

## BLESSINGS ALWAYS

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Association Minister Message

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*REPUTATION. “A good name is to be chosen rather than great wealth; high esteem is better than silver and gold.” (Proverbs 22:1, CEB). “(Jesus) does everything well! He even makes the deaf to hear and gives speech to those who can’t speak.” (Mark 7:37, CEB).* It seems that there is no pause in the election season. There are already exploratory committees being formed for the 2024 presidential campaign. Prognosticators are taking polls on the chances on who might be the president. Reporters are digging up all kinds of information, especially “dirt” or flaws, about each candidate’s character and *REPUTATION*.

The Book of Proverbs is ascribed to King Solomon due to his legendary wisdom. Proverbs is a collection of “*wisdom sayings*” from the religious elders who attempt to instruct the faithful, especially youth, on how to cope with life. We might understand the words as instructions on ethics and morality and how important it is to live life with integrity, honesty and trustworthiness. One’s *REPUTATION* is important and any scandal, or even a whisper of scandal, can ruin a person’s life. Rumors have a way to destroy someone’s *REPUTATION* and now with Facebook, Twitter, and other platforms, it is easy, in an instant, to pass on false information that could, and does, ruin someone’s *REPUTATION*. At times jealousies and assumptions of what a person is or not doing can cause disrespect and accusations of faithlessness.

Having a good *REPUTATION* is based on relationships of respect and a welcoming spirit. It is touching lives with love and care that honor God’s diversity of creative genius in every person, honoring others as brothers and sisters of God’s family. It is seeing the good and holy in each other, honored and worthy as a child of God.

In Mark’s gospel, it is said of Jesus, “*He does everything well!*” Jesus’ *REPUTATION* was that He cared about the people He met. He was a healer, comforter and preacher of peace and goodwill. It was His living life with integrity and love that challenged the powers of His day. The arrogance of their positions focused on developing *REPUTATIONS* of their own creations, loving the things of the world rather than doing good for God’s sake. Jesus challenges us to examine ourselves and find a resurrection faith of integrity and unconditional love for one another. May it be said of our *REPUTATION*, “*He/she does everything well!*” **BLESSINGS ALWAYS.**