

The Peace Visitor



*I watch the ripples change their size, But never leave the stream Of warm impermanence
So the days float through my eyes, But still the days seem the same. David Bowie Changes*

It seems impossible that I am rapidly approaching my third anniversary with the church. While October marks the official start date, I began thinking and praying about this church approximately this time of year. These three years have been full of changes for me. That is probably why every time that David Bowie's song *Changes* comes on in my car I turn it up. It isn't the catch phrase, "Time to face the strange", that appeals to me; rather, I love the imagery of how even as change unfolds it seems that flow forward continues. The ripples change in size but never leave the stream. That feels true for my life and I believe it is true for our church life.

You have recently noticed a change in the sanctuary. A row of pews was removed at the back of the church. I know that, as with any change, it was met with mixed feelings. Concerns about what it meant in terms of our congregation size or how we do the business of Sunday church were heard. But for nearly three years, I have also watched the congestion and clustered greeting entanglements of Sunday mornings. This change allows more space for walkers, more room for conversation clumps and freer post benediction greetings from me. It was a ripple but we never left the stream. As with all things, more change is coming.

As the bylaws committee nears the completion of their tasks, more change is imminent. One of the central ideas being proposed is about sharing the load of the work of the church more fully among the members and friends who attend here. Last fall, when the stewardship campaign happened, it focused on financial giving solely. We are approaching looking at the time and talent portion from a more task oriented view than a position view. On any given Sunday, we need people to hand out bulletins and greet people, communion servers, offering collectors, fellowship hour hosts, money counters, and pew cleaners. Over the week there are gardens to weed, lawns to cut and the occasional icy spot to sand. In the course of a year there are events to attend, rallies to embrace, and people for whom we are praying or visiting. Perhaps the umbrella of usher, deacon or trustee might seem daunting jobs, but the tasks can be broken into smaller doable tasks. Work is still under way to identify all the tasks that you might be willing to undertake, but a new time and talent inventory will be out soon.

Currently we have some really dedicated and kind-hearted souls who have been willing to stand in the breach and make sure all of the tasks of the church are getting done. I thank them all for their dedication and hard work. But before we burn them out or deny others the opportunity to help, it is time for a little change. Granted all of this will feel a bit different from our current patterns and ways of being. Being an engaged church does require connections. I hope we can find a way to all take a few bites out of the routine of making church happen. Look for the new talent and time sheet in next month's visitor. Until then start seeking yourself for how you might take up a task. Change is coming but we will be in the same stream just directing our course in new ways.

Pastor John

June 2017

Pastor John's Theology Word of the Month:

Pneu·ma·tol·o·gy [,n(y)oomə'täləjē]

The term pneumatology comes from two Greek words, namely, pneuma meaning “wind,” “breath,” or “spirit” (used of the Holy Spirit) and logos meaning “word,” “matter,” or “thing.” As it is used in Christian systematic theology, “pneumatology” refers to the study of the biblical doctrine of the Holy Spirit.

FROM THE MODERATOR

Most of the crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. And the crowds that went before him and that followed him were shouting, “Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!” And when he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred up, saying, “Who is this?” And the crowds said, “This is the prophet Jesus, from Nazareth of Galilee.” Matthew 21:8-11

At the Gate

Jesus knew he had to go to Jerusalem, it was part of his life here on earth. He was going to be facing death head on. He knew what he was being asked to do, what he needed to do.

He rode a donkey to Jerusalem with people cheering, waving palm branches, making a great noise. He knew what he needed to do. As he approached the gate into Jerusalem, he had a choice - turn away and not complete his journey, or enter through the gate and face his death by crucifixion. Jesus entered through the gate, many of the people remained outside the gate, shouting their support, their opinions, etc. They chose not to go “through the gate.”

Is the church, our church, “riding to the gate?” When we get to the gate, will we choose to go through the gate, and to confront what we are being called to do? Will we lay ourselves down for social justice? Will we meet those who are broken at the breach? Will it be just words, or action - being the church?

We need to get off our high horses (posting on Facebook, Tweeting, “shouting our opinions”) and get on the donkey and ride through the gate, to confront the issues we are being called to be witness to. Be the Church!

As we look at new directions for our church, may we find our way through the gate and truly work on solving the issues we are being called to in our community. Face them head on, fulfilling our calling as we celebrate our 125th Anniversary and the years to come.

Council Minutes Sunday, May 21, 2017

The meeting was called to order and Pastor John gave an opening prayer.

