
From Pastor Jayneann's Pen

Pastor Jayneann McIntosh

DECEMBER 2017

It's not quite Thanksgiving as I write this; church conference is still a few hours in the future. But I know that some of you (all right, most of you) will not get to Wesley UMC at 6 p.m. to be part of that. So I'm going to include my "Pastor's Report" – not the title lines, just the meat – so that you can be included.

"I've completed almost five months as pastor here at First: Wausau. I've found the people to be warm and caring; and I've been enjoying getting to know them on Sundays, Wednesdays, or whenever we meet. I've been delighted to find them to be passionate about our outward-focused ministries – particularly the Personal Needs Closet and the Downtown Memory Café.

"Since my arrival, we've said goodbye to a few of our members – through transfer and through death. While we grieve their loss, Wausau: First continues to be active both within and beyond our walls. In October we began a new year for confirmation. In December, we will welcome a new member through baptism.

"In August, Vacation Bible School (combined with First Presbyterian) brought in 30% more children than in 2016. In September, our Faith Formation season began a new program year. During our Wednesday Night Live programming, I introduced The Wired Word study which regularly brought 8 – 12 people together. (In January, we'll begin Making Sense of the Bible.) This month, we also had our first Messy Church worship of the season; my first Messy Church experience was a blast as we looked that "Caring" through the Pilgrims' first year in Cape Cod and through Jesus' parable of the Good Samaritan. Through 2018, we will have Messy Church quarterly, then in 2019 we'll intentionally open it to the public. In December, I'll lead the first Longest Night service in – I believe – eight years. This is a quiet service before Christmas for anyone, but especially for those for whom Christmas is a difficult time.

"In 2018, we look ahead to

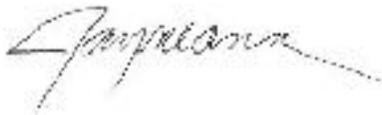
- Enlarging our hospitality efforts, training and adding more greeters, training (and adding?) ushers, looking at/listening to/smelling our site with fresh eyes to perceive as a visitor might.
- Including more lay persons in worship.

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- Casting First Church's vision and re-examining our mission to assure they represent us and who God is calling us to be in our communities.
 - Considering our leadership structures to assure that we practice the most effective ways to allow the most of us to be actively involved in ministry and mission.

"In October, I anticipate traveling to the Holy Lands with the "Living Stones" Pilgrimage through the Pilgrims of Ibillin. This will be my continuing education experience for 2018. I would have liked to have been a part of the Institute for Congregational Development but I can't do both so this will have to wait for another year.

"I continue to practice self-care, striving for balance in my life. I value the many leaders here at First Church, as well as everyone that supports my taking care of myself so that I can be the leader that this church needs me to be." By this time, you're probably asking yourself, "Why did she include this?" Well, some of what we'll be doing will be new. Different can be scary. If I talk about it now, it won't be a surprise next year. AND I want you to know that coming here to Wausau: First has been a great move for me. Yes, there's plenty to do (for all of us) but I wouldn't change it.

I love you people. Advent Blessings,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Jaylana".