



Connexion

Volume 6 Issue 16

September 21, 2011

Holy Habits Reconsidered

We began a four week series in worship on September 18. I called the series “Holy Habits Reconsidered”. The series was born out of my own reconsideration of the first four chapter of the Acts of the Apostles. We rang the keynote of the book with Jesus words, when he told his disciples before returning to heaven they will receive the power of the Holy Spirit so they might be his witnesses in the world. Jesus is telling them to look out before you look in.

Jesus’ final words did not say create great worship, so everyone is happy. Nor did he say organize relational small groups, so everyone feels connected. Jesus did not say run great financial campaigns, so everyone learns the joy of giving. Jesus said: The Holy Spirit will give us eyes to look outside; to see the human condition in need of the grace of God.

This series will begin with Holy Habit of witness because it precedes worship, nurture, and stewardship. We are to start with a witness that will connect us to a call or mission, which fuels worship, creates networks of nurture, and stimulates creative stewardship marked by unprecedented generosity. It is all right there in those first four chapters of Acts. Give them a read!

I want us to take this outside/in approach in exploring ways we can show up and see what is happening outside the walls of our church. We need to reverse the starting point when thinking about our Holy Habits. First United Methodist, Irving can activate the power of the Holy Spirit by making our first priority to intentionally look out beyond ourselves. An outside/in approach has a way of taking care of everything else.

Our religious habits become holy when we step into the line of vision of people we meet and serve outside the walls of our church. This creates opportunity for everything and everyone to be changed. The more ways we offer our witness, the more God’s spirit shapes our holy habits.

- The holy habit of worship expands in proportion to our expanded view of what God is doing.
- The holy habit of nurture grows in fellowship and word as we celebrate these new sightings.
- The holy habit of stewardship moves beyond our “offering plate” mentality as we see what possessions we hold in common and how we are to share them.

We fool ourselves into thinking our holy habits of: witness as usual, worship exclusively with the faithful, nurturing our own church family; and raising funds to perpetuate the institution will save our world.

I look forward to reconsidering our holy habits by entering into a conversation with our neighbors; giving a witness to the good news. There are people just around the corner of our church who need us to show up; more than they need our usual habitual ways. I am reconsidering my holy habits; how about you?

BE SURE TO SIGN UP FOR OUR E-NEWSLETTER!



SEPTEMBER 11

10:30 AM Worship	342
6:30 PM Worship	19
Total	361
Sunday School	177

SEPTEMBER 18

10:30 AM Worship	353
6:30 PM Worship	22
Total	375
Sunday School	190

ANGEL FOOD

WE RECEIVED THE FOLLOWING FROM ANGEL FOOD MINISTRIES.....

"IT IS WITH GREAT HEAVINESS OF HEART THAT WE REPORT THAT ANGEL FOOD MINISTRIES WILL NOT BE HOLDING A SEPTEMBER DISTRIBUTION. WE ARE WORKING EXTREMELY HARD AND LOOKING FORWARD TO OUR FUTURE DISTRIBUTIONS. FOR MONTHS NOW, WE HAVE INCURRED RISING FOOD AND FUEL PRICES AND OPERATIONAL COSTS IN THE FACE OF DECLINING SALES. WE APPRECIATE ALL OF YOUR HARD WORK, DEDICATION AND FAITHFULNESS TO THE LORD, YOUR CHURCH, YOUR COMMUNITY AND TO ANGEL FOOD MINISTRIES. WE WILL KEEP IN TOUCH WITH YOU CONCERNING OUR PROGRESS AND WILL POST CHANGES TO OUR WEBSITE, WWW.ANGELFOODMINISTRIES.COM."

BRING A FRIEND

GOSPEL CONCERT

EVERYONE IS INVITED TO JOIN US FOR OUR
1ST ANNUAL GOSPEL CONCERT & DINNER!

DINNER WILL BEGIN AT 5:00 PM AND
THE GOSPEL CONCERT WILL BEGIN AT 6:30 PM!

DINNER WILL BE CATERED BY BABA'S CHICKEN.
\$3 FOR CHILDREN 10 & UNDER & \$5 FOR ADULTS.

PLEASE RSVP TO THE CHURCH OFFICE BY TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 27.

10/2/2011 **FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH** 5:00 PM - 7:30 PM You don't want to miss this event!! 972-253-3531

October is FOOD BANK MONTH!!!



Here is a list of suggested items to bring....



Canned Meats, Chili, Coffee / Tea, Cooking Oil, Hamburger Helpers, Jell-O, Mayonnaise, Ramon Noodles

Diapers (Size 3 and Larger), Dish Washing Powders, Hand Soap, Shampoo, Toilet paper

The Trustees have decided to re-key the EXTERIOR doors of the Family Life Center and the main church building. This is going to happen over the next couple of weeks, so if your key stops working, this is why!

Discovering God's Call
November 4 - 5
Go to
www.fumcirving.org
to register!

KENNA TURNER WEST
IS COMING BACK!!!! JOIN US
FOR AN AMAZING
CONCERT ON.....
SUNDAY, OCTOBER 16
6:30 PM

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 1
UNITED METHODIST
MEN'S BREAKFAST
8:00 AM

Charge
Conference
Saturday,
October 1
First United
Methodist Church

Ad Board Meeting
Sunday,
September 25
5:00 PM

Make a Good Marriage Great
If someone suggested a Marriage Encounter for you and your spouse, would you be offended? The truth is, happily married couples get a lot out of an Encounter Weekend because it is designed to make strong marriages even stronger. The next United Methodist Marriage Encounter Weekend is on November 4-6, 2011. Learn more & make reservations on www.encounter.org. If you need more information, contact Mickey and Linda Wheeler, 972-594-0232 or jamesw3681@aol.com.

