

UPCOMING EVENTS

August 12-14 All Church Campout at Plymouth Park

Sunday, August 14: Live Worship Service, 10 am

September 11th, 18th & 25th Vacation Bible School

Hi Friends,

Summer is coming to an end, and we are putting together our programs and events for the upcoming year. Our Youth ministry leaders are planning events and programs to continue to build a community of faith and friendships with our kids as such important times in their lives. Our Sunday school program is planning a big kick off in September. And beginning September 11th we will be bringing back a 9 am worship service and moving forward in expressing our worship and connection with the Holy Spirit in creative and new ways. Some of us have a deep connection with God when we participate in the liturgy of a worship service, singing songs about the greatness and grace of God, reciting together the historic prayers and confessions of the church, hearing a sermon that illuminates a passage of scripture and joining together in an “amen” after a benediction is delivered with a charge to “go from this place and...” Some of us feel the touch of the Holy Spirit in a poem written from the heart, in a piece of art that moves us, in a simple story that connects with our story and reminds us of God’s peace and presence with us as individuals and as a community. On September 11 we will start a new “Rejoice Service” that flows differently, incorporates various elements like story, art, music and media that connects with many of us in everyday ways. At 10 am we will have a gathering that incorporates things that have been so important to many of us and our connection with God. Scripture, prayer music proclaiming the word in a format familiar to us.

I hesitate to label the “style” of one service or another as “contemporary” or “traditional”. I have been asked many times to define “contemporary or traditional worship”. Usually, definitions of those things revolve around music. An acquaintance of mine who writes books on such topics said something in a seminar we were both presenters at, I’ll paraphrase his comment - *let’s focus on its true meaning. Contemporary merely means “occurring in the modern” or “of the day.” It can be a difficult thing to call worship contemporary. The true translation makes ‘contemporary’ too unclear. For the past 50 years worship was “contemporary.”*

It was the way people all over the world had done it...for the most part. Ideally, worship cannot be labeled as traditional, contemporary or blended. Worship is worship. The only things that have changed in our corporate worship are the tools we use to help facilitate it. Any “style” of worship that helps you express gratitude to God, feel God’s presence and connect with the Holy Spirit in that moment is contemporary”

I believe he is correct... worship is worship! For some of us, following a familiar liturgy with familiar music and structure with a well-ordered bulletin in our hands, ushers us into a place where we can express gratitude and connect with God’s presence. For some of us, it connects us to a greater sense of community and flows with the way our hearts and minds process. For some of us, a less formal liturgy, a flow of service that blends art and music and story connect us with that sense of gratitude and God’s holy presence. I have been moved to tears in “high church” liturgical services with incense canters, thundering organ hymns, clergy in robes and clerical garb and readings from the ‘common book of prayer’. I have been equally moved and aware of God’s presence in a pub with 40 other people in downtown Portland before it opened, hearing a song and a poem written about a passage of scripture. Worship is worship.

The tools we use such as choruses, hymns, prayers, and other elements are merely elements that help us worship. If a more formal and familiar liturgy of worship gives you a sense of God’s presence then our commitment is to do our best to create the best gathering we can, to facilitate worship. If a less formal format that embraces story, simplicity and flow helps to bring you to a place of worship we are committed to doing our best to create that because ... Worship is worship.

So, what is contemporary worship? Simply the same as it has been since Jesus walked here on earth. It is giving honor, praise, and thanksgiving to God. It is living lives that reflect Gods presence in our life. Let us not confuse worship with music. Worship does not change.

Pastor Mark

Looking ahead to August and our yearly Camp-Out

This weekend a number of us from the church are camping at the Plymouth Park and Campground on the Columbia near Plymouth WA. The site is only about a 30-minute drive from Kennewick so if you would like to just come out during the day and not camp overnight, it would be a fun day trip with friends. Please feel free to join in the fun even if you are not staying overnight! Events like this help us Worship and Celebrate together; Serve together; Grow in our faith and create friendships. I hope you are able to join us for some fun and friendship this weekend!

This Sunday in Worship!

This Sunday we will be gathering in the sanctuary for our weekly Worship Service. Because Pastor Mark was out of town last week we will be celebrating the elements of communion this Sunday. If joining us in person for worship is not the best option for you, remember you can participate in the worship service via our YouTube Live Stream or watch the recorded service at any time at <https://www.youtube.com/user/PiratesoftheColumbia>. Bread and juice are available to participate.

Vacation Bible School

Spark Studio VBS is coming September 11th, 18th, and 25th. VBS will begin with breakfast at 8:30 am in the fellowship hall followed by VBS/Sunday School from 9 am to 11 am downstairs in Wesleyan Hall. VBS is for children 2 years old to those entering 6th grade. This is a free event. Please follow this link for on-line registration. On-line Registration Link: <https://tinyurl.com/3yx65z4y>. If you prefer a paper registration, you can pick a form up Sunday mornings during church service or at the church office. We are excited for this new adventure this September and hope you can join us!

VBS And Sunday School Helpers Needed

We are in need of a few adult aged helpers for our VBS/Sunday School going on September 11th, 18th, and 25th. If you would like to help, there is a sign-up sheet with further details hanging on the VBS bulletin board in the entryway. Thank you!

Breakfast Cook to prep and cook breakfast to be served by 8:30 am, (really simple breakfasts are planned, nothing complicated.)

Breakfast helper/server – arrival by 8:15 am or earlier, as needed by cook.)

Breakfast clean-up (8:45 am.)

Second hour helpers (various duties, multiple spots needed) – 9:50 am thru 11:00 am.

Applications Open for Youth Director

Do you know someone with high energy, loves to help kids/youth, has a deep Christian faith and would be a good fit to direct the Youth Ministries as part of our Church Staff at Kennewick First? Point them to our churches web page to get a job description and application instructions (The application and description is under the “Contact Us” page or follow this link: (<https://www.kennewickfirst.com/employment/>))

Rachel Loomis, our current Youth Director is continuing her education and pursuing a career in Student Counseling. She will be with us throughout the Summer and make the transition in the Fall.