated fat: 1 gram, Trans-fat: 0, Cholesterol: 35mg, Sodium: 85mg, Carbohydrate: 11g, Fiber: 2g, Sugar: 7g, Protein: 2g.

Recipe is from the Wellness Team at Cleveland Clinic. Enjoy!

~ D. J. Gillies-Walling

Circles

Methodism founder John Wesley knew the key to social change is small-group gatherings. Circles are a basic unit of United Methodist Women all over the world. Desert Skies has two circles, Zippy 49'ers and Mary Martha. Currently our circles are practicing social distancing but are very much looking forward to gathering for fellowship.

Seeking Happiness (Cont.)

However, after just under three years in our new home, I experienced a call into ministry. Suddenly the house was just a house, and the for-sale sign went up as we loaded the U-Haul and headed to Nashville for Vanderbilt Divinity School.

Now, as a very retired United Methodist pastor, I continue to contemplate *happiness*.

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Every Child Should Have a River (cont.)

In Issue 2 of the "The Joyful Noise" we were learning about the rules of summer on the Susquehanna river with Molly Squire's family. Let's resume.

Another important rule was tied to the first chore of the day. Each morning, we were required to take a pair of oars from the garage down to one of the boats and unlock the boat from its chain. Should the need arise for a boat to be taken out on the river quickly, the oars would be in place, the boat unlocked and ready to go. This rule stemmed from the time Daddy was a teenager and two of his friends tipped out of their boat when they were in the middle of the river. While they called for help, he attempted to locate a boat to use. All were securely locked and the oars were on shore. When Daddy and the other men got out on the river, it was too late. Both girls drowned. He never forgot the hopeless feeling of diving and searching,

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May Day

I grew up in St. Joseph, Missouri with my parents, my retired grandpa (from Copenhagen, Denmark) and my two younger brothers. May 1st holds cherished memories for me. We had neighbors from all over, including Denmark and Sweden, so maybe that's why this tradition was so celebrated each May 1st.

We made May baskets in school, after school, church, etc. We would go out and gather wild flowers from the gardens to fill our little baskets. Then the routine was to take the baskets with flowers, hang a basket on a neighbor's door, ring the bell, ...then run!! If the neighbors came running out and caught you, they gave you a hug and kiss! As one would presume, the kids could run much faster than the elder neighbors!

May 1st also happened to be my "little brother's" birthday. Naturally, my family's response as to May Day and how special it was for us... well, it was a Special Day.

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In my trouble I called to the Lord; I called to my God for help. In his temple he heard my voice; he listened to my cry for help. **Psalms 18:6**



If you have any questions about UMW, its meetings and activities, please contact one of the UMW Board Members:

President: Marilyn McKee

Vice President: Glenda Burdick

Secretary: Mary Broughton

Treasurer: Marilyn McKee

Social Action: Jeanne Myers

Zippy 49ers Circle: Glenda

Burdick, Lorna Niven

Mary Martha Circle: Sandy Kleen,
Jeann Fishback

Drawdown Book Review (cont.)

He lastly appeals to our innate sense that we must regain this conviction: we have a shared responsibility for others and the world, and truly we need one another.

The top 10 climate solutions might surprise you:

1- Refrigerant Management Refrigerants CFCs & HCFCs depleted ozone; the replacement HFCs are widely used and have the capacity to warm atmosphere 1000-9000x greater than CO₂. There exist natural refrigerants on the market such as propane & ammonia, but they are not widely used in the US. Refrigerants do their greatest damage at the point of disposal but can be carefully removed, stored, and purified for reuse or transferred into other chemicals that do not cause warming.

2- Onshore Wind Turbines In the US, the wind energy potential of just 3 states - KS, ND & TX - would be sufficient to meet electricity demands from Coast to Coast, using no more than 1% of the land they sit on.

3- Reducing Food Waste Globally, 1/3 of food is thrown out before being eaten! Enough said.

4- Plant-rich Diet According to the World Health Org, only 10-15% of one's daily calories need come from protein; eating too much animal protein leads to heart disease, certain cancers, strokes. increased health care costs & morbidity. Reducing overconsumption of animal-based foods holds the greatest promise for ensuring a sustainable global food supply and the planet.

5- Tropical Forests Per the World Resources Institute, 30% of the world's forestland has been cleared completely, another 20% has been degraded. More than 4.9 billion acres worldwide offer opportunities for restoration, the majority in tropical regions. As forest ecosystems come back to life, trees, soil & leaf litter absorb and hold carbon, taking it out of our atmosphere.

