

BLESSINGS ALWAYS
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Association Minister Message
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CHOICES. "...choose this day whom you will serve..." *Joshua 24:15.* As I write this article, the USA is waiting for results of an election. Surprises are everywhere. Questions are raised about why candidates succeeded or not. It has been a matter of *CHOICES* and many reasons are given why the electorate selected one person over the other.

Joshua became the leader of the Hebrews after Moses' death, chosen by God, and proceeded to lead the Hebrews into the Promised Land. It was time to settle in and claim a homeland that would give them freedom from slavery and a vision of a future "*flowing with milk and honey.*" Unlimited possibilities and yet when they settled in they had forgotten God and believed in gods of their own making. Forgotten was the Creator God who was faithful to them, bringing them "*out of the house of bondage*" and giving them a new identity as a people and nation. Joshua gathered "*all the tribes of Israel to Shechem, and summoned the elders, the heads, the judges, and the officers of Israel; and they presented themselves before God.*" (vs. 1)

Our faith is dependent upon all who have gone before us, who are with us now, and we have the hope of a faith that will be shared with generations yet to come. Joshua spoke about faith in God who led them to a new beginning and, like a lawyer, presented the case for God. He spoke of the God who was not a made up idol, but a God ever present, ever compassionate and ever keeping promises. Joshua did not make the case for God as some kind of task; it was personal: "...*but as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord.*" (v. 15) or from another translation, "*But my family and I will serve the Lord.*"

Choosing or voting, offers blessings or curses. Hopefully leaders are chosen to inspire others to embrace kindness, respect, generosity and a sense of community. As Christians we are called to decide, to make *CHOICES* that have meaning and purpose, "*to love God with all our heart, mind, soul and strength and our neighbor as ourselves.*" The prophet Micah spoke of the way of God, "*God has told you, human one, what is good and what the Lord requires from you: to do justice, embrace faithful love, and walk humbly with your God.*" (*Micah 6:8, CEB.*) *CHOICES* are before us; let us proclaim and do as God calls us to be in covenant with all holiness and wholeness. *BLESSING ALWAYS.*