
From Pastor Jayneann's Pen

Pastor Jayneann McIntosh

August 2017

It's July 12th. I've been here at Wausau UMC for one week. I have only learned the smallest pieces of your story (though I'm learning.) What am I to write?!

First, reassurance. In the past, I've had people ask what I will be changing at the church. True, no one here has asked me yet, but just in case you wondered... My first goal when coming into a new appointment at a church is to watch and listen, and to learn what you're already doing well. From my talk with our district superintendent, Forrest Wells, in April, and from my various exchanges with people since then, I expect to find that there is a great deal you're doing well. Yes, I have ideas for the future, and some of them will eventually be just right for us. For now though, I'm observing, learning, and getting to know you. This last because a church is built on ...

Relationships. I've already had a few people share with me that the church is part of their family. Maybe it's not family for you; maybe you have another word you'd use. My point is that in order to do church well, we absolutely need to cultivate our relationships, we need to know what makes people tick and what they're passionate about. So, I'm glad to hear how important church is to many of you. I'm glad to hear that the Personal Needs Closet has been embraced by you. I'm looking forward to learning more about the Memory Café as well.

I read once that we each have three special places. Historically, they were a person's home, work/school, and church. In recent years, this has changed. For some it's the corner pub; for others it's the sports arena. Churches have suffered in this transition, but we're not down and out. Church people find relevance in our faith community. And the only way I'd want to change that is to help others who don't have it to find that relevance and that connection, as we have.

I am so looking forward to being in ministry with you. In my last sermon before coming to Wausau, I answered questions many people had asked about whether I was nervous and/or excited. Apparently, I don't get excited.. I even asked my mother. She said that even as a child I was this way. I'm hope-filled and looking forward to our time together, in a calm way.

And no, I wasn't nervous. I trust that my new adventures here at Wausau First will be Jayneann-sized, as long as I don't try to do it all myself. (And since a pastor's task is to empower the laity—that's you—to do the ministry of the church that shouldn't be hard, right?)

Speaking of doing it all, one of the places where I ask you to help me make a change is in The Messenger. I understand that my predecessor did quite a bit of its writing. (which seems reasonable since he's a novelist.) I like writing, but with sermons, my blog and other things I'm doing plenty of writing.. Sooo, come September we'll be looking for some of you to help with this ministry. Now if something inside you woke up when you read that, please prayerfully consider if this might be something you are being led to be a part of, then let's talk.

Until next time. Enjoy your summer.

So thank you. You have molded me as a minister in ways that I needed to be shaped. As your new pastor comes, with different gifts and different rough edges, keep it up.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Jayneann", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.