6- Educating Girls The more education women have, the fewer, healthier children they have, impacting population growth. Educated girls realize higher wages, upward mobility, thereby contributing to economic growth of their countries; maternal mortality drops, there is far less likelihood of marrying as children or against their will; their families become better nourished, & their communities improve.

7- Family Planning To have access to contraception and have children by choice rather than chance, including the US where 45% of pregnancies are unintended, has ripple effects on drawing down greenhouse gas emissions. See #6 above.

8- Solar Farms The sun shines most every day, providing a virtually unlimited, clean, free fuel at a price that never changes. Photovoltaics have greatly declined in price, so it will soon become the least expensive energy in the world. It is already the fastest growing. No CO₂!

9- Silvopasture The integration of trees and pasture into a single system for raising livestock (cattle, sheep, deer, ducks) works as a sustainable, symbiotic system that sequesters carbon in the biomass aboveground and the soil below when pastures are crisscrossed with trees drawing down 5-10 X more carbon than grazeland pasture alone. Ruminants better digest silvopasture forage, emitting lower amounts of methane, fertilizing trees, and allowing for a greater diversification of agriculture (nut or fruit trees, etc.) for farmers.

10-Rooftop solar Helps utilities meet broad demand by feeding unused energy into the grid, especially in summer when electricity needs run high. Net metering allows consumers to sell excess electricity back to the grid. Utilities can also avoid capital costs of additional coal or gas plants.

Anyone can access this book on the website <http://www.drawdown.org>. Each solution has been summarized into a paragraph or two and is more easily understood when reviewing the solutions by sector, i.e. "Women and Girls", "Food", "Land Use", "Energy", "Materials", as well as those sectors not summarized here: "Transportation", "Buildings and Cities", and "Coming Attractions". If you want to learn important information about each solution in order to be a better-informed citizen, and if you have had enough in-depth analysis of Coronavirus, then this book is a must-read. Our planet depends on our participation in being part of the solutions. ~ Barb Reuter

May Day (cont.)

This year, having extra time on my hands with a mandated home quarantine from Covid-19, I found my May basket templates, made my little baskets... just as I used to do with my 1st graders in my career of teaching. I filled them with mini wrapped chocolates and Del and I took them to some neighbors on our street. We rang the bells and rather than running away, we waited for the door to open and greeted them with, "Happy May Day!!" We greeted friends and, with proper social distancing, got to see neighbors we hadn't seen in over a month. And to the neighbors who were unfamiliar with this age-old tradition, it was a welcomed and surprising event. One that actually started a response... Every one of the neighbors we presented a May Day Basket to on May 1st returned the favor in their own way in the following days with gifts of meals, desserts, and their own traditional treats. Truly a May Day to remember, no doubt.

As the saying goes... Make new friends and keep the old. One is Silver, the other is Gold. ~ *Aliene Schluchter*



Every Child Should Have a River (cont.)

Among other safety precautions, we were taught to row parallel to the riverbank in case the boat tipped or sprang a leak. This would enable us to swim to shore. If we wanted to cross the river, we had to row in a straight line from point to point with no zigzagging in the current. We were not allowed to change seats while in the middle of the river but had to wait until we were close to shore. Anyone wanting to swim from one side of the river to the other had to have someone in the boat go with them. The swimmer swam on the upper side of the boat and if he or she tired, they only had to drift with the current until they bumped against the boat and caught hold. The rower was not allowed to outdistance the swimmer in case a sudden cramp took hold. As children, and especially as teenagers, we used to fret and fuss over all these rules whenever we had friends staying at the cottage with us. We did commit minor infractions of these rules occasionally. After all, we were children. We had a deep-rooted respect for the power of the river we were taught to use by Daddy. We were very aware that breaking these rules lead to a very unhappy mother and father with punishment meted out accordingly.

It was a common event for the cottagers to inspect the condition of the river every morning. Sometimes a heavy rain fell during the night in New York where the headwaters of the river are located. Rain may not have fallen in Pennsylvania but the downpour above us gave cause for the river to rise. We watched as the blue water turned into an ugly brown torrent filled with churning debris. An hourly watch was kept to determine how far the water was going to rise. I don't remember ever leaving the cottage in the summer due to flooding. Several times the river came almost to the top of our banks but did not spill over. ~ *Molly Squire*

We will continue this story in our next newsletter.



