

The Church Council meeting

Sunday, March 31, 2019

Pastor's Report

“How can we deal with the result from General Conference of 2019?” “How can we as the church respond to it?” “What should we do for our local ministry here in our community?” These are the questions I have been struggling with over the past weeks and I want to share my concerns with you at our council meeting today. As we talk about those together, I even wish we can feel God’s touching hand in our broken and anxious hearts that we may overcome our confusion and conflict among us and know what to do as one family in God’s love.

Where do those uneasy feelings comes from? It is just because we all have different viewpoints from each other. I know some of us are disappointed at our denomination; some are not ready to move forward (you know what I mean)... But brothers and sisters, no matter what belief we have, let us remember that we all belong to one God, one Baptism, one Spirit, and one Church. It is God’s will for us to come together, worship together, grow together in his love, so that we can let people know we are children of God.

I’d like to invite you to participate in this circle process, that we may share our honest feelings and thoughts on the matters we now confront. I humbly ask you to take this discussion seriously and respect and honor others’ opinions. In doing so, we may hear God’s voices and find God’s will for us.

Opening Prayer

L: Lord, compel us as a church to proclaim your truth and preach your message. It won’t always be easy, and it may not be convenient. But Lord, your words are life to us. Use Your Word to rebuke us, correct us and encourage us — and let us follow you as we hold each other accountable. We fully trust and depend on you. – from 2 Timothy 4:2 (NRSV, adapted).

P: Amen.

Scripture

So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and **members of the household of God**, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, in whom the whole structure, **being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord**. In him you also are **being built together** into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit. (Ephesians 2:19-22)

Discussion

1) How do you see the church and all the believers in it? What is your best image of the church? Why is the unity so important to the community of faith?

L: [Lord], you urge [us] to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which we have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. --from Ephesians 4:1-3 (NRSV, adapted)

P: Amen.

2) As the members to the church, the body of Christ, what struggles and challenges do we pray about? How can we handle and overcome them?

L: [Lord, you call us] to bear one another's burdens, and in this way [we] will fulfil the law of Christ... [Help] us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. Therefore, as we have opportunity, [help] us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers -- from Galatians 6:2, 9-10 (NRSV, adapted)

P: Amen.

3) What are our hopes and dreams for our church for the year(s) to come? In what ways can we pray for and seek God's way? What is our vision for the future of our church?

L: Speaking the truth in love, [Lord,] we are to grow up in all aspects into [You] who are the head, even Christ, from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by what every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love. -- from Ephesians 4:15-16 (NRSV, adapted)

P: Amen.

Closing prayer

L: Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body; and be thankful. (Colossian 3:15)

P: Amen.