

Dear Friends,

A few weeks ago there was a news story about a small porcelain bowl that a man purchased at a yard sale in the New Haven area. The bowl was about six inches in diameter and it was painted blue and white. The buyer didn't haggle over the \$35 price.

Guessing that he had acquired something special, the buyer had the bowl appraised and it turned out to be worth between approximately \$300,000 and \$500,000 dollars. Experts determined that the Ming dynasty bowl was crafted in China in the early 1400's. The artifact ultimately sold for a whopping \$721,800 at a Sotheby's auction last month.

Angela McAteer, the head of Sotheby's Chinese art department, said this about the sale: *"Today's result for this exceptionally rare floral bowl, dating to the 15th century, epitomizes the incredible, once-in-a-lifetime discovery stories that we dream about as specialists in the Chinese Art field ... it is a reminder that precious works of art remain hidden in plain sight just waiting to be found."*

Ms. McAteer could be speaking as well about the people in our midst. Sometimes we need to be reminded of the inherent preciousness of the people – these hidden treasures – with whom we share our lives. The late Martin Buber, a German-Jewish scholar, philosopher, and biblical translator, once wrote: ***"In each person there is a priceless treasure that is in no other. Therefore, we should honor each person for the hidden value that only this person and no one else has."***

Moreover, this uniqueness and pricelessness can be ascribed to all people everywhere. No matter whether others look like us or think like us or live like us or believe like us – there is inherent worth in every human being.

Let us continue to cherish the people in our midst, and let us continue to regard each and every human being as a precious child of God.

God bless,  
Jane

P.S. I'll be taking vacation time between April 16-29. In case of an emergency requiring pastoral care, George Law, chairperson of the Diaconate, may be contacted at 860-638-9122. For Sunday, April 18: Ann Labby, Mary Clark, and Kasha Breau are adding to the worship service video celebrating the ministry of Silver Lake Conference Center. For Sunday, April 25: Deacon Karen Rettich is preaching and Deacon Kelle Young is serving as Worship Assistant. Many thanks to all these "precious people" who are sharing their gifts and ensuring our church's ministry.