My family has discovered something wonderful during this pandemic! Zoom calls! We had a Zoom birthday party for my brother on May 2nd. Sixteen people attended ranging in ages from 7 months to 74 years. Family came from Arkansas, Michigan, Maryland, North Carolina, and China. We had not all been together for a visit for 2 years. We were on the phone for over an hour – with people sometimes disappearing into the other room to tend to a child's need and then returning when they could. We each brought a cupcake or muffin with a candle on top, and we blew out the candles simultaneously after singing Happy Birthday. There were balloons, a Happy Birthday message hung on the wall and some of the kids blew noise makers. The adults were able to have a really nice visit – and the kids could do gymnastics and run into another room and play and then come back at will. We have decided maybe we should meet on zoom every month or two – even after everything is "back to normal" – whatever that will be. ~ *Sandee Landsburg*



Susquehanna River

Oprah's Book Club (cont.)

No Water Bottles Allowed. There were several other men in the area, dressed in black suits, sort of standing guard. Next, we had to pass through a metal detector! I think I could get into the White House easier than this! After the metal detector, we found ourselves in an old warehouse where a makeshift stage had been set up with a backdrop reading "Oprah's Book Club." There were rows of folding chairs, all on the same level, and since we were in the last group naturally, we were in the very last row. There were cameras everywhere.

It was about 2:15 when we were all settled in the warehouse, and a little after 3 Oprah appeared. She thanked us for coming and then speaking into the camera said, "This afternoon we are in Tucson, Arizona - - -." She told how she chooses books for review in her Book Club and then introduced the Author – Jeanine Cummins. Jeanine told us how she had written several other books that had been published in a limited run. She had spent five years researching for "American Dirt" and had no idea of the firestorm it would cause.

Then Oprah introduced three ladies from the Latinx ('Latinx' is a gender-neutral word for people of Latin American descent) community. One of them was from the Washington Post who had written the negative article on the book that was printed in the Arizona Daily Star on January 25th. These ladies were objecting to the book which was written by a "white" woman who came to a Latinx community when she had trouble getting her stories and books published. Also, in attendance and interviewed were representatives from Flatiron, a division of Macmillan, the publisher. It was hard to hear their rebuttal due to the camera angle. Oprah showed several video interviews with migrants, and we also saw videos of migrants riding on top of freight trains. A few audience members recounted their own migrant stories. I was a little disappointed that there was very little review of the actual book. It seemed more like an "author bashing" opportunity, and I felt like I needed to give the author a HUG!

The taping lasted 2 hours with no break. The show was aired on March 6 on Apple TV in two one-hour segments. I have not yet seen the taping as I don't have Apple TV. The Coronavirus hit us soon after that and social distancing and self-quarantining is in place. However, I'm anxious to see it and fill in the parts I couldn't hear.

Even though there was a lot of head bobbing trying to see from the back row and sometimes having difficulty hearing everything, it was an exciting afternoon, and I wouldn't have missed it for anything! ~ *Sylvia Flagg*

Video <https://www.facebook.com/appletv/videos/oprahs-book-club-on-apple-tv/136665107698345/>

Seeking Happiness (cont.)

I find myself pondering the connection between happiness and a sense of purpose. I am most dissatisfied (unhappy?) and most grumpy when I feel no sense of purpose. A state of mind that I would suggest has come to plague many of us in the midst of our new need to shelter in place.

It has been my experience that God places within us a yearning to be about the doing of good. I feel there is a direct connection between seeking to ease the pain of others and one's personal happiness.

Why else would hundreds of people be sewing protective masks and making them available at every level of society? Why else would a call for food for the ELF ministry result in an overflowing supply? Why else would persons be organizing drive by birthday celebrations or individuals sitting outside nursing care facilities chatting on the phone with residents they cannot physically visit. The list is wonderfully long.

Alongside all the good that is taking place, there are the protesters armed with guns, anger and hatred emitting from the very pores of those distraught by new limitations. I am saddened by my inability to see any signs of happiness in all the discord.

It could be said that happiness evolves from stepping outside of ourselves to be harbingers of hope and help to those in need. My needs are microscopic in the midst of the pain enveloping so many. I find happiness in the peace of prayer for those whose pain is expressed in anger and violence. I find happiness in smiling at the stranger, being kind to the grumpy neighbor, shopping for basic needs of others, offering financial support to organizations equipped to be on the front lines of assistance. For me, happiness at the very core of my being, comes as I seek to be a follower of Christ in a very troubled world. My prayer is that kindness, thoughtfulness, signs of love and concern will offer all of us a pathway to happiness. ~ *Sandra McNary*