

# **First United Methodist Church**

**310 North Rowley, Mitchell, SD 57301**

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Well, we've all survived another Halloween. The candy's been given out and the costumes are being packed away until a later time. Up on Sawgrass Avenue Halloween was a pretty fun evening of greeting all the trick or treaters as they came by. Our dog, Sophie, especially enjoyed all the people coming by that seemed to want to pet her. Yes, it was a fund time

Something I noticed this year is that it seemed that the costumes were not as much about spooks, ghouls, and monsters, which is the usual Halloween fare, but more about heroes, the future, and even bringing a smile to people's faces. Oh, there were a couple of vampires and ghosts that floated by our home, but mostly I saw superheroes, doctors, nurses, clowns, princesses, a few historical figures, etc. There was even a priest or two in the crowd – maybe God is already nudging those youth to think about spiritual leadership or the ministry. A favorite was the dinosaur family. They never made it to our house, but I saw pictures and heard plenty of people talking about them.

As I've thought about the evening and the costumes of Halloween, it seems to me there was more of a spirit of fun about the evening. Oh, certainly, there was the "candy" goal, but even with some of the adults I interacted with, there was just a spirit of fun in the air. With some of the kids there was even a spirit of looking to the future; living out through their costumes qualities and characteristics that they want to develop or have in life. Superheroes want to be strong and make a difference in the world. The doctors, nurses, firemen, and police officers, they all want to help people. Prince and Princesses want to be seen as handsome or beautiful, and always to be loved...and loving.

Maybe it's because of the turmoil of our world and even our nation, I felt there was a greater sense of hopefulness about the future as kids talked about their costumes and why they chose to wear what they did. Oh certainly, there was fun for the day...but there was also a hopefulness for the future. May all our children and youth develop the positive traits and qualities they wish for on Halloween.

Another place I have seen hopefulness in the future is here in our church family. There is a strong sense of hopefulness about who we are and where we're going. What makes me say and believe this?? In great part it is the spirit of the people of our church family that I interact with, but also, it's the two special votes that we've taken recently. The purchase of the Ackerman Building was approved 106 Yes votes and only 4 No votes. That's a margin of 96%. Then the MCCI Prescriptions were approved by a vote of 112 Yes and 7 No votes. That's a margin of 94%. Both of those votes indicate a strong positive outlook and belief in the future of our church and where we sense God is leading us.

Thank you to all of you for your belief in our church. Thank you for sharing my feeling that the best days for our church are yet to come. I am honored to be your pastor during this time. Thank you for being a part of this church family. God is at work...and it will take all of us working together to achieve the future that God has in store for us.

Serving Together,

*Pastor Keith*

Remember, this Sunday is All Saints Sunday. We'll be remembering some special people from our church family and community who have died, but we carry in our hearts. The time of remember will take place at both of our morning worship services; 8:30 and 11:00 am.