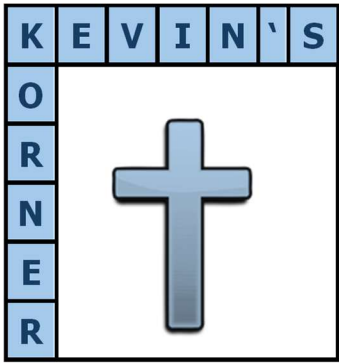




Last month I wrote to remind you that we, at First Christian Church, are part of something way bigger, and not just God or God’s creation. We are part of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). As Disciples, ***"We are a movement for wholeness in a fragmented world. As part of the one Body of Christ, we welcome all to the Lord’s Table as God has welcomed us."*** We Disciples are also gathering this BIGGER church together, July 10-11 (Friday night and Saturday), at First Christian Church, right here in Grand Junction. We will gather electronically, but we will be gathered as the larger church. I hope you will commit to attending at least one of the sessions: Worship or Business of the Church. We’ll make it fun!

You can look below for the website to register.

This month I want to talk about the church of Jesus Christ as a much smaller organization. According to Father Richard Rohr, ‘Jesus’s first vision of church is so simple we could miss it: “For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them” (Matthew 18:20).’ Now stop and think about this, *where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them*, and there is the church, the early church for sure.

Not only that, but the first missions of the church were Jesus sending the disciples out “two by two” (Mark 6:7). The original church Jesus designed was two people and Jesus praying, worshiping, working and serving together. Now stop and think about this. Two people gathered in Jesus’ name, with Jesus’ Spirit, qualify as church. Could this be the design for church that Jesus had in mind? Could this be an effective way to be the church of Jesus Christ and to build the kingdom of God on Earth (the Body of Christ, in Paul’s words)? Can you imagine the power of having 20 partnerships, or more, praying together (in person, by phone, even email at times, but in person whenever possible)? Perhaps these spiritual partnerships would lead to worshiping together. Perhaps working and serving together within the church and community. Who knows what God might do with us?

Recently our Elders have been conversing about seeking God’s will and direction for First Christian Church. The Good News is, we have a book that promises to be relevant and Spirit-filled. And that is our Bible, the story of God’s love for God’s people and God’s good creation. We believe that the Bible can guide us into God’s will and God’s future, if we read it carefully and seek answers and directions for our church. Thus, we encourage our Elders and entire congregation to study the Bible and pray for God’s guidance.

We are doing that in our Bible study, where we are bringing our questions for Christian life and church life to the Bible and seeking clear context and understanding, which we can use to guide our church and our individual lives. What if Jesus were to send us out (or home) *two by two*? What if we formed partnerships of 2 persons (possibly 3), and the Spirit of Jesus? What if these partnerships would commit to praying for each other and for our church, maybe take on specific needs in and around our church family, to make sure we are accessing the power of prayer?

I imagine that we could strengthen our spiritual foundation as a church and perhaps encourage each of us to grow, not only in our prayer lives, but also in our *worshiping, working, and serving together*, first in our partnerships and together in our larger church family. I suspect that such a revitalized and committed church would be attractive to others in our community. And I think our partnerships would make it easier for us to encourage each other to share this Good News with others and invite them to come and pray, worship, work and serve with us.

I suspect this might produce bolder, more confident, knowledgeable, spiritual, and spirit-filled followers of Jesus, potentially better leaders for worship and mission. And yes, we need everyone to still come for worship, fellowship, study and service at FCC, as best you are able. I invite you to think about this and pray about it. I would like feedback from everyone, if possible, before we meet with the Church Board. Email me: revkev@gmail.com. Call me: 970-778-5473. Come visit me during the week. Let me know what you would need from the church: suggested guidelines and suggestions for *praying, worshiping, working and serving together*.

We believe that just having people deliberately praying regularly for each other, folks in the church, and other important subjects/persons, would be a great benefit for FCC. What more might happen when people seek God’s will and guidance together, rather than alone? With these bolder, more confident, knowledgeable, spiritual and spirit-filled followers of Jesus, potentially better leaders for worship and mission?

I suspect that regardless of numerical growth for the church, which could happen, the spiritual growth of our church could be tremendous. Could this be the starting point for God’s future for First Christian Church? May God bless this church!

Blessings, Pastor Kevin