
From Pastor Jayneann's Pen

Pastor Jayneann McIntosh

JUNE/JULY 2018

Annual Conference

In less than a month, Bonnie Goertz, Wes Ebert and I will be going to Middleton to participate in the Wisconsin Annual Conference. The annual conference is:

- A geographical entity;
- An organizational body (made up of clergy & elected lay members);
- A yearly meeting.

Each year equal numbers of clergy & lay members attend annual conference session for worship, fellowship and to conduct business. Sessions include reports of past and ongoing work; adoption of future goals, programs & budgets; ordination of clergy as deacons and elders; and election of delegates to Jurisdictional and General Conferences (every 4 years). Our bishop presides over these meetings.

Yes, I know there are two of them and one of me, but there are folks who make sure it stays balanced. (My mother is serving as an equalizing member to her conference this month!)

I look forward to AC each as a time to connect with clergy colleagues that I seldom see as well as the ordination of old and new acquaintances. This year I'll be sitting at a different table with two new friends and I look forward to getting to know Wes and Bonnie better. We'll report back to you about what happens during those four days in our next edition of *The Messenger*.

Tithe in July

I first heard about this 4 years ago. Each summer, members were invited to step up their giving for one month as a way to grow in faith (and support the budget during a time that is often lean.) I don't know when they began doing it, but each year more people choose to participate.

Tithe is an emotionally packed word. Questions surround it. Is a tithe really about giving 1/10th of all we earn to the church? Is that gross or take-home pay? What does the bible say about tithing? And, why

is the church so pushy about money? (Okay, that's not a tithe question, but it's one pastors and finance committees often hear.)

Personal giving is always an act of faith. It's tied not only to how much we make and spend but also to how much we trust God. Giving of ourselves, our time, our finances and such are all ways we practice our faith.

Tithe in July will mean different things to different people. Some of us may give 1/10th of our income to the ministries of First Church in July. Some of us are already tithing and may step up our giving for July by a bit. Others will decide to make a special one-time gift. Whatever your decision, I invite you to consider this with heart and mind, bringing it before God.

I know I didn't answer any questions, but I've felt for a long time that it's more important to wrestle with the questions – especially about faith than to receive answers. Please prayerfully consider this opportunity and plan to join in this adventure in giving. Giving is always a expression of gratitude which has a positive effect on all of life and especially for the giver. Give it a try!

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