
From Pastor Jayneann's Pen

Pastor Jayneann McIntosh

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Do United Methodists believe in saints? The short answer is "Yes." We don't elect people to sainthood; we don't pray to saints or believe they act as mediators between us and God. But, yes, we believe in saints. (Read on for the longer answer.)

From the early days of Christianity, there's been a sense that the Church is made not just of living believers but of all those who've gone before. Think of the Book of Hebrews' "great cloud of witnesses."

John Wesley, founder of the Methodist movement, enjoyed and celebrated All Saints Day, calling it "a festival I truly love. ... I always find this a comfortable day." He thought we could learn a lot from the saints though he warned about esteeming them too much. (God's saving grace through Christ Jesus is foundational for Methodists.)

Alongside with saints of the New Testament, Teresa of Ávila, Martin Luther, Susanna, John and Charles Wesley, United Methodists celebrate grandparents who brought us to church, pastors who prayed with us before surgery, friends who simply sat and listened. We celebrate the gifts of Sunday school teachers who told us Jesus loved us, the store-keeper who knew when we were having a hard time, and all the folks who serve meals, work at homeless shelters, or yell at the neighborhood kids reminding them to act like someone cares how they behave.

Everyone who exemplifies the Christian life. We remember them. We tell their stories. Doing this grounds us and inspires us to be all God knows we can be.

All Saints Day (Nov. 1) is a special time to give thanks for all who have gone before us in the faith. Many churches – including First Church – celebrate All Saints Day, on the first

Sunday of November when we remember Christians of every time and place, honoring those who lived faithfully and shared that faith with us.



You and I are saints as well. On All Saints Day, we remember that we're part of a giant choir all singing the same song – one that Jesus taught us two millennia ago. We're honored to be invited to join our voices with all of theirs.

I hope you will join us in worship November 5th as we celebrate All Saints Sunday – in prayer, in song, in Holy Communion and through the lighting of candles in memory of those who have departed since last November.

This day is also Consecration Sunday. We'll have the opportunity to consecrate our commitments for the coming year. You will have received an estimate of giving commitment card in the mail the week before. If you did not receive one or if you forget to bring it with you that day, additional cards will be available. (We want everyone to be able to participate.)

We invite you to prayerfully consider what your offering to God through our church will be in the coming year, fill out a card, and bring it forward as you come up to share in the bread and juice of Holy Communion. 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.

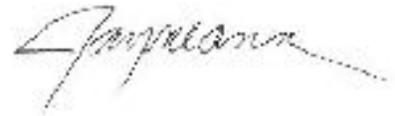
And no, I wasn't nervous. I trust that my new adventures here at Wausau First will be Jayneann-sized, as long as I don't try to do it all myself. (And since a pastor's task is to empower the laity—that's you—to do the ministry of the church that shouldn't be hard, right?)

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 "L. J. [unclear]".