

Living into Our Purpose

Have you ever wondered how our weekly scripture readings for worship are selected? For the most part, we stick with prescribed readings that are known as the Revised Common Lectionary. Each week has a passage from either from the Old Testament or Acts, a passage from one of the Psalms, a passage from the Epistles or Revelation, and a Gospel passage. This is laid out in a three-year cycle. This year happens to be Year B, and that means that almost all of the Gospel readings are coming from the Gospel of Mark. Once in a while, we will step away from the lectionary in order to have a worship theme that is particularly appropriate for our congregation at the moment. Otherwise, the lectionary gives our worship and ministry a focal point. Our Sunday School children are learning the very same lessons that are guiding our worship each week. This is also why our theme for the day usually matches the wonderful picture on the cover of our bulletins, being used by many congregations in many places.

From now until the beginning of Advent (when Year C will begin), we will be spending our time focused on the Gospel of Mark. Each Gospel has its own characteristics, with similarities and differences in comparison to the other Gospels. The Gospel according to Mark is known for being simple, straight forward, and action-packed. What a great way to describe the ministry of Jesus. I got thinking that it would also be a great description of our congregation's ministry together . . . simple, straight forward, and action-packed. It might sound unreasonable to describe our congregation's ministry as "simple" when there is so much happening and so many people involved. But remember that Mark was describing Jesus' ministry in a way that could make your head spin with the activity and frantic pace. Yet, there was a sense of grounding and calm that came from Jesus' clarity of purpose. The activity was frantic, but his purpose was constant. He stayed focused. He had come to bring the news that God's kingdom had come near. He had come to tell people to repent and to believe in the good news.

How do we live out that same purpose in our piece of Christ's ministry here at Palmer Moravian? As you have heard, our Joint Board has been engaged in strategic planning for the past months. We are in the process of identifying just a few manageable, realistic goals for our ministry. These goals relate to worship, which is the very reason we gather as the Church. They also relate to caring for one another within our faith family and extending the invitation to others to know and live the Good News.

You are already experiencing some of the practical components related to addressing these areas of congregational life. One obvious example is that you are asked each week to sign our friendship registers, even if you're sitting in the very same pew/chair every Sunday. This will help us to reach out to those who haven't been worshiping, out of care and concern for them. In a congregation our size, with three worship services, we need to be intentional about caring for each other. Thank you for helping us form a "new" congregational habit.

As we move further into 2012, you will notice other new ideas, and we will ask for your input to help us better understand the concerns and priorities of our members, as well as the needs and concerns of our neighbors. We are certainly a busy congregation. With God's leading, may we become even more grounded in our purpose as we live into the Good News of Jesus Christ!

Pastor Missy

WORSHIP SERVICES DURING FEBRUARY:

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 5: Installation of the Joint Board



- 8:00 a.m. Early Worship Service
- 9:15 a.m. Sunday School for all ages
- 9:30 a.m. New Horizon Worship in Fellowship Hall
- 10:45 a.m. Our Family Worship Service will include special music by the Chancel Choir, a Children's Chat, and a sermon by Pastor Missy

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 12: Installation of Student Pastor, Mark Newman

- 8:00 a.m. Early Worship Service with sermon by Student Pastor, Mark Newman
- 9:15 a.m. Sunday School for all ages
- 9:30 a.m. New Horizon Worship in Fellowship Hall with sermon by Student Pastor, Mark Newman
- 10:45 a.m. Our Family Worship Service will include special music by the Hilltop Ringers, a Children's Chat, and a sermon by Student Pastor, Mark Newman

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 19: Scout Sunday

- 8:00 a.m. Early Worship Service
- 9:15 a.m. Sunday School for all ages.
- 9:30 a.m. New Horizon Worship in Fellowship Hall
- 10:45 a.m. Our Family Worship Service will celebrate Scout Sunday with members of the scout groups meeting at Palmer Moravian Church in attendance. Included in the service will be special music by our Chancel Choir, a Children's Chat, and a sermon by Pastor Doug

Ash Wednesday Worship

The season of Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, March 9th. This year we will offer two worship services on Ash Wednesday; a late morning service at 11:15 a.m. in our Sanctuary, and an evening service at 7:30 p.m. in our Sanctuary. Our Chancel Choir will be providing special music at the 7:30 p.m. service.



