

The Newsletter

Saugatuck United Methodist Church

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Dear Friends,

Change is in the air. It is said, "The more things change, the more they say the same." The Writer of Ecclesiastes 3:1 put it this way, "There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under heaven." If you are like me you don't always appreciate change. For the most part I have been able to embrace change if it wasn't too fast or too radical. My preference has always been slow change. But the reality of is that change happens and often faster and in ways different than we would like.

There is a story of a pastor who, on his first Sunday, preached before any singing took place. Then instead of passing the offering plates in the pews, he asked his congregation to parade across the front of the sanctuary and drop their checks and change into a giant pot. But the most shocking change of all came after the service was over. Instead of greeting his people in the foyer, he exited out the back door and raced them to the fellowship hall. He was changing too much too fast and it wasn't long until he himself was asked to change churches!

Someone has said adjusting to change in life might be one of the most difficult things to do. The confidence for dealing with change comes from knowing that God is still in charge. Your life and my life are safe and secure in his hands. Ecclesiastes 3:1-10 give powerful witness to God's purpose in all things, even change. The Chorus we sometimes sing comes from Ecclesiastes 3 and has these words, "He makes all things beautiful in their time."

As I said at the beginning of this letter, "Change is in the air." If there ever was a time when the United Methodist Church needed prayer it is now and during the month of February. Near the end of the month there will be a special General Conference for one single purpose. Delegates from every annual conference and from around the world will be trying to find a Way Forward for our church dealing with human sexuality issues. For a long time our church has been divided on this issue with some wanting to change the Discipline of the church. What ever decision is made it has the potential to cause a split in the church. No one really knows what decision will be made and the impact it will have on the church. But simply put things will not be the same.

I invite you to pray for the church. May God's will be done among the believers called United Methodist. And let us pray for our little church that our commitment to God and each other might be stronger than any issue that might divide us. And let us pray that God will give us wisdom for any decisions we might be required to make.

In Christ,

Pastor Emmett & Mary