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From the Desk of Rev. Chuck

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Dear Friends,

When I was at Unity Village, Chris Chenoweth, the senior minister at the Village Chapel told a story about Mortimer:

There is a mole in my yard that has become a great inspiration to me. It seems to tunnel night and day like an underground Energizer bunny. This past winter as I looked out my living room window, I would see the fresh mounds of dirt over the white snow. This striking contrast was more evident each morning as more and more mounds could be seen. I feel as if I know this mole, as much as a person can know others by watching their work and habits. I have named this mole Mortimer.

My dog (a two-year-old golden retriever named Bentley) is quite upset with Mortimer. Bentley's keen nose picks up the scent, and he rapidly digs into a fresh dirt mound, but to no avail: Mortimer is probably miles away on the freeway of his underground interstate system.

As I said, Mortimer is an inspiration to me. Everywhere he decides to go, he has to tunnel through solid ground in complete darkness--all alone in the cold. This would faze you and me, but Mortimer is unaffected by the continual obstacles in his daily life. He pushes on and pushes harder, never stopping. He's never satisfied with yesterday's tunnels: Mortimer always digs anew, blazing a new frontier. It seems as though he's never defeated when he hits a wall: he instantly changes direction toward his success. Nothing stops him, and I awake each morning to a new shrine of his achievements. I heard the other day that Mortimer also has a health challenge that affects most moles: he is almost blind.

I have decided that Mortimer is one of the great positive thinkers of our time. He can begin at one end of two acres of solidly frozen ground pushing, shoving, and digging right below the icy surface and tunnel his way to the other side. I wonder what he's thinking as he tunnels. How does he pray? Does he use affirmations? Does he set goals?

I wish I could meet Mortimer just once and talk about life, motivation, and faith. I enjoy spending time with faith-filled people (and moles) of like mind. I wish I could ask Mortimer to speak on Sunday

morning. His topic would probably be "How to Dig Up a New Idea."

We all need a positive role [or should I say mole] model in life, but what can we learn from Mortimer? Faith, persistence, perseverance, positive outlook, purpose, relentless pursuit of happiness. I used to be upset that my once beautifully lush green yard was disappearing. Now I see more: I see an example of what can be accomplished by one single solitary life dedicated to its purpose. This is what God intends for each of us.

In John 14:12 we find these words spoken by Jesus, "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes in me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do..." and we all know what Jesus did during his lifetime and we have this promise that we can do it to. So why aren't we doing it?

I believe that the major obstacle or wall we tunnel into is the lack of belief in ourselves to do those things that Jesus did. As we see in the story about Mortimer, we all have the ability to express faith, perseverance, positive outlook, purpose, and a relentless pursuit of happiness in our lives... the key is do we believe it?

Here are some statements that can help build a strong belief system:

1. Believe in yourself - you are marvelously endowed.
2. Believe in your work - all honest work is sacred.
3. Believe in this day - every minute contains an opportunity to express God's plan for good.
4. Believe in your family - this is done by creating harmony by trust and co-operation.
5. Believe in your neighbor - the more friends you make the happier your life will be.
6. Believe in values - you can never go wrong doing what's right.
7. Believe in your decision - go to God first and then follow the guidance.
8. Believe that you are meant to be healthy and prosperous - stop looking for things to always be wrong or waiting for the "other shoe to drop."
9. Believe in the now - yesterday is past recall, learn from it and move on; and tomorrow is not here yet.
10. Believe in your church - you encourage others to attend by living the principles that are taught and attending yourself.
11. Believe in God's promise you are never alone - "I am with you always."
12. Believe in God's mercy - if God loves and forgives you with an everlasting love, you can love and forgive yourself. Then try again tomorrow.