The minutes from the March 19 meeting were accepted as presented in the Visitor.

Pastor John gave his pastor's report.

Brad Hanson's treasurer's was discussed and motion to accept was made (M) (Bev Tallent) and seconded (S) (Curt Hutchens) - motion passed (P).

Michelle Dettmann's financial secretary report was discussed. Mid-year statements will be issued to include January-June giving and provide progress on pledged giving to those who pledged. Motion MSP (Val Broste, Mark Hoff) to approve the report.

Old Business:

125th Anniversary Celebration: plans are progressing. Shirley is planning a Women's Fellowship reunion for September, possibly held at Good Shepherd to include Bev Killeen, Genny Manea and others.

By-Laws task force (Fiscus, Tallent, Tufte) has met and will try to have a draft created at their May 25th meeting.

The Just Peace Initiative will begin with an interest/informational meeting on June 4 following the service.

New thermostat was installed in the sanctuary. It is programmed to keep the Sunday temperature at 75 F in the summer and 70 F in the winter. A box was placed over it to remind us that it is now programmed and does not need any "messing with" on Sunday mornings! :-)

The last row of pews was removed following the meeting. This change should allow for better traffic flow on Sunday mornings.

Shirley Hoff, Jon Tufte, and Pastor John will be attending the Annual Meeting of the Minnesota Conference from June 9-11.

New Business:

Val will get a couple of "Neighbor" signs for the churchyard.

Work is commencing on a special anniversary banner.

The next Council meeting will be on June 25th [changed following the meeting] at 11:30 AM

BOLD were in attendance:

Moderator: Jon Tufte

Vice Moderator: Ron Seibring

Secretary: Linda Vierkant

Treasurer: Brad Hanson

Financial Secretary: Michelle Dettmann

Member at large: Curt Hutchens

Member at large: Val Broste

Trustees: Bruce Michaels

Mission: Rick Fine

TTT: Mark Hoff

ROSE: Beverly Tallent

Deacons: Jeryl Michaels

Faith Formation: TBD

Pastor/Parish: TBD

Shirley Hoff

Pastor John Fiscus

FAITH FORMATION *Our Civility Project*

Make the World More Civil, Idea #47— “Learn a foreign language. It’s a big small world. If we all learned even one more language, think how much more clear communication we could all have.”

One of the things I have been most grateful for in my life is my study of foreign languages. Even knowing a few words of other languages has helped me be a more considerate traveler — and, I think, SMARTER, too! From a theological perspective, being able to go back to Hebrew or Greek origins can make Bible passages more clear and expose an original meaning. Many concepts don’t translate well to English. Just for fun, here are some words which are almost impossible to translate!

- Tartle (Scots) The nearly onomatopoeic word for that panicky hesitation just before you have to introduce someone whose name you can't quite remember.
- Iktsuarpok (Inuit) You know that feeling of anticipation when you’re waiting for someone to show up at your house and you keep going outside to see if they’re there yet? This is the word for it.
- Pelinti (Buli, Ghana) Your friend bites into a piece of piping hot pizza, then opens his mouth and sort of tilts his head around while making an “aaaarrah” noise. The Ghanaians have a word for that. More specifically, it means “to move hot food around in your mouth.”
- Greng-jai (Thai) That feeling you get when you don't want someone to do something for you because it would be a pain for them.
- Fremdschämen (German); Myötähäpeä (Finnish) The kinder, gentler cousins of Schadenfreude, both these words mean something akin to "vicarious embarrassment.”
- Lagom (Swedish) Maybe Goldilocks was Swedish? This slippery little word is hard to define, but means something like, “Not too much, and not too little, but juuuuust right.”
- Ya’arburnee (Arabic) This word is the hopeful declaration that you will die before someone you love deeply, because you cannot stand to live without them. Literally, may you bury me.
- Pana Po’o (Hawaiian) “Hmm, now where did I leave those keys?” he said, pana po’oing. It means to scratch your head in order to help you remember something you’ve forgotten.
- Zeg (Georgian) It means “the day after tomorrow.” OK, we do have "overmorrow" in English, but when was the last time someone used that?
- Boketto (Japanese) It’s nice to know that the Japanese think enough of the act of gazing vacantly into the distance without thinking to give it a name.
- Hygge (Danish) The pleasant, genial, and intimate feeling associated with sitting around a fire in the winter with close friends.
- L’esprit de l’escalier (French) Literally, stairwell wit—a too-late retort thought of only after departure. [from Mental Floss]

Faith Formation is not just Sunday School classes or a moment of the service. It’s the day-to-day wrestling with how to be God’s people, living in community in the world. A few more tips are printed on the Fridays of the calendar. Try them, then discuss: What did you learn this month?

