

be
still
and
know...

Psalm 46:10



January 2018

Mt. Pleasant United Methodist Church

A CULTURAL STORM

We are in the midst of a massive cultural storm. We are seeing things that have never been witnessed before and at a speed never imaged. It is far deeper than random acts of violence and the opioid epidemic, horrific though they are; there is a seismic shift in our cultural identity. Our culture, those ideals and values that define civilized people, are being rewritten before our eyes.

There is a loss of truth. In 2017, Webster's word of the year was "post-truth." Webster defined it as "circumstances in which objective facts are less influential in shaping public opinion than appeals to emotion and personal belief." Our culture has lost its connection to Truth and has drifted into a free-for-all of opinions where truth is being replaced by the loudest voices.

As Christians, what can we do to find our way out of the storm? As every mariner knows, being properly oriented to True North is essential if we are to find your destination. Thankfully, God has given us several compasses to help us find our way despite the storms that rages all around us.

The first one is the Word of God, the Bible. This is the compass handed down to us as God's self-revelation of the meaning of life (Jer 29:11). As a church, we use this compass to guide our lives not because it easy or convenient, but because it is true, tested and certain. It is the solid rock on which we build our lives. It is not our opinions, of which there are millions, that matter the most in a storm, but the clarity and authority of the compass you use.

What God has said isn't only alive and active! It is sharper than any double-edged sword. His word can cut through our spirits and souls and through our joints and marrow, until it discovers the desires and thoughts of our hearts. Hebrews 4:12 (CEV)

The greatest compass of all, of course, is Jesus Christ. The Word made flesh. He is the embodiment of truth, and all truth is found in Him. Jesus said "*I AM the Way, the Truth and the Life. Without me, you can go no farther.*" (John 14:6) If we want to know what God is like and find our way in a noisy culture, then we need to know Jesus, not just about Jesus. How well can you discern the Shepherd's voice in a noisy world?

When Jesus was in the midst of a storm on the Sea of Galilee, he was not afraid. Nor is Jesus afraid today. He has no fear of the Church's demise. He knows that we belong to him and therefore, we are indestructible. The culture might be in a post-truth spiral, but we are not.

Church is not about where you go, it's about who you become.

As members of Mt Pleasant, we are all responsible for shaping our culture. We have been given these powerful tools and we need to use them wisely, otherwise we are part of the problem. We have provided some excellent opportunities for you to develop the skills necessary to navigate these storms. I implore you, take advantage of them for your welfare and for the world's.

Blessings,



Everyone Needs Care.

When the road before you is uncertain, when your heart is torn with grief, when questions haunt you at night, and you feel alone, a trusted friend can make all the difference! We aren't made to bear our burdens alone. We all need someone to listen along the way.

“The difference between suffering which destroys us and suffering which transforms us begins with the presence of a caring, thoughtful other who is willing to acknowledge that brokenness with us.”—Ron Johnson, from Broken, We Heal

Communion Ministry: If you would like to receive communion because you are unable to attend church services on Sunday morning, please call the church office to schedule a time for one of our pastoral care team to bring communion to you.

Home/hospital visitation: Notify the church office if you would like a visit and some prayer support from a member of the pastoral care team during a medical crisis or a prolonged medical condition.

A Listening Ear: Sometimes life just becomes overwhelming or very sad and it helps to have a spiritual friend who will just listen to “our story” and offer prayer without passing judgment or having a “fix-it” attitude.

Prayer Support: Prayer changes our lives by changing our hearts. If your heart is troubled, you are not alone. You have an advocate in Jesus who will never abandon or forsake you because he loves you. However, sometimes God seems very far away and we need prayer veterans to help us and step in for us. Sometimes it is most helpful just to know we have the prayer support of others while we are going through an upheaval in our lives.

Professional Counseling: Some issues have deep roots that will take specialized skill, training and time to uncover. For extensive mental and emotional support, we recommend professional counseling as a means of grace for recovery and renewal.

A DIFFERENT KIND OF CHURCH

- People love to attend

“Our mouths were filled with laughter, and our tongues with songs of praise, and then it was said among the nations; the Lord has done great things for them.” Psalm 126:2

- People learn, grow and thrive.

“The Righteous chews on wisdom like a dog on a bone, rolling virtue around on his tongue. His heart pumps God’s Word like blood through his veins; his feet are as sure as a cat’s.” Psalm 37:30

- Leads people to new, better life with Jesus

“They were longing for a better country – a heavenly one. Therefore, God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a place for them.” Hebrews 11:16

Let your
light
shine.
Matthew 5:16

Thank you being a church people love and God blesses.

Thank you being a church kids want and parents need.

Thank you being a church where disciples grows and generosity flows.