

THE MESSENGER

March 2020

Red Oak First United Methodist Church

www.redoakfumc.org

! BE INFORMED !

Monthly Ad Board Meeting Minutes are available in the church office for you to read



Core Values—Part II

For the past 4 weeks, we have been working toward identifying our three (3) Top Core Values—those foundational beliefs that are fundamental to who we are as a church and a congregation.

Save-The-Date. Sunday, March 22nd we will meet as a congregation to discuss and further refine what we have learned so that we may move into the future with a clear focus on who we are and what we may be called to by God. We will have lunch

together in the Fellowship Hall immediately following the end of the 10:30a worship service. Lunch is being provided—Brenda Vrba's World-Famous Chicken & Noodles! Followed by Core Values—Part II, led by our HCI coach, Melissa Drake. The workshop will last about an hour to an hour and a half. Come and help build our future.

March Birthdays

03/01	Patrick	Wolfe	03/07	Donald	Torbett	03/22	Marlys	Fisher
03/04	Mick	Fisher	03/09	Grant	Vrba	03/22	Kathryn	Walker
03/04	Pastor Ron	Bupp	03/09	Fred	Trumble	03/23	Kathy	Harris
03/05	Mark	Gregg	03/12	Lester	Bozwell	03/24	John	Walker
03/06	Ryan	Adams	03/12	Donna	Walker	03/30	Steven	Smith
						03/31	Carlos	Guerra IV



ASH WEDNESDAY begins the season of Lent, a season of reflection and fasting. We reflect on Jesus’ sacrifice for us. And we fast as a spiritual discipline in the nature of Christ’s 40 days of fasting in the wilderness following his baptism (Like 4:1-2).

Traditionally, Christians have given up eating meat during Lent, but more modern acts of fasting have included giving up things like chocolate or soda pop. In the end, we usually “reflect” on the fact that we miss what we’ve given up and look forward, not to Easter, but to the end of Lent when we can go back to our steak, snickers bar, or Diet Coke. Jesus did not come to share the Good News for us to be sad and gloomy (Matthew 6:16). He taught us to find joy in serving others. To find joy in caring for others out of sacrificial love—just like Jesus did for us. So, my challenge to you for Lent 2020— Instead of giving up something superficial, give yourself to serving others. Volunteer at our food pantry—Christ’s Cupboard—on Wednesdays, or plan and conduct a food or clothing drive for the poor, visit a nursing home’s shut-ins once a week. You get the picture! It is Christ’s sacrifice of love that he wants us to remember. “Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them” (John 13:17). *Pastor Ron*

Finance						
	Febraury			Year-to-Date		
	Actual	Budget	Difference	Actual	Budget	Difference
Income	\$ 11,579	\$ 15,135	\$ (3,556)	\$ 23,976	\$ 30,270	\$ (6,294)
Expenses	\$ 21,059	\$ 15,280	\$ (5,779)	\$ 35,845	\$ 30,560	\$ (5,285)

Attendance				
	2018	2019	2020	Change
January	322	379	228	-40%
February	418	233	390	67%
March	367	428	0	-100%
April	517	459	0	-100%
May	389	331	0	-100%
June	333	481	0	-100%
July	464	364	0	-100%
August	286	377	0	-100%
September	403	464	0	-100%
October	427	386	0	-100%
November	395	377	0	-100%
December	566	556	0	-100%
Year-to-Date	322	379	618	63%

“Go and make disciples”

Matthew 28:18



With these words, the risen Jesus Christ, himself, gives his church its mission and commission. The mission—as followers of Jesus, we are to “go” into the world and make disciples for Jesus. A few lines later in this same passage of scripture, Jesus defines exactly what a disciple is and how we are supposed to make them: “baptizing” and “teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.”

The commission? We “go” with the authority of Jesus Christ who has received it from the Father and with the strength of knowledge that Christ will be with us “always” as we carry out our mission.

Everything we do as a church must be focused on and with the intent of fulfilling Christ’s mission— “make disciples.” The world where we are to do this may seem obvious. As obvious as it may seem, let me define it . . . just so we are clear. This includes those outside the church walls who may know who Jesus is but, who do not yet have a relationship with him. It also includes those of us inside the walls of the church who say we are followers of Jesus. In other words, it is up to us to reach the “lost sheep” (Luke 15:6) and (as Paul writes in Ephesians 4:18) “equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ.”

The formal mission of The United Methodist Church is, “To make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.” So, you can plainly see that your task—our task, is to “go and make disciples.” Yet, somehow, local churches are missing the mark. Local churches are getting so caught up in doing good works, or they are so focused on themselves, they forget the mission. Our episcopal leader here in Iowa —Bishop Laurie Haller—has seen this challenge and has determined that we, the local churches of the Iowa Annual Conference UMC, must be more intentional about making disciples and has asked that all 700+ UM churches in Iowa develop an individual Discipleship Pathway. She has asked every church to have their Discipleship Pathway formalized by the end of this year.

In my message of February 9th — “Your Hope for the Future,” I presented the 3-Legged Stool of Discipleship. The 3 legs that support the weight and faith of the congregation: *Worship, Study, and Mission*. Development of our pathway to discipleship is based on the 2,000-year-old method used by Jesus himself. He taught the disciples to worship, he taught them the scriptures, he taught them mission. And, he taught them how to do this for others. As a result, a “church” of 13 men has grown to a church of more than 2 billion believers!

This will be our starting point as we build the Discipleship Pathway for Red Oak First. You will certainly hear more about our Discipleship Pathway as the year progresses. You may be asked to participate in its development—in a prayer group, a task group, or a workshop. A pathway to discipleship in which each of us is obliged to participate and use to lead others to Jesus Christ.

Pastor Ron