

The Pastors Connection

January 2012

2012: Standing Firm by Dwelling in the Word Together

“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God.” Col 3:16

“I tell you the truth; whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life”. John 5:24

“So then, brothers, stand firm and hold to the teachings we passed on to you...” 2Th 2:15

Each of us can testify to the transforming power of God’s Word written. When David and Pegge Tenant were CMC newcomers I heard them express awe at the depth of spiritual insight shared in our older members Sunday school. Newcomers also bring fresh wisdom, revealing biblical jewels our culture may prevent us from seeing.

Respect of the scriptures has been a CMC strength throughout our 250 year history. Although dad seldom read books, I have vivid memories of him at his desk every Saturday night reading the next days SS text and lesson to deepen his faith and sharpen his contributions. Such memories help me “stand firm!” Today’s generation is also finding multiple ways to dwell in God’s word helping us “hold to the teachings passed on to us”.

As a Pastoral Team we are grateful for this legacy. Throughout this past year we have discerned together how we might deepen these practices in 2012 so the scriptures continue to form and transform us as individuals and as a corporate body. Last month our discernment led us to now invite the congregation to “dwell” in one text we will identify for each month in 2012. We envision members reading that text in daily devotions. We propose each member base their Sunday morning opening reflection from that text.

Although I reserve the freedom to preach from alternative texts as appropriate, we believe God’s Spirit is confirming our designated texts as the primary preaching diet in 2012. We invite any member leading devotions during committee meetings to base their meditation on the designated text. We believe the Holy Spirit will use this immersion in one primary monthly text to deepen our understandings throughout 2012.

In January the designated text is Jeremiah 31:27-34. In the next month we will narrow to twelve our current list and share them with you. We do not assume every member will follow this practice. We simply encourage you to make it a matter of prayer and then do whatever the Spirit confirms is right for you. What we know is that as we dwell in the word together we will be able to “teach and admonish one another in wisdom”. We will daily be “crossing over from death to life”. And our capacity to “hold to the teaching passed on to us” will deepen.

I look forward to witnessing the fruit God will release as we dwell in the word together in 2012.

Joyfully living His story with you, Pastor Bob Petersheim