

Pastor Peter's message notes from Nov. 22, 2020

Rich Church, Poor Church: Transformation

The scriptures of the Old and New Testament make it clear the aim of faith is to transform us from following sin to following Jesus. Paul was transformed on the road to Damascus when he encountered Jesus in a flash of light. He went on to live a life of transformation, challenging us in Romans Chapter 12 to dedicate our whole lives to God so that we might discern the will of God and be transformed by the grace of Jesus Christ. This is why we exist as church: so that through the power of God, others might have new life in Christ.

In the Rich Church we hear how transformation is taking place. People testify about how they were once lost through things like drugs or alcohol or workaholicism and how the church led them to understand the transforming nature of Christ. The congregation sees how their gifts help people do mission work in the Third World, feed the hungry, bring new people to faith, and support families who are financially struggling during the pandemic. In the Rich Church, people are encouraged to give to help continue this transformation.

The Message translation of Romans 12:2 reads, **"Don't become so well-adjusted to your culture that you fit into it without even thinking. Instead, fix your attention on God. You'll be changed from the inside out."**

When people give and then see the transformation, they are immediately compelled to want to give again and to give more to make an even bigger difference. It is a beautiful cycle. Don't all of us want to make a difference? Don't we want our communities to look like the kingdom of heaven on earth?

The Rich Church is well aware that giving is a spiritual discipline and a spiritual decision. It has little to do with money, but it has everything to do with our devotion to Christ as Lord of our life. It is easy to fool ourselves into believing we have a good relationship with our Savior until we are put to the test of giving and then forced to see what we truly trust.

I haven't tithed my whole adult life. When I went to college and for several years afterwards, I drifted away from Jesus' mission to change the world. I wasn't giving financially to Jesus' mission. I now wonder how tithing would have changed my life in my early twenties. Would I have drifted away from the community of faith if I had understood how God could use me and my gifts to change the lives of others? Could God have changed my life through the spiritual practice of giving?

When people invited me to return to the life of faith, I remember seeing how the church was changing lives for God: raising the next generation in faith, feeding the hungry and visiting the sick. They offered hope to me. I wanted to make a contribution to this important work and felt compelled to start giving financially to Jesus' mission. This decision has continued to be an important part of my spiritual life.

Why should we give to the church? It goes back to what Paul tells us: By giving to Jesus' mission, we change the world. By giving to Jesus' mission, we change ourselves.

Preparing For Worship

Scriptures for the coming week

Monday	Nov. 30:	Luke 1:1-7
Tuesday	Dec. 1:	Luke 1: 8-13
Wednesday	Dec. 2:	Luke 1: 14-17
Thursday	Dec. 3:	Luke 1: 18-20
Friday	Dec. 4:	Luke 1: 21-23
Saturday	Dec. 5:	Luke 1: 24-25

Upcoming Worship Messages

- Nov. 29: Giving Thanks
- Dec. 6: Christmas According to Luke: Zechariah's Story
- Dec. 13: Christmas According to Luke: The Good News

Our Church Family

Prayer concerns from our church family

Aura Tavernner, Judy Murray, Donna Rosiere, Jaccie Blaszczyk, Linda Riddle, Camden Garcia, Peggy Province, Irene Miller, Ann Wilson, Nancy Walters, Michael Smith (Hubert Neth's son-in-law), Jim Hudson, Alice Hanrahan, Waneta Lane; Anastasia, Tilly Agymang's sister-in-law in Ghana; the Russell Jackson family on the loss of Russell's father Myron Jackson; the Sample family on the loss of George's brother, Jack Sample; June Mellinger's brother and sister-in-law Herald and Phyllis Merle; Barb Carder

Birthdays for the coming week

- Nov. 30: Maggie Ridenhour, Amber Wilson
- Dec. 1: London Eckhoff, Morgan Frankum, Meryl Lin McKean, Stephen Price
- Dec. 3: Beverly Jackson

Anniversaries for the coming week

- Nov. 29: Chris and Vada Postlethwait

In-Person Worship Paused; Office Remains Open

UMC-Burg is pausing in-person worship along with all other programming that meets in the church through December due to the increase in COVID cases. However, this does not stop us from accomplishing Jesus' mission to live that all may know Jesus. We will continue to worship together online and provide online children's ministry. DVDs of worship services are available.

