



Set your differences aside for the holidays

You've probably noticed that every person is not the same. Each of us has a unique personality with various likes and dislikes. And while we are often drawn to people who are different than we are, it's these differences that can lead to strife in our relationships.

Sometimes we try to convince our spouses, coworkers and kids to be more like us, but that's not what the Bible teaches us to do. We're all created for freedom and liberty, and if we want to win with people, we need to give them a right to be who they are.

I can't tell you how many years I tried to get my husband, Dave, to stop watching sports. But it seemed the more I tried,

the worse it got. One Saturday afternoon, I walked into the family room to find him shining one game on TV and listened to another game using his headphones.

I thought, Joyce, your plan is just not working!

The truth is I wanted Dave to do what I wanted to do — I wanted him to be more like me. But trying to change him was not accomplishing anything, and it left me frustrated and upset.

I love what Romans 12:16 (AMPC) says: "Live in harmony with one another; do not be haughty (snobbish, high-minded, exclusive), but readily adjust yourself to [people, things]..."

It's impossible to be selfish and have healthy relationships. If we truly want to live in peace and harmony, it's going to

require some give and take. At times, we'll have to adjust our lives to accommodate someone else's needs or desires.

Sometimes this simply means being patient and understanding with those who don't share your own strengths.

For instance, have you ever noticed yourself getting irritated with someone who takes more time to make decisions than you do? Or maybe they don't catch on to things as quickly as you would like.

If we allow ourselves to get into prideful thinking, we can hurt people by acting out of our own self-importance and selfish interests.

The Lord doesn't want us to have a lowly opinion of ourselves, but He certainly doesn't want us to think we're better than anyone else!

First Corinthians chapter 12

provides the perfect illustration. It says we are all part of one body, each with our own distinct and important role to play. Verse 25 (AMPC) tells us "there should be no division or discord ... but the members all alike should have a mutual interest in and care for one another."

The truth is we all need each other, and when we learn to recognize and celebrate each other's gifts, it develops a respect that can heal our relationships.

For Best Results, Try This:

When I'm having a hard time agreeing with others, there are a few things I try to do to maintain the right attitude. I encourage you to try them yourself.

- When you need to confront someone about a problem or discuss a negative issue, choose your timing wisely. Pray about what to say and ask God to lead

you in each conversation.

- Be respectful, even if the other person doesn't agree with your opinion.

- Listen with an open mind. Be willing to pray about what they say.

- Keep looking for things to agree about, instead of focusing on your differences.

- Use positive body language and voice tones, and choose every word with care.

There will be times when you won't find a thing to agree on, and in those circumstances, the best thing you can do is trust God, let it go, and become an expert at forgiveness.

Yes, some things are very important and you need to stand your ground, but there are so many things in life that just don't make a difference.

I don't agree with Dave about all his opinions or 100 percent

of everything he does, but I do agree with Dave. He's a good man, and I love him and agree with his character and principles. Over the years, we've learned how to "disagree agreeably."

You won't always agree with your spouse, family or friends, but you can still respect and appreciate them. And as you do your part to "keep the peace," God will not only honor your commitment, He will also bless your life in greater ways than you can imagine.

I encourage you to trust God with the people in your life. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you see the positive in your relationships and the things you have in common.

Nobody's perfect, but with God's help, we can begin to set aside our differences — and love people for who they are.

NIGHTINGALE QUARTET TO PERFORM

After several years away from the Florence entertainment scene, the Florence Nightingales, a women's barbershop quartet, are back!

The reenergized group includes three of the original members — Christine May, Lori Robertson, and Trina Smith — and a new lead singer, Vonnie DePuente.

The Nightingales will be on stage today at 7 p.m. and Sunday, Dec. 11, at 2 p.m. for the Community Chorus Christmas concerts. Both concerts will be at the Presbyterian Church on Highway 101 in Florence.

The quartet is available to sing at other venues and plans to visit assisted living facilities this holiday season.

For more information, call 541-997-3469.



COURTESY PHOTO

The Florence Nightingales return for holiday shows

FUUF invites community to service

Sunday, Dec. 11, from 10 to 11 a.m., the Rev. Ruth Miller will be speaking at the Florence Unitarian Universalist Church. Her subject will be The Perennial Philosophy.

Miller says, "Our Unitarian-Universalist principles call for us to honor and draw from the world's religious tra-

ditions. Why? What do they have in common?"

She will draw on her training as an historian of world religions and Aldous Huxley's essay to help people see the core ideas common to religions around the world.

The UU Fellowship is located at 87738 Highway 101 at

Heceta Beach Road and is wheelchair accessible.

Each service concludes with refreshments and dialogue circle to explore the questions that come up during each service.

For more information, visit florenceuuf.org or call 541-997-2840 with any questions.

Bell Choir performs with chorus this weekend

The Bell Choir will play every Sunday during Advent at the Presbyterian Church of the Siuslaw.

It will also play with the Community Chorus at their performances today at 7 p.m. and Sunday, Dec. 11, at 2 p.m. at the Presbyterian Church.

Anyone interested in participating in the bell choir, directed by Jennifer Weier, can attend rehearsals on Mondays at 4:15 p.m. at the church, located at 3996 Highway 101.

Contact the church office at 541-997-7136 for more information.



COURTESY PHOTO

Members of the Bell Choir rehearse for their performances Dec. 10 and 11 at the Presbyterian Church.

Meet Santa at FEC tomorrow

All families are invited to come and enjoy Christmas treats and a visit with Mr. and Mrs. Santa Claus on Sunday, Dec. 11, from 3 to 5 p.m.

Admission is free and there will be door prizes.

Bring your own cameras or can choose to have a photo taken by the on-site photographer, who can develop photos

immediately and place them in a Christmas photo folder for \$5. Santa welcomes adults as well as children to have their photos taken.

Original prints, greeting cards and art will also be available to purchase if desired.

The Santa reception will take place at the Florence Events Center in Gallery One.

CURTIS SALGADO
with Special Guest
HANK SHREVE
December 31st 9 pm
Tickets available through the
FLORENCE EVENTS CENTER

Siuslaw News Photo of the Week: By Cajun Olson



Siltcoos Lake

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