

First United Methodist Church

310 North Rowley, Mitchell, SD 57301

Rev. Keith Nelson, Lead Pastor

keith@mitchellfumc.org

605.630.6586

I know that camping season is a long way off for us here in the Dakotas, but the last few days of warmer temperatures sure gets me in the mood!! Just the other day I was thinking about camping and the saying “Leave the campsite better than you found it” floated through my head. I’m not sure when I first heard that statement but it sure has stuck with me. So, whenever I’m out camping I always try to do something to live those words; pick up trash, move a limb off a walking path, pull some weeds, etc. I try to do something to leave the campsite (or campground) better than I found it.

So, what if we tried to apply this principle into the larger setting of our lives! What if we lived our lives striving to leave the world a little bit better than we found it. I know, in some ways that seems like a pretty tall order – pretty overwhelming. Our daily news reports often seem filled with stories of how the world is becoming a worse and worse place to live. Pain and suffering, disasters and tragedies, pollution and changing environments, disease and sickness, violence and distrust, poverty and brokenness. These seem to be the themes that we continually hear about and we wonder, or at least I do, can I really leave this world a better place? Can I really make a difference?

The answer to that question, I believe, is a loud and clear “Yes.” The key, I have to remember, is that I can’t change the entire world...but I can touch, and make better, the place that I am in the world. The same is true for each of us. So, I’m proud of my daughter who is currently on a Medical Mission Trip to a nation in Central America. She and the team have gone inland to a remote area where regular medical services aren’t available. I’m proud of our youth group who this year are doing monthly service projects, plus they take a yearly mission trip, in order to make a difference.

I’m proud of so many of our church family that are involved with Love Feast, providing and serving a free meal for anyone who simply wants something to eat. I’m proud of all of those who work with our children and youth ministries. I’m proud of those who work in the adult education and adult ministry area. I’m proud of Bruce Blumer, one of our own, for his work in Haiti in building a school that honors one of our own, a Mitchell native. That school alone will touch and change hundreds if not thousands of lives. My hope is that within the next few years our church will once again be involved with adult mission trips. This list could and should go on and on. There is much we, as a church, are doing to make our corner of the world, a better place.

In recent weeks there’s been a lot of discussion about less desirable parts of our world. There’s also been a fair amount of negative talk on social media about how the church is “falling short” of what it should or could be doing. But what few critics point out is what the “church” is doing. Do we mess up? Could we at times do things better? Is there more that we could accomplish? Sure!! But the truth is we are making a difference, one day at a time, one life at a time. May we each find some way to make the world a better place today, through how we live, how we act, how we speak, how we treat others, and how we reflect God in our lives. “Leave the world a better place”...that really is our goal!

Serving Together,
Pastor Keith

-We do have several copies of the book “Cherish” available for purchase in the church office. The cost is \$13. This Sunday’s theme is, “Cherishing in the Midst of Stumbling.”

-Remember its Noisy Bucket Sunday!!!! This month’s project is Spirit Lake Ministry Center (Devils Lake, North Dakota) Children’s and Youth Outreach! Mike and Libby Flowers have a growing ministry to Children, Youth, and Adults.