Please contact our office if you need any technical support or just want to connect. The office phone and email are checked daily.

Phone: 660-747-8158 Email: contact@umcburg.org

The church office will be closed Thursday and Friday, Nov. 26-27 in observance of the Thanksgiving holiday.

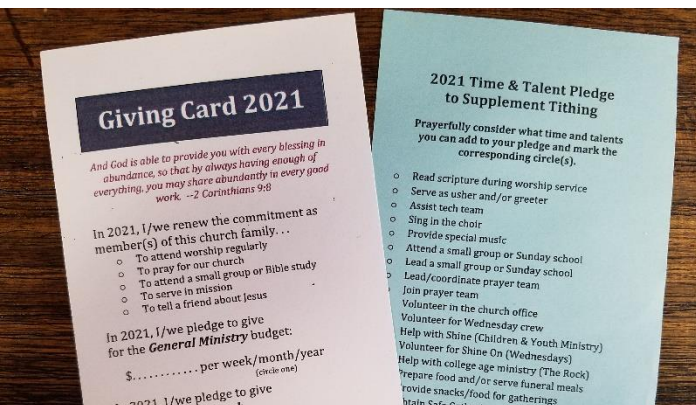


This is the one of whom the prophet Isaiah spoke when he said, "The voice of the one crying out in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.'" Matthew 3:3

Prepare! Isaiah knew that Christ was coming. The Prophet also knew about John the Baptist, "a voice in the wilderness." The man before the man! Isaiah and John, born centuries apart, both told anyone who would listen that the Messiah was coming, and they needed to PREPARE!

Advent is a season to prepare for the birth of Jesus. It is a time of great anticipation and joy but also a time to get our spiritual lives in order. When I was growing up, if my mom knew we were receiving company, everything stopped, and the whole family cleaned house. We could not let our "Guest" see that we lived in a messy, unkept house! This is what John the Baptist was telling the Israelites: "Company is coming, and your room is unacceptable!"

The first candle of Advent represents hope and expectation. We must get our affairs in order so we can enjoy and appreciate when the King arrives. Praying, reading scripture, and repenting should be the top three things on our Christmas "TO DO LIST." Christmas is a blessing, but it can also be a stressful time. Daily meditation and worship with our Father will help us prepare. Besides, we do not want baby Jesus to see our dirty room, do we. -Doug Christie



Now that we are worshipping online, we encourage you to mail in or drop your pledge cards and Time & Talent sheets off at the church office.

'Tis The Season to Give

While UMC-Burg is pausing in-person worship during the holidays, we are definitely not pausing in helping others in our community. Below are several ways you can support others and their needs.

The Mitten Tree

Let's keep our students warm! Bring hats, gloves, mittens, scarves, socks, or fleece blankets to the church atrium and place them on or beneath the mitten tree. According to Liz Kostas, social worker in the Warrensburg R-VI School District, also especially needed are sweat pants for girls and boys sizes 4-12.

The Christmas Store

In December, our community will come together to host the 47th annual Christmas Store 2020.

Due to COVID, the Christmas Store will have to rely solely on financial contributions. Because approximately 500 families are planning on this for their Christmas dinner, over \$20,000 is needed to make this ministry work. The plan is to distribute vouchers for perishable food such as meat, dairy, eggs, and fresh fruit/vegetables.

Monetary donations for the Christmas Store are needed by Dec. 1. Please mail donations to Christmas Store 2020 c/o Shiloh Baptist Church, 212 N. Main St., Warrensburg, MO 64093. Make checks out to Christmas Store 2020. You can also donate online by going to umcburg.org and clicking on the Christmas tree icon. If you are receiving this newsletter through email, you can [click here](#) to donate.

The Rock Students

College students need our help, too. UMC-Burg's College Age Ministry Council would like to provide gifts of support and comfort to The Rock residents throughout the week of fall semester finals. Monetary donations to support this cause may be mailed to or left in the church office. Make checks out to First United Methodist Church with The Rock in the memo line. Contact Lisa Schmidli at lisaschmidli05@gmail.com with questions regarding this ministry. Please make donations by Dec. 4.

Adam Hamilton's Advent Study *Incarnation: Rediscovering the Significance of Christmas*

Interested in forming or joining a five-week Bible study group in December? Contact Pastor Susan for materials and support.

