

McCabe United Methodist Church
September 21 & 22, 2013
Jan Joersz
“Servanthood”

Good afternoon (morning) everyone. Welcome to McCabe! Please stand up, shake out your legs, and greet your neighbors.

Let's be seated. My name is Jan Joersz and I want to thank you for coming today. I'll bet this was not what you were expecting when you got here, is it? So, did any of the thoughts you heard hit home? Did other thoughts or questions come to your mind?

Well, I asked to do this service because it has always been my belief that we, the laity, should be involved and even more so now that we have only one pastor. Rick and the current leaders can only do so much. There are over 900 members here at McCabe, so think about all the things we could be doing in and out of this church building if each of us used our God-given gifts.

As members of the United Methodist Church we took a vow to “faithfully participate in the ministries of the church by our prayers, our presence, our gifts, and our service.” We are reminded of this vow and renew it every time a person joins the church or there is a baptism. If you don't believe me, look in the hymnal on page 38, 43, 48, and 52.

Today I want to talk to you about your gifts and your service that we profess in that vow. Do you know what gifts God has given you? Are you using them in service to others? In Romans 12:6 it says, “We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us.” And in 1 Peter 4:10 it says, “each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms.”

Years ago I did extensive research about spiritual gifts and tried several different gifts assessments before deciding to use a program called Serving from the Heart. The acronym that they use is S.T.R.I.D.E., stride. It stands for Spiritual Gifts, Talents, Resources, Individuality, Dreams, and Experiences. It was developed by the United Methodist Church of the Resurrection in Leawood, Kansas. I chose this program because I felt it was the most comprehensive and easy. Now, I'm sure some of you are thinking, “Well, I took the Myers-Briggs test at work” (or other character assessment) and that's great, any insight about who you are, is important!

Spiritual gifts and gifts-based ministry are the foundations for understanding how the church is meant to operate, and for understanding our individual roles within the church. With every believer using their God given gifts, the church is better equipped to achieve the Great Commission as stated in Matthew 28:19, *“Therefore go and*

make disciples of all nations. . .” Every spiritual gift is designed to equip us to fulfill the Great Commission. As Christians, we are responsible for carrying on Christ’s work as he commanded. The importance of spiritual gifts is addressed in several books of the Bible and one of my favorites is 1 Corinthians 12:12-14:

“Just as a body, though one has many parts, but all its many parts from one body, so it is with Christ. For we were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body – whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free – and we were all given the one Spirit to drink. Even so the body is not made up of one part but of many.”

I think this passage is one of the easiest to understand; we are each a part of the body of McCabe and Christ with different abilities/gifts, and if you do not use those gifts than McCabe cannot fully do what God has commanded us.

So if you don’t know what your gifts are, please take some time to discover them, I’d love to help you with it.

Now as far as Your Service:

Back in April the Bishop asked us to meet with a consultant to assess where McCabe is at and Sue Nilsen Kibbey gave us a report of what we need to do to grow numerically and spiritually. She believes that we “must begin a new focus on nurturing and fueling the spiritual vitality of both current members and newcomers.” I have decided to take this challenge and that’s another reason that I decided to do this service.

Sue asked us to read her book, *Ultimately Responsible*, and I would like to read a section in Chapter 4, *Unleashing Servanthood*, under the subheading *Serving: Not Optional*:

“During his life on earth. . .

Hear her last words again and think about them.

“Serving is not something a servant chooses when it’s easy or convenient. It’s a way of life, an identity.”

Your service, as said in our vows, are the activities that you engage in to use the gifts that you have been given. Before Sue was here and gave us her report I started working on a spiritual journey and servant catalog for McCabe. What you have in the bulletin is the start of our journey together as the body called McCabe. I have designed it and called it our “Spiritual Expedition” because of our connection to the history of the Lewis and Clark Expedition. It starts with an explanation of what a “spiritual journey” is and what our Book of Discipline has to say about Servanthood. There is a simple spiritual gifts assessment and discipleship map. The Servant

Opportunities booklet is a listing of some possible ways you can use your gifts in the body of Christ. It is a work in progress and your input and participation are needed.

So, have you figured out the first half of this service yet? Where would McCabe be without the musical gifts shared by the singers, accompanist, and organist? The leadership of the choir director? The hospitality and helpfulness of our ushers and greeters? The words of wisdom and knowledge of our pastor? The mercy and healing of our parish nurse? And all the spiritual gifts, talents, resources, individuality, dreams, and experiences that are shared by the other people who are a part of a worship experience for you on any given Saturday or Sunday. And how about the rest of the week? Classes, dinners, activities for youth and adults, etc? All of you are a part of McCabe and McCabe can only continue as long as we all share our gifts and service as God has commanded.

During the final hymn and postlude, take your time, ask God to guide you and take a look at the servant opportunities. Jot down on the enclosed sheet some areas that you are or might be interested in and if you don't see something that God is leading you to do, make note of it on the back side. When you are done, bring your offering and the servant opportunities sheet of paper here to the front and leave with the excitement of helping to complete God's mission and fulfilling your vow: *"faithfully to participate in the ministries of the church by our prayers, our presence, our gifts, and our service that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ."*

Thank you!