Let me know how it goes. —Michelle Dettmann, *Faith Formation Rep Pro-tem*

Return to Civility: a Speed of Laughter Project, John Sweeney & The Brave New Workshop. 2007



Remember Sunday, August 13 at 10 AM is our Annual Picnic at Riverside Park Pavilion. This is a great time to invite friends to join you for church! Start praying for nice weather now. Join us for worship, potluck and activities.

Annual Meeting 2017

308 people (235 of which were voting delegates) from 89 congregations attended our 55th Annual Meeting June 9-11 in St. Joseph.

Several have commented it was the best Annual Meeting they've ever attended!

Embracing God's Promise
- a future with hope -



We re-framed the definition of vitality in our churches, reminded by keynoter Kristina Lizardy-Hajbi that vitality is not primarily about numbers, growth, or size. Rev. Julian DeShazier drew upon the Palm Sunday Biblical narrative and urged us to enter into the gates of Jerusalem and confront the various forms of death we find within. Conference Minister Reverend Shari Prestemon shared 8 exciting new strategic objectives of the Conference, and called upon us all to be "midwives of hope" in our churches and world. More [here!](#)

**I screamed at God for the starving child
until I saw the starving child was God
screaming at me.**

Anonymous



"Songs of Hope" in concert
Hosted by First Congregational UCC in Brainerd
FRIDAY JULY 14
7:30 PM (tentative)

If you'd like to go, there may be opportunities to carpool!

"Songs of Hope™" is a six-week, overnight performing arts summer camp in Saint Paul, Minnesota, USA for kids aged 10 and older from around the world. More than just a performing arts camp, Songs of Hope™ offers participants a unique opportunity to live in community with kids from other countries and cultures while learning and performing music from many countries.

Is Your Church A Family? 5 Ways To Help It Be A Healthy One

A healthy family doesn't put up walls to keep newcomers out. They welcome new members with open arms and big parties.

By Karl Vaters, from his blog *Pivot: Innovative Leadership from a Small Church Perspective*

So much of what's taught about church methods and structures comes from a corporate mindset. That's to be expected when most church leadership writers are coming from a large- and megachurch background.

But smaller churches don't operate that way. And they shouldn't. Because small churches are more like families than corporations. And their pastors are more like parents or older siblings than CEOs.

But operating a small church like a family doesn't mean that we shouldn't do it well.



Here are a few principles I've picked up about how healthy families (and therefore, healthy churches) do and don't operate.

1. Healthy families teach by example more than by lecture

But most of our churches aren't set up this way – including the small, family-style ones. Instead of living our lives with people, we put almost all the weight for learning, growing and maturing in Christ on the Sunday morning sermon.

Certainly that time of preaching and teaching the Word is important. But it's not meant to carry all the responsibility for building a healthy church – no matter how good the preaching is.

No family operates like this – with all the leading and teaching happening in a once-a-week, one hour lecture. And Jesus didn't teach that way either.

One of the strengths of the smaller, family-style church is the ability for the pastor and congregation to actually know each other. A healthy small church takes advantage of that.

2. Healthy families welcome new members with joyous celebrations

When they say “we're like a family here,” what too many churches mean is they're small, they're insulated and they plan to stay that way.

But a healthy family doesn't put up walls to keep newcomers out. A healthy family welcomes new members. Through births, adoptions, marriage and more.

In fact, that's when families throw their biggest parties – to welcome newcomers into the family with weddings, birthdays, anniversaries and other parties.

Healthy family-style churches do the same. They don't keep others out, they throw open their doors to welcome everyone in.

3. Healthy families don't let dysfunctional members call the shots

Every family has members we love, even though they're not easy to live with. In unhealthy families, those members seem to control everything – casting a cloud over every family event.

A healthy family draws boundaries which allow us to love and welcome the dysfunctional members without letting them ruin things.

In a healthy family-style church, dysfunctional members are loved and appreciated, but control freaks don't get their way, gossip is not tolerated and bullies don't win.

4. Healthy families use discipline sparingly and constructively

Unhealthy families “smack first, ask questions later.” Unhealthy churches do the same. Yes, healthy families use discipline. Bad behavior needs to be addressed. But a healthy family uses negative discipline only after all positive options have been depleted.

