

Our journey toward Easter continues. Last month I wrote Christine's Corner with a focus on forgiveness and the hope that we can be a church of forgiveness. We are also a church that has a practice of prayer and scripture. You are cordially invited to attend a Bible Study held each Wednesday from 11 to noon. This is a lectionary study. Come for all of these sessions or for just one. Come with your Bible and an open heart to share and learn. Take a step along your journey for study.

In this March Spire there are many announcements for our life together. There are fundraisers, activities and especially the closing of the Stewardship Campaign. I hope you have completed your pledge and sent it or delivered it to the church. Currently the Interim team has endorsed the Share and Prayer triplet initiative. The Search Committee will be sending out a survey to membership in the near future. There is a form to order Easter flowers.

Now I want to write about a "touchy" subject for all of us.

I hope that some of you might begin to attend church after some absence or more regularly. You are needed. Many wonder what happened. Why have people left us? Have we lost persons who need what many of us enjoy? Do you think you would be welcome after an absence? I certainly and prayerfully hope so. We have several inactive members who have returned to worship recently. In a bashful sort of way I approach those persons and am internally grateful that somehow the Spirit has been sweetened by being at worship together. Coming through the church doors to participate is an affirmation of your baptism and I am encouraged to get to know new persons in our midst who want to support this church as their church home. Soon we will have four new people become members.

Have you been watching the Olympics, even all the commercials? What strikes me is the commitment to personal excellence that each team member exemplifies. Most will never step to the podium hearing their country's anthem played. Most will never make lots of money by endorsing particular products. Not all of them have identical gifts, talents, or opportunity to win. Each has a commitment to be the best within themselves and have been forever changed by the Olympic experience.

During Lent we look to Jesus as the pioneer and protector of our faith; of his excellent commitment to God and to bringing in a realm of intended peace with justice. We need not be Jesus. That job is not ours. Our commitment to discipleship calls us as individuals to pursue excellence. Excellence is based on relationships and not about success measured by a particular culture or some sort of endorsement. Not all churches have the signs of success that our culture might endorse. Yet, we do a great deal to help others and to grow in faith. We make a difference as a team of the faithful.

So pray for this hurting world and yourself. Attend church and think about participating in Bible Study. Take time to sit in reflection watching the world and listening to your inner thoughts. Seek out excellence in the small things you offer to others. Faith has no gold, silver and bronze. Faith simply requires a daily commitment to serve the excellence of a good and gracious God who loves us unconditionally. Hitch your wagon to a team for Lent. Easter is coming. See you in church and always let me know if you need a pastor. I will do my best to serve not as a perfect pastor but as one who remains committed to the excellence of faith.