

Hello Church,

Here's a great article on revitalization! Here's the internet address: [What I No Longer Believe Is True About Congregations](#)

To summarize, District Superintendent Susan Nienaber, of our Big Waters District, talks about tiny Ogilvie UMC located 75 miles north of Minneapolis. Ogilvie is a village of about 361 souls. In 2014, they were down to 12 in average worship attendance and hit a new low of \$35 in the checking account. They were hopeless and exhausted. And, D.S. Nienaber was convinced they would close.

But, that's not what happened.

D.S. Nienaber found 3 key things to be true in their revitalization:

- Unshakeable faith
- Unconquerable will
- Teachable spirit

Quoting from the article: *What's working from my perspective? I also believe that all transformational work begins in prayer because it is about God transforming and changing us. As my boss, Bishop Bruce Ough, has said, "We cannot manage our way into revitalization, we can only be led into it by God's Spirit." I believe that this little congregation's intention and commitment to continue being **missional** has made a huge difference. Members took their greatest asset, which was food, and instead of using that gift to create fundraisers to pay the light bill, they used that gift to create a free meal for the community. This little village is where many people come to recover from a financial crisis, job loss, and foreclosure. They offered their gifts to fulfill an unmet need for others and God blessed that.*

Advent came early to Ogilvie this year. God's presence is vital to our church. Our attention to God's details is our way forward.

Our worship and learning series "Revival" can also be a lesson for us on taking God seriously in our life of faith together. We'll be engaged in that journey January 3rd until Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, February 10th.

Peace & Grace, Pastor Glen



Revival: January 3 – February 7

The 1700's were a time when society was polarized, when rationalism had led people to believe they no longer needed God, when the rich struggled with materialism and the poor with lack of necessities. Sound familiar?

Into this world a priest and Oxford professor named John Wesley came to trust in Christ and then began preaching a faith that would bring a revival of Christianity throughout the British Isles and across America. Wesley's message and his faith continue to speak to 21st Century Christians – calling for a revival of our hearts and souls so that our lives and our world might be changed.

Join us for a six-week journey as we travel to Wesley's England, following his life and exploring his defining characteristics of a Methodist Christian. Wesley's story is our story – it is our heritage, it defines our faith and it challenges us to rediscover our spiritual passion.

Worship 8:30

Learning Time for all ages 9:45

ASH WEDNESDAY OBSERVANCE

February 10th 7pm



Wednesday Lenten Observance

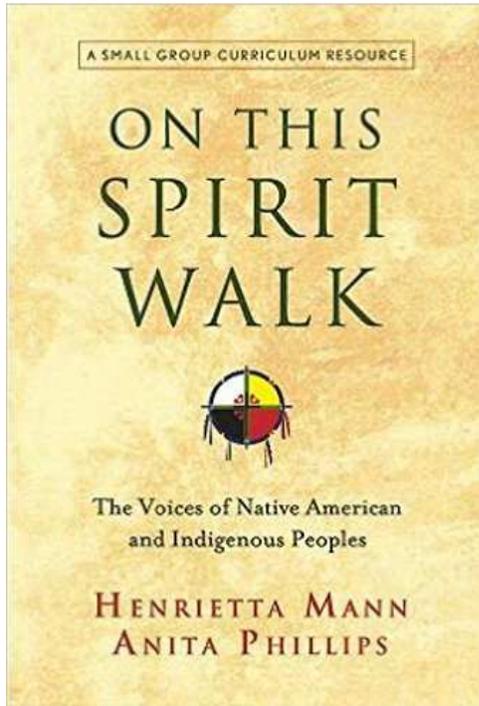
On This Spirit Walk

Beginning Wednesday, February 17th

Deserts 6:30-7:00

Small Group 7:00-8:00

Contact Pastor Glen by February 10th with your interest to join the group so he can order for you a copy of the book.



Choir

The choir is always looking for new members. If you are interested in singing with us or if you play an instrument and would like to play during a worship service speak to Deb Goeldi. The following are the practice dates for January and the beginning of February. Our practice days vary depending on peoples work schedules so don't let having to miss a practice or 2 keep you from joining the choir.

1/07/16 7:30 pm
1/12/16 7:00 pm
1/19/16 7:00 pm
1/25/16 7:30 pm
2/02/16 7:00 pm



Thank you

to everyone who helped make the **Christmas Breakfast** service a success. We couldn't have done it without the help of all of those who volunteered. ***Great things happen when we all work together.*** There has been some interest in having a Sunrise Service/Easter Breakfast using the same format as the Christmas Breakfast. If you are interested in helping with this please let Deb or Jeff Goeldi know by February 28th.



Movie Nights

A movie night is planned for February 12th at 7:00 pm. If you have a movie suggestion please let Jeff Goeldi know. The movie will be announced during announcements at the beginning of February



Winter Clothing Drive

Winter clothing needed for new refugees: The Minnesota Church Center Refugee Services is in need of new or gently used warm coats, hats, mittens, and gloves for refugees arriving from warmer climates. We will have a collection container at church so bring in your donations and we will make sure they are given to our Refugee Brothers and Sisters as they make Minnesota their new safe home.



Caring Cars

Thanks to everyone who helped with the raking this fall. I think we set a record in one of the yards for the shortest time it took to clean the yard. Many hands made light work. There is a possibility for a Caring Cars event in Stewartville on March 9th in the evening. Watch the announcements for more information. If you have a suggestion for a Caring Cars activity please let Deb or Jeff Goeldi know.

