

First United Methodist Church

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Yes, I was one of “those” people. Our first little touch of snow a couple weeks ago reminded me of it. I knew I needed to do it. But I didn’t. Then, the storm that hit a few days back made me realize that winter is here. So, as the wind blew and the snow fell, I called the tire place and I asked about getting an appointment to get the snow tires put on Nancy’s vehicle. They said I could bring the vehicle by the next day and they’d take care of it. As I hung up the phone Nancy said, “The guy at the shop is probably laughing and commenting to another person behind the desk... ‘Yep, another guy who kept putting things off.’”

The next day when I dropped the car off, the shop looked kind of busy. I commented to the service coordinator, “Yeah, I’ll bet you got a few phone calls yesterday...including mine.” The guy just smiled and said, “Yes, we had a few.” I’m guessing (I’m hoping) I’m not the only one in our church family who has done this.

I’m reminded of a story in the Bible in which people seemed unable to truly grasp what was happening all around them. The story is found in Matthew’s gospel. It starts out saying that the Pharisees and Sadducees came to test Jesus and they asked him to show them a “sign” from heaven. In other words, they wanted Jesus to do one of his amazing miracles to prove that he really was someone or something special. It didn’t matter that Jesus had just fed over four thousand people with just seven loaves of bread and a couple fish. It didn’t matter that just before the miraculous feeding, Jesus had healed a bunch of people of their physical impairments, and that part of the story says the people were “amazed” because of what Jesus had done. The Pharisees and Sadducees still wanted to see more. They weren’t yet convinced. You might even say, they were hard hearted and close minded.

That’s when Jesus says, “When it is evening, you say, ‘It will be fair weather, for the sky is red.’ And in the morning, ‘It will be stormy today, for the sky is red and threatening.’ You know how to interpret the appearance of the sky, but you cannot interpret the signs of the times.” In other words, Jesus is saying, “The signs are all around you. Open your eyes to what is happening now. Open your hearts to what God is doing.”

Those are good words for me, and maybe all of us, to keep in mind in this Advent season. The signs are all around us of what God is doing. The lights are up, the Christmas trees are decorated, there’s all sorts of music playing that talks about a special baby being born. We hear the message that we need to be making room in our hearts for this baby, since there was no room in the inn. Yet, I’m guilty of ignoring these signs and messages, and filling my life with busyness and things that tend to draw me away from God. How often in my heart have I thought, “God, just show me another sign.”

May we all see the beauty and wonder of this season, and then respond. Together let’s pray that in this incredible time of year that we will open our eyes and our hearts to see, receive, and experience a fresh touch of love, God’s love, in our lives. Let’s not “put off” responding to what God has done, and is doing, in our world today!

Serving Together,

Pastor Keith

This Sunday is the Second Sunday of Advent. Join us for worship at 8:30 and 11:00. Be sure to join us Sunday afternoon at 4:00 pm for our Children’s Christmas Program. This year’s theme is “Listen...Its Christmas!” The kids have been working hard. There’s some great Pre-Program music lined up too! See you Sunday!!