Pastor:  Jonathan Rayder                                    Date:  01/16/2022

Sermon Title:  **"UNIQUELY UNITED FOR MATURITY"**

Ephesians 4:7-16

- As a parent, I want to celebrate & enjoy each phase (part of the task entrusted to me by God is to help them mature)
- All of us should be growing & maturing (spiritually speaking)
- God is working in BOTH our oneness & uniqueness to mature us & to grow us
- Have you ever stopped & pondered that our personal maturity (or immaturity) impacts the rest of the body of Christ?
- Any gift we've received is completely an act of God's grace & based entirely upon Christ
  o God's equipped us for the task He has in store for us
- Verse 8 quotes Psalm 68
- Our King (Jesus) has won the battle (He's triumphed over death, sin, & hell), but He DOESN'T hoard the rewards
- Jesus ascending is universally accepted as Jesus (after His time on earth) going to the right hand of the Father
- I tend to look at this passage similar to Philippians 2:5-11
- Jesus was in Heaven, but He emptied & humbled Himself & took on flesh & descended to earth (to set the captives free)
- When I read Ephesians 4:9-10, I see Jesus descending into earth to rescue mankind & with that accomplished, Jesus has ascended back into Heaven to be glorified forever
- The point of this bunny trial … we ought to stand back & marvel at Jesus' generosity & the power & authority that He has
- Christ has given some specific gifts (of leadership) & these gifts should be used to help mature believers
- Apostles & prophets were foundation (the Lord used them to reveal His Truth & usher in the church)
- "Evangelists" = heralds; messengers; the spreaders of Good News
- These flocks need shepherds (pastors), who can help instruct & guide them Spiritually in God's Word
- In order to NOT be "tossed here & there by waves & carried about by every wind of doctrine," sheep NEED to be taught
- Through our oneness IN Christ & our uniqueness (that sets us apart for Christ) we are to mature!!!
- When differences arise (& they will) how we respond is equally as important to the offense in question