

The Voice

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH



EPIPHANY “After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen in the east went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they were overjoyed.”

Matthew 2: 9-10



Inspiring•Inviting•
Including•Instructing

First United Methodist Church
Growing disciples to reach others for
Christ

Happy New Year
2012
“Keeping the Right Focus”

Here we go... ready or not. May this new year be a good one for each of you. It would be my desire that we keep our focus on the Lord Jesus Christ.

One of the best ways to keep our focus on the Lord is to continually ask ourselves these questions...


- 1.) How can I please and honor God in this situation?
- 2.) How can I bring praise to Jesus by showing that he has changed me?

Seeking to please and honor God is a powerful compass for life. This is especially true when we are faced with difficult challenges. We must not forget that even Jesus was guided by these goals. Jesus said, “I seek not to please myself but him who sent me.” (John 5:30)

Pray that this **“powerful compass for life”** -- pleasing and honoring God -- would guide your heart and mind today and every day in this New Year. I hope we have just as good year as last year.

Please see my 2011 Pastor’s report.

Keep trusting in Jesus.


Pastor Doug

Pastor Report December 4, 2011

“In all these things, as disciples of Jesus Christ, we give the glory to God through Jesus Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit.” Colossians 3:17

“Extravagant Generosity”

I can see God working in many ways in the people and ministry of Newton First United Methodist Church. I would characterize the growth in extravagant generosity exemplified in personal love for God, corporate love for one another and missional love for those outside the church.

The membership at the church has increased by 17 since November 14, 2010 which includes 8 youth going through confirmation class. There had not been a confirmation class here since 2008.

The financial giving has increased and is above budget guidelines. During the GIC week-end, people pledged to give over \$20,000 for mission outreach locally and globally. Commitments were also made for short-term mission trips.

The youth ministry of our church has grown to include over 30 youth attending weekly youth activities.

There has been a growing love among those who are a part of the FUMC family. We have added 1 more small group that meets twice a month in a home. We have also enjoyed studying books together on spiritual formation and reflecting on sermon material.

Our worship services are going well. Our classic and contemporary services continue to build up the body of Christ. Our combined services have increased our spiritual passion and deepened our relationships with one another. The worship committee that was organized has been creative in planning a unique outdoor morning service in the parking lot and has given leadership to planning our combined services. We have revitalized the bell choir and creative arts ministry.

There has been continued evidence of God working through our missional love for those outside of our church through Circles of Hope (poverty focus) and hosting children at the week day Bible School. Also, the youth have grown in reaching others and maturing spiritually through a summer mission trip. We are pleased that one of our young people has been accepted to serve as a missionary with Wycliffe Bible translators.

I believe God is building and nurturing a very vital congregation at Newton First. It is evident that many are willing to share their resources with those outside the life of the church and using spiritual gifts at home, at school, and everywhere they find themselves. We are giving our time and money in ways to impact the world, both locally and globally. This is especially evident in the spirit of cooperation that has made the Annual Bazaar a success and missionally relevant. We are thankful and praying for extravagant generosity to increase in our devotion to God, to one another and to a needy and lost world.

Connect, Serve, & Grow ~~~ *By Roy Pumphrey, Executive Minister*

"[S]o we, many as we are, are one body in the Messiah, and individually we belong to one another. Well then, we have gifts that differ in accordance with the grace that has been given to us, and we must use them appropriately ... Love must be real. Hate what is evil; stick fast to what is good. Be truly affectionate in showing love for one another; compete with each other in giving mutual respect. Don't get tired of working hard. Be on fire with the spirit. Work as slaves for the Lord. Celebrate your hope..." Romans 12:5-6a, 9-12a (The Kingdom New Testament)

A short while ago at Christmas we celebrated the birth of a King. With the birth of Jesus the Kingdom of God bursts onto the scene. God accomplishes what humanity failed to do since the time of Adam and Eve. Reestablishing community with God for all who place their trust and hope in Jesus Christ.

