

First United Methodist Church

310 North Rowley, Mitchell, SD 57301

Rev. Keith Nelson, Lead Pastor

keith@mitchellfumc.org

605.630.6586

Several years ago when I was living in Bismarck, President Obama made a stop in our fair city. There was no parade, or anything like that. He was flying in, getting on Marine One (the Presidential helicopter) and flying to a location south of Bismarck. Of course, there was a lot of buzz about the Presidential visit, but there really weren't any opportunities for the public to see or greet the president. Yet there were a lot of preparations taking place to get ready for the Presidents brief visit. For me the cool thing was seeing Airforce One passing overhead our home. Yep, I had my camera out and I was snapping lots of pictures. It's not everyday that the President of the United States passes over my home. And it's not every day that an aviation enthusiast (like me) gets to see Airforce One in the air and quite close by!

Now, thinking in terms of all the preparations a community makes when the President is coming to visit, that's also what it was like centuries ago when the Roman Emperor would visit a community. There was a term used for the time of preparation for the Emperor's arrival, "Adventus." The Latin word means "coming" or "arrival." Commemorative coins have been found with the word Adventus on them, indicating the coin was minted to commemorate the coming of the Emperor to a community. So, lots of preparations were made; like the rough places on the road were made smooth. Potholes around town were filled. Things were cleaned and polished as best they could, all because someone of GREAT importance was coming!

You can see where we get our word Advent from – the Latin word Adventus. Since preparation was a big part of Adventus, so it is that preparation is a part of Advent for us today. So, the question I want to ask today is, how are you preparing for the coming...the arrival? Yes, we recognize Advent is the time of preparing for Christmas, the "coming" of the Christ Child. But Advent is also a gentle reminder to be preparing for what we Christians refer to as the second coming of Christ...his return. Either way, there are preparations to be made because someone of GREAT importance is coming.

What are your Advent Preparations this year? No, I'm not talking about the decorations and the tree, the baking and the Christmas Cards, etc. What are you doing to prepare yourself, your life, and even your household for this great arrival? What preparations would make the King, or Jesus, the happiest and most proud of our preparations? I believe the answer to this question is found in Jesus response to what the greatest commandment is. Jesus simplified answer was, "Love God and Love Neighbor."

My challenge to myself, and to each of us, is that in each day in this season of "Adventus," we would intentionally look for some way to live out Loving God and Loving Neighbor. I would love to see on Facebook some simple posts stating "Adventus" – and then a brief description of what you did that day to prepare for the coming. Love God & Love Neighbor is the "preparation" that I believe would truly please Jesus the most. Just think how this simple focus could really impact our community and the world. Seems to me, Jesus really knew what he was talking about. Love God...Love Neighbor...Prepare!

Serving Together,

Pastor Keith

Sunday afternoon, December 9, at 4 pm the Sunday School Christmas program, "**Finding Joy on the Christmas Express**" will be held in our church sanctuary. **Pre-Program music will begin at 3:15.** What a great way to get in the Christmas Spirit. Come Join Us!!

On Friday, December 14 our church is hosting a Family Advent Evening at the church. We'll have soup in the Gathering Area beginning at 5:15 pm and then show the movie "The Fourth Wiseman" at 6:00 in the Chapel. There will also be children's activities starting at 6:00 for those that don't want to watch the movie. Click on the following link to let us know you're coming...or call the church office. [**FILL OUT IN GOOGLE FORMS**](#)