A pastor who always talks about sin and its consequences is just as unbalanced as one who never talks about sin and its consequences.

According to 1 Timothy 1:9, “...the law is made not for the righteous but for lawbreakers and rebels...” The same is true for churches and families.

If a church is healthy, it will lead with love and grace, not law and punishment.

5. Healthy families come together when they face challenges

Nothing will expose the health or weaknesses of a family or a church like facing adversity. No matter how much they may disagree with each other, when a healthy family faces a common enemy, they unite to defeat it and protect its members. But an unhealthy family will turn on each other.

Maybe the best way to tell if a church is healthy or unhealthy is to see how they behave when faced with a trial. How does the church fare when they lose a pastor? When there's an economic downturn? When the church building is destroyed in a fire?

Healthy churches band together and get stronger. Unhealthy ones turn on each other and fall apart.

So how do we test this theory in good times? Find a common enemy and go on the offense. Tackle the homeless problem in your town. Welcome people into your church family who don't look, act or sound like you. Give the growing youth group the main sanctuary, while the small adult Bible study goes to the back room.

Stretch yourself into new areas of ministry and see what happens.

Your church may be a family. But is it a healthy one? Or unhealthy?

You won't know until you put it to the test.

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2017 is our 125th Anniversary!

Throughout the year, we will celebrate this milestone. Invite people who would want to come back for anniversary events!

On the Anniversary Calendar already:

Sunday, August 13, 10

AM—Annual Picnic at Riverside Park Pavilion

Sunday, December 3, 10 AM—Formal Anniversary Worship with guest preacher Shari Prestemon, Conference Minister—A lunch at a local restaurant will follow. This will be an RSVP-needed event! More details as we get closer. :-)

If anyone is interested in creating a reunion of a Youth Group gang or Confirmation class, a Couple's Club, Women's Fellowship, Quilters gathering, or any other event, please talk to a member of the Council and we'll see how we can help make it happen! To this end, if you have ever been in a Women's Circle, there are plans afoot to have dinner together at a local restaurant to celebrate and reminisce. If you are interested, please talk to Shirley Hoff or Michelle Dettmann and let us know your ideas.

FUN FACT: We have traditionally supported refugees. In 1975, we adopted a Chinese family from a Vietnamese refugee camp, in conjunction with Catholic Charities. Thanh & Chau, with their two (later three!) children and Grandma Chen, arrived with very little and were helped by the church to find solid footing in the US, with more of the family joining our family in later years. In 1978, we adopted a Ugandan family for Christmas. In 1982, 10 foreign-born members of Peace gained citizenship and were honored with a special Sunday ceremony at the church. (from the church history book "A Century of Sharing and Caring")

We will be providing lunch for the volunteers at Habitat for Humanity's Build for Unity site this summer.

Our date will be **Wednesday, June 28**, the day of the Wall Raising! We'll need to provide food for about 75 people. Please check your schedules to see if you can help provide food, take food to the site, and/or serve. We'll need a few people other than John. Please let Pastor John know if you are able to help.



Remember to keep us up-to-date on your address and other contact info.

Did we miss your birthday on the calendar? Let us know!

Thought of the Month

If you could walk into any painting and actually experience the moment it depicts, which painting would you choose?

From *The Conversation Piece: Creative Questions to Tickle the Mind*

Remember to let us know if you are ill or hospitalized. The hospital can't let us know you are there, due to HIPAA and other privacy concerns. The only way we know to put you on the prayer list and come visit is if you call the office and leave us the information.

Also, let us know if you **wish** to be put on the prayer chain or the prayer list in the bulletin. We want to know how much information you are comfortable sharing.

Thanks so much!



Are you able to visit or send a note to members who are homebound or living in long-term care?

They would love to hear from you.

Marlys Burke

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Dolores Honl

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Bev Killeen

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To send a letter is a good way to go somewhere without moving anything but your heart.

~Phyllis Theroux

The Sunshine Report—Joys and Concerns

Dolores “Dodie” Honl, get well

Sue Towler, get well

**Nicole Clements & Michael Schomer,
wedding congratulations**



PEACE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

402 – 8th Avenue South
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Staff

Minister: Rev. John Fiscus

Secretary: Michelle Dettmann

Choir Director: Roger Towler

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Financial Secretary: Michelle Dettmann

Council Secretary: Linda Vierkant

Members at Large: Curt Hutchens, Val Broste

Trustees: Bruce Michaels

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