

Pastor's Point

StoryCorps' mission is to preserve and share humanity's stories in order to build connections between people and create a more just and compassionate world. We do this to remind one another of our shared humanity, to strengthen and build the connections between people, to teach the value of listening, and to weave into the fabric of our culture the understanding that everyone's story matters. At the same time, we are creating an invaluable archive for future generations.

<https://storycorps.org/about/>

StoryWagen is about bringing stories and awareness of Community Spiritual Health by being a resource and listening center. Our first step is to talk general spiritual health issues via our podcast and then create a series of short videos with our Moral Injury Project. We also will provide training on Trauma Informed Care and Moral Injury to community groups, faith communities, and other entities that seek more understanding in these areas.

This wild dream of a mobile resource and listening center focused on spiritual health was started by Chaplain Jose Martinez. He saw through his chaplain work, at the hospital and in the military, that there were many people that had spiritual health issues and didn't even know it. It is our goal to provide free resources about these issues such as grief, moral injury, shame, guilt, and other spiritual health issues that affect mental health to individuals, community groups, and faith communities. Additionally, for those that need to tell their story, we will be that safe space, meeting people where they are and giving them a platform to be heard.

<https://storywagen.org/aboutus>

We all have stories. Our stories are the intricate fabrics that weave throughout our lives. They are stories that give hope and inspire.

Listen to these Life Giving & Life Changing Stories and be encouraged!

<https://lifegivinglifechanging.org/>

Jesus was a storyteller. No matter which Gospel you study, all of them portray Jesus as a teacher who traffics in narrative. He doesn't stand in front of a crowd, droning on by ticking off bullet points on successive slides. Nor does he read each story verbatim from an app on his phone. Jesus taught with story the way the best tellers do – shaping and adapting his message and its vehicle to fit the needs of the crowd in front of him. He spoke their language and used their cultural touchstones. He told stories that not only had the power to shed light on God's nature, but on their own lives and actions. Sometimes, his crowd loved his stories. And sometimes they ran him out of town for upsetting their self-awareness. But Jesus continued to tell stories that challenged his audience, that used the past to reveal the present, that pointed toward a different kind of future.

Just as there is a lot to be learned by listening to stories, there is also great deal that we can learn by paying attention to what stories we tell and how we tell them. We naturally edit our narratives, letting go of something we deem unbecoming or embarrassing. We choose to start at a particular point in our life's timeline because we don't want to have to explain what came before. For some of us, it's the location that is central to the story's message and for others it's

the images or the sounds or the feelings evoked. If a story were a lovely watercolor, we each spend time deciding which frame looks best for our living room wall.

On December 1st, after worship the Nurture and Grow Crew will again host a fellowship time after worship. This time the theme is “Story Stations.” There will be 3-5 different tables each of which has a set of questions and an activity. My hope is that folks will partner with each other in groups of 2 or 3 to take turns interviewing each other about our childhoods, our families, our spiritual and religious convictions and our CCC experiences. That you will be not only willing to tell your stories, but to listen carefully to others without trying to jump in or compare. I think there is a lot we can learn about who we are as disciples as well as the body of Christ. Stories can tell us things about our present identity, but also about our dreams for the future. The resources listed above make important arguments for the way stories affect our lives. If you get a chance, take look at one or all three. Listen to the stories they share and read why they share them. Please encourage your friends to come to worship on December 1st and stay for snacks and stories. The Holy Spirit is alive and moving and this is yet another way to practice listening for her.

Blessings,