

The beauty of the season of spring can be observed using our senses. Pentecost is the liturgical season for the church that began on May 23rd. We saw lots of red that day! We look, taste, admire, smell and feel the season of spring and Pentecost. This season is about newness of life as the church grows and our faith matures. June is a full month on our church's calendar as we hold the **yard sale**, host a faith forum on the **Share and Prayer Triplets**, we celebrate **Christian Education Sunday** and enjoy a **Choir Appreciation** reception. Committee meetings, the Council, Interim Team, Exploration Team and the Search Committee will also be together to conduct the ministry of the church. I have been tending the flock so to speak with a committal service, visiting nursing homes and the Springfield Hospital. There will be sermons to write, worship to conduct and plans to make as the summer unfolds for us as a church. Summer is not a "slowing" down for me.

On May 19<sup>th</sup> we held our annual meeting. There are results I need to share. We value our relationship with the wider church by continuing to give 10% of our pledged income to Our Churches Wider Mission. We reinstated funds for several committees. We decided to give the Christmas Eve offering to the Social Concerns Committee to distribute to local agencies that help others.

The biggest decision made at the annual meeting was the endorsement of a Feasibility Study. A task group of Jim Tucker, George Lamb, Jim Ballard and Diane Holme has convened to begin the process. I have encouraged these members to be thorough and open about their exploration. We want to explore and investigate a number of options for the building and for our ministry. I see this as a way to approach our purpose or mission as a church. I pray for a dream, a vision, a hope and a calling for us.

Do we have a vision? How does this sound: to be a center of spiritual growth with a focus on being partners with other helping organizations? Could we sell the church and still use it? Can we partner with other churches maintaining the building and creating a plan for usage that is a bit different than today's use? Can we worship in another existing church using space and sharing expenses? Do we have a vision of being a chapel where worship is held, people are baptized, weddings and funerals are celebrated and a place where groups can meet needing a chaplain to guide us, not a pastor?

Ideally, faith and finance are two tracks that run side by side. I know I have said that many times before. We can only cut so many expenses and remain viable. We have put in expenses for OCWM and committees, one benefit for one employee hoping to raise more money by doing more fundraising. In the past we have just used principal, year after year. There is an end in sight as we do this no matter how we cut expenses. We need not be at cross purposes using up principal in the endowment. We need a plan of action for our ministry with goals. I keep wondering if we want to build up the church. Are we open to experimentation? We will use up the endowment in a few years unless we grow in faith and finance. New people need to join us and inactive members need to become active again. Our pledges need to increase dramatically over time which means more people and the programs that attract people.

My hope and prayer is a feasibility study that will be an earnest attempt to re-invent this church with plans to grow. Each person matters so attending on Sunday morning and contributing with your presence will make a huge difference. It really will. God help us all as spring and Pentecost continues.