

Madison Heights Christian Church
(Disciples of Christ)
149 Main Street
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MADISON HEIGHTS MESSENGER

No. 11

June 12, 2018

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Open doors-----Open hearts

Brenda Harris
Secretary

Purpose Driven Ministry

You are a purpose-driven ministry. A purpose defines who you are and why you do what you do. Your heritage is rooted in a very significant purpose that is divinely inspired. Your purpose is significant because it comes to you from discerning the will of God. Unfortunately, I think we often fail to make the case for our divinely inspired purpose and divinely focused ministry.

We are rooted in reformation. The Protestant Reformation grew out of people discerning the will of God. While I do not have the room in this newsletter article to explain all the details I will concisely sum it up by saying that through their recognition of the will of God they wanted a church that would focus on the will of God over the ways of humanity. The American Restoration Movement grew out of virtually the same purpose. The desire to restore the church to the pattern set forth in the New Testament. In other words through their discernment they wanted a church to be as Christ set up the church to be. That is an indeed a very powerful and significant purpose.

Embracing this purpose, an evangelist held meetings in this area, and this particular church was born. The people that gave of themselves to build up this ministry did so because this church was not just another church in the neighborhood but a mission with a very significant purpose. You are a church with a very significant purpose. What this means is that you are not just another church, you are called to be different, you are called to discernment.

I once read “the main thing is vision” and at first I embraced the concept. Then I got to thinking about that and realized that the main thing is purpose. Both are very important. Your mission and the direction you go depends on your vision. However, your vision for ministry comes from your purpose and your purpose comes from honestly seeking, understanding, and acknowledging the will of God. Therefore your vision is not one that looks for what people want so that you can attract people through entertainment or providing self-serving services in order to grow the institution. Your vision is rooted in discernment and your vision is rooted in your purpose. Your service is divine service. It is divinely inspired. It comes from reflecting upon the will of God as opposed to doing something because it is what you want to do or because others want you to do it. Since your service is divine service then pleasing God is your focus.

We discern the will of God through prayer, studying the scriptures, and community. Prayer is not just a quick fix. It is not a matter of speaking a quick and concise prayer to God petitioning the Lord for something that we want. Prayer includes listening, meditating, and being in communion with God. Prayer should be daily devotion, and at times it should take a commitment of time for deep level discernment to be one with God. Studying the scriptures is more than going to Sunday school, it is a matter of prayerful consideration of the context and a careful study of what the author was saying to the audience that it was written to. Likewise, community is a matter of faith formation within the life of the church. It is developing faith through disciples who are loving, supporting, and guiding each other in a Christian life. Therefore, your services are joyous, your mission is joyous, all of it. You find great joy is serving, in answering the call, because you understand that your purpose is a divine purpose and you are reminded of God's grace. Of all the things that God has done for you and given to you, you can't help but be appreciative to God for it. Your service is a matter of responding to God's grace. Your ministry is not just another ministry, your ministry is a purpose driving ministry.

In Christian Love,
George