

# **First United Methodist Church**

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

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A friend of mine, a colleague in ministry, is known for asking the question on Facebook, “How much rain did you get?” after a rain show rolls through their area. Some folks in his community are just waiting for the question because their responses start coming in almost immediately after he asks. It shows people are out checking their rain-gauges in anticipation of Pastor Jeff’s question, as well as for their own knowledge.

Just the other night we had a pretty good rain come through our area. So, guess what...I was out checking my rain-gauge too, so when the question came up in conversation, “How much rain did you get?” I’d be able to join in. (Which by the way, we had about 1.2 inches. 😊)

This got me thinking about another type of rain-gauge. Sometimes during a worship service, or in a prayer time, I’ve heard people ask (and I’ve done it too), that God’s Spirit would rain down upon us. Just like rain is needed for the crops, the grass, the pastures, the trees, and even to replenish the streams, rivers, and lakes, so we recognize that God’s Spirit or presence needs to be experienced in our lives regularly to keep us refreshed and growing in our faith. But the question is...how do we measure God’s spirit in our lives?

I’ve heard some people say, “Wow, I really felt the Spirit in that moment.” But then I’ve heard other people say that the same moment or experience did nothing for them, spiritually speaking. Yes, it’s true that quite often the movement of the Spirit is more a personal thing.

Yet, I believe there must be something that becomes a rain-gauge for our spiritual lives or our being a follower of Jesus. Another way to put it is, what’s the “reign-gauge” in our lives, the gauge that measures or indicates the “reign” of Christ in our hearts and lives? After all, as followers of Jesus, that is what we are really striving for isn’t it?!

Amos in the Old Testament talks about justice rolling down like waters and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream. Maybe that’s part of the “reign-gauge” for our lives. Or Jesus might use the beatitudes as a means of measuring the Spirit’s influence and presence in our lives. Or Jesus might use the Great Commandment as measurement. You know, loving God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength...and loving our neighbor as ourselves. Or it could be that Jesus would use the words of his Great Announcement that he began his ministry with. Words that actually come from Isaiah, “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.”

The truth is, we do need a rain-gauge or a reign-gauge in our lives to help us know what God is doing in our lives. A simple measure tool that I’m using in our church is what I’m referring to as “C<sup>5</sup>” which stands for; Come, Connect, Care, Create, Celebrate. You’ll hear more about this later on.

So, I hope your rain-gauge, or reign-gauge, is out. Let’s check it regularly to see how God is impacting, watering, or nurturing our walk of faith.

Serving Together,  
Pastor Keith

Remember, this Sunday we’re asking for the **“One Thing”** offering of **Crayola 8 Count Water Color paints**. They will be used for the Backpack School Project. We’re back at our facility this week – 310 N. Rowley. Worship is at 9:30 am. Come join us!!