

January 2011 Newsletter



God has blessed us with the beginning of a new year and we have the opportunity to refresh our ministry here at Wesley Church in this new gift of time that will unfold to us day by day. In the December letters that I sent to you, each of you received an invitation to approach Christian mission and Christian giving in a new way. Here are ways to strengthen both of these.

We have many traditional ways to bring forward Christian mission in our congregation and recently we have added a number of new opportunities. Consider teaching or assisting with Sunday School. Our children are a sacred trust and God calls us to train our children in the ways that God desires them to live. Think about serving on a committee. Our committees thrive as diversely-talented people serve on them. Though fall is when we usually recruit new committee participants, new members are always welcome. We have 4 active music groups. New participants are always welcome, because music is a gift of God that we want to share. There are additional opportunities to build up our outreach ministries, such as volunteering to visit those hospitalized or homebound, delivering seasonal gifts to our homebound, or volunteering at S.O.S. (Soups or Socks). New opportunities for Christian mission are found in volunteering with the Intervarsity Christian Fellowship located on the UW campus. Here we can help build up the faith and life of young adults in our community. As of December 1, YFC (Youth for Christ) has officially begun their ministry in our area, primarily with at-risk teens, 18 and under, helping to strengthen their lives materially, socially and spiritually. Another effective way to be in Christian mission is to invite an un-churched friend to worship or a church activity.

In order to carry out our Christian mission of inviting people into a relationship with our Lord Jesus, support of all kinds is welcome and necessary. So many of you have already given many hours of service, and we appreciate and welcome the gifts of time and talent that you have shared. We welcome your ongoing ministry in this New Year as well. We also know that even in a challenged economy, God blesses the financial giving that we do. The invitation to tithe has been extended. If an outright commitment to tithe seems too challenging, it can also be done progressively by increasing giving to the Lord's work by 1% per year. Statistically, United Methodists give 2.5% of their income to the church. Consider the amazing ministry that God could do through us as people committed to giving back to him 10% of what he's blessed us with. What God-given dream that you have for the church could become a reality?

Yet, in order to continue to give of our time, talent and treasure, we need to keep our own "spiritual tank" full. We need to nurture our faith and our desire to serve God as he is calling us to do, and God desires to bless us lavishly so that we can. So take time to attend adult Sunday School classes on Sunday morning. Or come to the Monday Morning Bible study at the Willows and enjoy wonderful food and fellowship as we observe the day dawn through the east and south windows. Come to worship and take this opportunity to hear the Word, to pray and sing, and to participate in Holy Communion, for God blesses us in a special way when we come together in his name.

May God richly bless us all in the New Year as we step forward in faith, for God is amazing and can do far more through us than we could ask for or even think of. *Ephesians 3:20*

Peace in Christ,

Pastor Ruth