



The River

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER | JANUARY 2020

Greetings,

As I set and contemplate on this past year, I find myself between Christmas and the New Year. I pray that you had a joyous and blessed Christmas.

I am pondering what lies ahead in 2020. Have you given any thought as to how you will grow spiritually and draw into a deeper relationship with Christ? As you set goals for yourself in the upcoming year, I encourage you to put some time into spiritual growth.

I realize that are some uncertain times that lie ahead of us as South River United Methodist Church. In May the global church gathers again in Minneapolis for General Conference. And as in years past a big focus will be on how the church addresses and functions on the issue of human sexuality. It is no surprise as we watch the TV and read newspapers that the world that we all live is changing and dividing on moral topics. There has been a rapid rise in the LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bi, queer, and transgender) voices. There has been a push to put them on an equal and open platform in society and to be openly accepted. This does not fair well with everyone. I would say that the majority of people at South River UMC are of a traditional belief and interpretation of scripture. As such raises the question as what South River is to do or be associated with if the global church changes it's official position. There have been a few conversations on this subject over the past year. However, as it presently stands in the UMC Book of Discipline does not spell out any procedure for a local congregation to disassociate with the global church by way of or through the Conference. There are several plans submitted to General Conference for adoption. I am inviting each of you to keep General Conference in your prayers and that the United Methodist Church maintain traditional Biblical standards.

I also continue to reach out to other congregations of varying denominations in our area to find ways to come together and work together for the whole of our community in the Name of Jesus. The idea is that together we are stronger than any single church. Part of the problem becomes the issue of what is it going to cost us and who gets the biggest portion of credit for whatever the event or project is. I say this to encourage every member or regular attendees of South River to broaden and expand how you view our community and church. If we step up to ensure that every event or special project is a success as long as it glorifies God regardless of who was involved, how much effort is expended, or who gets the credit or blame for the success or failure. We need to try new ways to reach people and introduce them to Christ. We can change the landscape of our community for the

better when we all lead by example for the sole purpose of glorifying God. We all need to do our own homework and start a deeper transformation to be more like Christ each new day.

As we start a new year, I encourage each of you to take on the plan to read through the whole Bible in a year. I also encourage you to make Sunday School and a bid-week Bible study a priority. To make it a priority to spend dedicated time every day in prayer.

This leads me into another of area of concern that needs specific prayer consideration; that is on the direction of the 9:15 service music. This past year saw a quick and dramatic twist to the Early Service Praise team. The unexpected death of Guy Maher was a shock that was felt throughout South River. Some of the Praise team felt that this was time for them to step down. There was a few people that saw this as the time to join the praise team but then later found that this was too great a disruption to their time balance. 2019 also was a time that Barry and Rene made a decision to step down after many years and gave us notice that they will continue until the end of the year 2020. We need musicians and singers for what we have come to know and appreciate as the “Praise Team” to continue. Pray for what direction the music of the 9:15 service takes.

Open your hearts and let the Spirit of the Living God lead you for Kingdom Glory. Young or Old you are here because God led you here and He’s not done with you yet. We are all called to be in ministry but not necessarily to be a full time pastor. Each on here has an area of influence – some as teachers, some as co-workers, some as parents. Give God the glory for where you are and let Him transform you for greater works.

Peace & Blessings

AJ Moore

January Memorials

In Memory of Candance Fraley to the Cemetery Fund

Shelbia Foster

In Memory of Gerald Foster to the Cemetery Fund

Shelbia Foster