

First United Methodist Church

310 North Rowley, Mitchell, SD 57301

Rev. Keith Nelson, Lead Pastor

keith@mitchellfumc.org

605.630.6586

So, how are your eyes doing? I hope they're just fine. I'll be honest, it's time that I scheduled another eye exam. Not that there are any problems...that I know of. It's just been awhile, and I want to keep my vision healthy and strong. I know that it takes the outside perspective of another person, my doctor, to help bring to light any potential issues or needs that should be dealt with. I've come to realize there are just some things my eyes cannot see without the help of an outside perspective.

Another issue I've had to face in my life and ministry is that sometimes I see something so much that I really no longer see it. Recently I was asked where something was at home. My reply was, "I don't know...I haven't seen it." And yet when the item was found, there it was...in plain sight. It had been there so long it was easy to overlook.

This sense of not being able to see what is right in front of you is a reality that people, businesses, and even organizations have to deal with. This is why some store owners hire "mystery shoppers" or unknown people to come to their store to shop. Then these mystery shoppers tell of their experience, what they saw, heard, and felt, and the store owner then is able to decide if anything needs to be done different to make the shopping experience more helpful, attractive, meaningful, or enjoyable for the shoppers.

Did you know that there are mystery worshippers?? This is something I first heard about 10 years ago or so. It's the same idea as what I've described above. Unknown individuals come into a church setting to experience the facility and worship service. They record their thoughts and observations, which are then shared with the pastors and leadership of the church. It provides outside eyes to see what others who have been there for a while tend to overlook.

As a part of the MCCI process that our church is involved with there will be Mystery Worshippers that come to our church. These mystery worshippers will experience what all of us experienced at some point – that of what it's like to be a first-time guest or visitor in our facility and in our worship service. They will notice things that I don't notice anymore because I've been here at Downtown Mitchell First UMC for over two years now.

The goal of a mystery worshipper is not to make us look bad. No, the goal is to point out what we're doing well and then identify things / areas that we might overlook, that a first-time person is likely to notice. The goal is to help us become even better at what we do.

To hear what our mystery worshippers have to say about us, as well as be a part of what the MCCI Consultation team shares with our church, I invite you to come to our church on September 22 for the Consultation Seminar Day. It will last from 9 am – 3 pm. Lunch will be provided. It will be a great day of learning and sharing of hopes and dreams for our church for the future. Your presence and thoughts can help shape the direction of our church.

Serving Together,
Pastor Keith

Remember, we're two weeks away from the beginning of the school year schedule. On September 9 we go back to 2 worship service each Sunday – 8:30 & 11:00, with Sunday School at 9:45.