

Pembroke FUMC
Thursday September 17, 2009
Pastor's Report

I. **Spirituality and Worship**

- a. **Sermon Series-** We are in the midst of our third of three consecutive sermon series.
 - i. The first, entitled "Who is God," was a four part series that wrestles with what it means to understand the creator as God for us, Emmanuel as God with us, the Holy Spirit as God in us, and the Trinity: perfect community.
 - ii. The second series, entitled "Who are we," proceeds from a desire to understand theological anthropology, what does it mean to be human from a Christian perspective. It consisted of two sermons that explored our beautiful, beloved nature and our broken, sinful nature.
 - iii. Having discussed who God is and who we are, the third series answers the question who is the church. It is be a five part series: Intentional Faith Development, Risk Taking Mission and Service, Passionate Worship, Radical Hospitality, and Extravagant Generosity.
- b. **Discussion Opportunities-** I have pressed forward with a discussion series following our Tuesday evening meals. The first discussion was held last month and dealt with God's **faithfulness in the past. The second session, held 9/1, asked what the church saw as its mission.** The final session will ask the church to think about its vision.
- c. **Worship Team-** Worship team met on August 27th.
 - 1. Some strengths and areas for growth were discussed.
 - 2. Our next meeting, scheduled for 9/21, will wrestle with ways to creatively re-enforce the disciple making process in worship
- d. **Bible Study-** We continue to have good numbers for Bible Study (30-40), and we are concluding our study of the primeval history next week before moving on to the patriarchs.

II. **Attendance and Membership**

- a. Attendance for the three services over the last four weeks was 159.
- b. Membership: Jerry and Dawn Norris joined the church in August

III. **Weddings**

- a. Brooke Martin and Jared Hall were married on September 12th.
- b. Joey Caldwell and Leanne Tabor will be married October 24th.

IV. **Deaths/Funerals**

- a. R. Edwin (Eddie) Williams- Eddie passed away Sunday morning August 16.
- b. Lee S. White passed away Sunday August 23rd.
- c. Sonny Lafon (Mt. Leb.) passed away on August 31st.

V. **Visitation**

- a. Visitation continues to be a priority for me. Please continue to keep me aware of needs in the community.
 - i. Michelle Lester- What are we going to do to help?
 - 1. I continue to look for ways to incorporate church members in the visitation process. (I took a church member with me on a visitation earlier this month.) Please direct your thoughts and prayers to ways this could be accomplished.

VI. Administration

- a. Charge conference is scheduled for November 1st at Blacksburg UMC at 7:00 pm.
- b. I have met with Lay Leadership (Committee on Nominations and Leadership Development ¶258.1) twice to select persons to fill roles in our administrative committees.
 - i. Please continue to be prayerful as we are still looking for people to fill the following positions:
 1. Outreach Coordinator
 2. Witness Coordinator
- c. I continue moving forward in my professional development towards commissioning as a provisional elder in the VAUMC. This is pivotal for the continued growth of the church and my career in ministry.

VII. Miscellaneous:

- a. I am deeply troubled by divisions in the body. In an attempt to help facilitate healing I have taken a few steps and am asking the church to help.
 - i. At the request of Jennifer Lester and the youth council, I have assumed an administrative role in the youth. In an effort to build bridges I have asked that **the youth make a concerted effort to focus its activities on the disciple making process. This does not imply that their focus was elsewhere in the past.**
 - ii. I held a planning session Sunday afternoon to help the children and youth facilitators to work together in producing a children/youth activities calendar for fall 2009.
 - iii. I have asked the youth to step back fund raising efforts for a few months in the Spring. **WE WILL HAVE TO PICK THEM UP AGAIN.** However, as they are re-introduced they will be introduced by me, from the pulpit, with a clear ministry objective in mind. I.e. "we need \$2,000 to send 20 kids to camp, and we'll be conducting these two fund raisers in order to accomplish this."
 - iv. The youth group has done a lot of giving in an attempt to build bridges. Now, it is time for the church to give as well. I am asking all members of this body to examine themselves. Do you have genuine good will towards the members of the church? If not, fix it. Lead the way. I am genuinely convinced that the "issues" are not longer at issue. People have stopped trusting and, perhaps, loving one another. Remember that the last words our Lord spoke as a free man in John were words about unity. "Father, I pray they may be one, just as you and I are one." We can have the best programs, courses, worship services and activities of any church in history, but if we fail to love one another, we fail. I Corinthians 13:1-3 says, "If I speak with the tongues of men and angels, but have not love, I am but a resounding gong, a clanging cymbal. If I can fathom all mystery and all knowledge, if I have the faith to move mountains, but I have not love, I am nothing. If I give all that I possess to the poor and surrender my body to the flames, but have not love, I gain nothing."

VIII. Questions, suggestions, and recommendations

- a. It is incredibly important to keep lines of communication open. I assure you I welcome feedback. Please feel free to contact me with any issues as they arise. If you feel uncomfortable speaking to me, please make use of the PPRC as set forth by the Discipline of the UMC.

In Christ,
Pastor Rob