They are restored, made whole and are given life in Christ. A tremendous transformation begins for those in whom Christ lives. When they give themselves away to God it is accepted as spiritual worship and their minds begin to be transformed.¹ They are renewed as they "learn to know [their] Creator and become like him."²

To know Jesus is to learn to know your Creator.³ That is what a disciple does, they learn to be like their master. Our minds are renewed as we spend time learning from Jesus. We need to learn what he said and what he did. To do this we read the Gospel according Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. We read the epistles to learn how we experience Christ living in us and what it is like to actually live what he taught and showed us.

As our minds are renewed we learn to be like Christ. Indeed, Christ lives in us and we are one with him and with each other. We are then the body of Christ and he is our head. With Christ's life in us we will love one another and compete with each other to give mutual respect. We will work hard as slaves for the Christ. We will be on fire with the Spirit. We will celebrate our hope, which is in Christ Jesus.⁴ May we learn to live this way in 2012.

See Romans 12:1
Colossians 3:10b (NLT)
Colossians 1:16
Titus 2:13

MISSION MOMENTS ~~~ *by Jay Anderson*

COME AND MEET JOHN AND COLLEEN EISENBERG for breakfast at the Breadbasket Saturday morning, January 21, at 8:30 a.m. They are missionaries in Paraguay, now home on furlough this year. They are on their way to speak Sunday morning in Hays. They have been here some years ago.

The Eisenbergs will share in more detail about what they have been doing in Paraguay and how the church there is making progress. Colleen writes, "They have a really good sense of evangelism in this country because of all the teams that have come down (for the States) and done different kinds of evangelism projects. They'll now do this on their own with their own resources." Also, "People now are praying much more frequently and that God is really giving them, the Paraguayans, the vision of how to carry out various things with local resources."

"John is now the interim pastor at the local church in Paraguay and is teaching at a local Bible Institute. He says that's challenging because a couple of his students are indigenous believers who speak Spanish but are oral learners."

You don't have to register for this meeting with the Eisenbergs. Just come.



If you are planning a meeting or special event at church, please clear it through the church office first, as a lot of our rooms are used by various groups. If it is on the office calendar, it is yours to use at that time. Thank you.

United Methodist Men will not meet January 14 for breakfast. Instead they will meet January 21 at 8:30 am at the Bread Basket to join others for breakfast with John and Colleen Eisenberg.

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

801 North Main
Newton, KS 67114

Phone: 316-283-2150
Fax: 316-283-1544

E-mail: info@firstchurchnewton.org
Return Service Requested

We're on the Web

www.FirstChurchNewton.org

This newsletter has been prayerfully prepared for:

Office Hours: M-T, 8:30 am-4:00 pm
Friday 8:30 am—12:00 pm

Dr. Doug Tofteland, Lead Pastor
Jay Anderson, Missions Pastor
Roy Pumphrey, Executive Minister
Roxie Truan, Administrative Assistant
Beverly Stigge, Choir Director
Barry Fulmer, Praise Team Leader
Karen Kaufman, Organist
Mary Beth Davies, Organist
David Portlock, Custodian



You are invited to attend a class on "4 Keys to Hearing God's Voice" on Wednesday evenings at the church at 6:30 p.m. following the F.A.S.T. meal from 5:30 to 6:30. You are invited to the meal for fellowship but it is not required for the class. The class will start on January 4th. The class is a DVD presentation by Mark Virkler with discussion following the DVD. There is a book that accompanies the DVDs if you wish to buy it. Lois and I heard Mark speak at

a Christian conference in Dayton, Ohio, this past summer, and were greatly impressed by what he had to say. I have been trying to listen to God for a long time without much success, but his suggestions have helped me greatly. You will not be disappointed. Come join us

January 4th in Fellowship Hall.

Jay Anderson

Happy New Year!

The snow fall of the December, brings the joy of the passing year, and the beauty around fills everyone's heart with fresh hopes and dreams for the coming year. May such a beauty remain in your heart for the entire next year. Happy New Year 2012!