Conflict - to come into collision or disagreement; be contradictory, at variance, or in opposition; clash: to fight or contend; do battle.

Conflict is everywhere. We have conflict in our relationships with spouses, children, co-workers, teachers, peers, friends, family and the list goes on. I for one do not like conflict. However, avoiding conflicting situations rarely produces a positive outcome - ultimately. So, what is the point? Well, this week we had a little drama in the youth department. It was nothing big but conflict nonetheless. Which begs the question, "How do we deal with conflict?" While there are many answers, and indeed books have been written on the subject, my point is not to go over all the possibilities. My point is to be aware of its presence in our lives and to know that conflict comes from one of two sources; satan, or God. The writer of Hebrews says, "It is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God" 10:31. God's conflict in our lives helps us to know something more about Him and our purpose in life. However, the author goes on to say, "But recall the former days when, after you were enlightened, you endured a hard struggle with sufferings..." 10:32. This kind of suffering or conflict is a direct result of being "enlightened" or "to give light" which means that we received the Light of God through Jesus Christ the Son. This conflict is also good because it means we are being targeted because of having "received the light of Christ". Does this mean that we all have the life of Job? No, but it does mean that conflict will occur and does occur regardless of being in the light or out of the light.

For me, I am glad that I endure conflict having been "enlightened in Christ" rather than conflict outside of Christ. And that is my real point. I deal with people all the time who are going through some sort of struggle. Those who know the Lord and have been "enlightened" by Him, through the Spirit have such a bevy of resources in the Scripture about how to learn, deal and grow through conflict. Those who are not "enlightened in Christ" have only what secular culture has to offer.

So, how do you deal with conflict? Is it through the eyes of culture or through your "enlightened" eyes? The final comment is to point out verse 32 said, "you endured... (the conflict)". This word endured in this verse means "to remain, tarry, or abide". I take that to be such a great relief because my faith in the Lord helps me to remain steadfast, tarry, abide, endure through the conflict as it comes. And indeed it comes. But that is okay with me, because I would rather be in the hands of the living God than to flail unknowingly being tossed and torn upon the waves of life outside of his grip.

Blessings,
Sean

Bible Presentation: Sunday, September 18, was an exciting day in the life of the church. Fourteen third through fifth graders were presented with Bibles. This is one of those special rites of passage in the United Methodist Church. Many of us remember receiving our third grade Bibles, and some of us still have them. Thank you to the Pathfinders Sunday School class for their generous donation to cover the cost of the Bibles. I pray that these Bibles will be a blessing to our children as they grow in their knowledge and faith.

Exploring the Bible: Beginning September 25, I will teach a five-week series of Sunday School lessons for our 3rd-5th grade class. I call the series Exploring the Bible. We will learn about how the Bible came to be, the various versions of the Bible, how to study the Bible, etc. I look forward to spending time with these students as they explore and discover the hidden treasure in their new Bibles.

Wednesday Night Grace Place: We are having fun at Wednesday night Grace Place. We're learning about the Fruit of the Spirit through stories, scripture, games and crafts. All children in Kindergarten through 5th grade are invited to participate. We meet from 7:00 to 8:30 pm. in SonRise Village.

School Supplies for Guatemala: For our VBS mission project this year, we colored small backpacks for the students at the Vida Nueva School in Guatemala. We then asked the church to donate school supplies to go in the backpacks. Thank you to everyone who has donated supplies! Your generosity is greatly appreciated. In order to provide school supplies for all 80 children at the school, we need more of some items. We will put together a list of needed items and ask the adult Sunday School classes to help us out. If you are not part of a Sunday School class but would like to help, please let me know.

Children's Choir: We know that busy schedules and shared custody situations sometimes prevent children from being able to join the choir and attend Wednesday rehearsals. In an effort to involve more children in our music ministry, Sue Wilson is teaching the 1st through 5th grade Sunday School students the songs that the choir will be singing in worship. She will hold these "mini-rehearsals" at the beginning of the Sunday School hour, from 9:15-9:25. Then when the choir performs, those children who are not official members will also be invited to sing. Their first performance will be this Sunday, September 25. We hope that this will allow more children to experience the joy of music and performing for God and his people.

Kelly



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Debbie Robinson

Director of Parent's Day Out

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Keri Moreno

Jessica Anderson

Administrative Staff

.... AMONG OUR PEOPLE AMONG OUR PEOPLE ...

HONORIAUM: In honor of **Glenda May** to Chapel Renewal Fund from Ruby L. Milburn.

In honor of our teachers to General Budget from The Derol Todd Homebuilders Class.

MEMORIALS: In memory of **Jeanette Hamilton**, stepmother of Leeann Feuerbacher to General Budget from Koinonia Sunday School class.

In memory of **Hank Henry** to General Budget from Don and Jane Shultz.

In memory of **Jewllene Barnett** to Benevolence Fund from Chuck and Teresa Hyde. To Wednesday Work Crew Endowment Fund from Dick and Jeanell Bischofhausen. To General Budget from Janice Summers; from Harold and Rosine Barnett; from Derol Todd Homebuilder Class; from Nona Payne; from Mac and Jackie Spruce; from Jack and Pat Carnell.