

**Sunday Sidebar: November 4, 2018**

### **Every Member in Ministry**

Some churches proceed from the assumption that the clergy and professional staff do the ministry of the church, and the laypeople are the recipients of the ministry. Well that is a false and erroneous assumption and it is not the biblical model, at all! The biblical message is that every member of the church should be involved in some kind of ministry. So here at New Bethel UMC, we don't ask anyone to do everything (not even the pastor!). But we do ask everyone to do something!

Jesus said that he came to serve, and not to be served. He saw his task and role as that of a servant. And he invited his disciples...and the church to continue in that servant role. The Church today is an extension of the servant ministry of Jesus Christ.

A lot of folks look for a church by asking the very natural question, "What does this church have to offer me?" And that's a fine place to start. But genuine joy and satisfaction come, when the church helps the person rephrase the question to, "What can I offer in service through the church?" Indeed, each of us longs to be a part of a meaningful ministry. We want to love God, love our neighbors, and grow in our faith. Most people are looking for more than just sharing a little piece of their lives, one hour a week in worship; rather, they want to invest their lives in ways that make a real difference. And those who are finding deep satisfaction in their meaningful ministry are usually excited about it and telling others about it, and inviting more people. And thus, a church grows.

So together, we are the body of Christ, serving the world in his name. The Apostle Paul wrote some great words about our service in the 12 chapter of 1 Corinthians: There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but the same God works all of them in all people. Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good...

We are gifted differently and we serve differently but it all works together for the common good! I love the way God values and equips the individual and the group as a whole. God sees it all, the big picture and all the little snapshots, and they all matter to God! What an awesome God we serve!

So what ministry area do you want to serve in 2019? Think about it, fill in your In His Steps form, and be ready to bring it forward today as a part of your offering to God! Every member in ministry! That's what we are aiming for....

### **"Made for a Mission"**

That's the title of a chapter in Rick Warren's book, *The Purpose Driven Life*. It's an excellent book and we have several copies available in the church library if you'd like to take a read. Our English word "mission" comes from the Latin word for "sending." So being a Christian includes being sent into the world as a representative of Jesus Christ.



In the 17th chapter of the Gospel of John, Jesus says In the same way that you gave me a mission in the world, I give them a mission in the world (John 17.18 The Message). God is at work in the world and the followers of Jesus Christ - those who have accepted him as Lord and received forgiveness for their sins - are supposed to join in that work. God gifts us with both a ministry in the body of Christ and a mission in the world. As Rick Warren puts it, our ministry is our service to other believers, and our mission is our service to unbelievers. I tend to lump it all together as ministry, but I appreciate Rick's point that our work is multi-faceted and focused on both those inside and outside the church walls. It all counts. Everyone matters. And all of our efforts at helping others in the name of Jesus Christ, bring glory to God.