Wood Fire Oven Update



Now that the temperatures have dropped we have taken a hiatus from working on the oven. I miss seeing our work buddies every Saturday morning

but have found plenty of other things to fill that time with until spring. On January 30th our church has been invited to attend a community oven meeting in the cities. Jeff, Deb, Tracy, & Bob will be representing our church at this event. Our oven was also mentioned in an article in the Pioneer Press at the beginning of December.

Here is the link to the article

[http://www.twincities.com/localnews/ci_29184455/minnesota-churches-build-communities-communal-brick-ovens.](http://www.twincities.com/localnews/ci_29184455/minnesota-churches-build-communities-communal-brick-ovens)

We will be having a small pizza event before the weather gets warm enough to work on the oven again. Watch the Heard the News and listen for updates during announcements in church.

Readers

January

- 3rd – **Karen Goldsmith**
- 10th – Nathaniel Schatz
- 17th – Mark Marburger
- 24th – Jessica Warren
- 31st – Sandy Schatz

February

- 7th – **Steve Wesenberg**
- 14th – Dawn Vrieze
- 21st – Jackson Helget
- 28th – Alysha Bleifus

Greeters

January

- 3rd – Terry & Karen Goldsmith
- 10th – DeeAnn Byrne
- 17th – Austin & Gina Schatz
- 24th – Burce & Vicki Schroeder
- 31st – Bruce & Ellie Hoffman

February

- 7th – Bob & Tracy Hoover
- 14th – Mark Marburger
- 21st – The Helget Family
- 28th – The Warren Family

A holiday letter from Muslim leaders in Minnesota

Two faiths, one hope — for peace

By Multiple authors

December 23, 2015 — 7:34pm

To our Christian brothers and sisters:

Out of our shared love for the Messiah, Jesus, Son of Mary, Peace Be Upon Him, we greet you with peace and joy during your celebration of his life.

The Bible refers to him as the Messiah and describes the annunciation, his miraculous birth and his numerous miracles.

The Qur'an refers to him as the Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary. It teaches about his miraculous birth and how his mother Mary was honored above all the worlds.

Muslims are instructed to invoke peace upon him whenever his name is mentioned.

The Qur'an narrates the story of the angel who visited Mary, saying "O Mary, indeed God has chosen you and purified you and chosen you above the women of all the worlds." (Qur'an 3:42)

The angel said, "O Mary, indeed God gives you good news of a word from Him, whose name will be the Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary. He will be honored in this world and the Hereafter and he will be among those closest to God. He will speak to the people in the cradle and in maturity and he will be of the righteous." (Qur'an 3:44-45)

She said, "My Lord, how will I have a child when no man has touched me?" The angel said, "Such is God; He creates what He wills. When He decrees a matter, He only says to it, 'Be,' and it is." (3:47)

The Qur'an describes how the baby Jesus, immediately upon birth, looked up to his mother and comforted her: "Do not be sad; your Lord has provided beneath you a stream. And shake toward you the trunk of the palm tree; it will drop upon you ripe, fresh dates. So eat and drink and be contented." (Qur'an 19:24-26)

The Qur'an describes many instances in the life of Jesus: how he preached the worship of God and compassion to people, how he healed the leper, how he healed the blind, and even how he brought the dead back to life.

Our two religions, Christianity and Islam, which both profess love and reverence for Jesus as a central figure in each of our religions, constitute over half of the population of the world.

Mercy and compassion, charity and love are the divine attributes that the Christmas season evokes among Christians. A mother's devotion, a child's love, and the promise of God's mercy and grace in the coming of Jesus to us are sentiments that Muslims can share and appreciate.

In the Bible, we are told that Jesus, in response to a question about the most important commandment, is said to have answered: "You should love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul and mind.

This is the first and great commandment. And the second is similar. You should love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.” (Matthew 22:35-40) Jesus added that those whose hearts are filled with such love of God and neighbor live not far from the kingdom of God. (Mark 12:34)

Similarly, the Qur’an teaches us that to “worship God being sincere to Him in faith, to incline towards the truth, to establish prayer and to give alms to the poor is the essence of the religion.” (Qur’an 98:5) “ ... And you should forgive and overlook: Do you not like God to forgive you? And God is The Merciful Forgiving.” (Qur’an 24:22)

The Prophet Mohammad, Peace Be Upon Him, taught: “None of you truly believes until he loves for his brother that which he loves for himself.” (Bukhari & Muslim)

In the words of St. Paul, let us put on the armor of light which is the teaching of God that we are to love one another that we might together better confront the dark that lies within some human hearts which are far from God. (Romans 13:12)

As Jesus taught so movingly, let our lights so shine together before all people that they may see our good works which glorify our God in Heaven. (Matthew 5:16)

Jesus taught us that we should not live by bread alone but by every word of God. (Matthew 4:4)

Thus, we applaud the good hearts and loving deeds seeking to please God in His mercy and compassion that are befitting for us not only during this Christmas season but also every day of every year. Let all people, Christians and Muslims, who love Jesus, peace be upon him, come together to practice what he preached. Let peace and goodwill spread among us all.

We invite all our Muslim brothers and sisters of goodwill to join us in this open letter at this Christmas season and throughout the year as peace and joy, love of God and neighbor, are to be with us always.

This article was submitted by Imam Asad Zaman, Muslim American Society of Minnesota; Dr. Odeh Muhawesh, Imam Hussain Islamic Center; Shaykha Tamara Gray, Rabata/Daybreak Bookstore; Dr. Tamim Saidi, Masjid Al Kareem; Fedwa Wazwaz, Engage Minnesota; Dr. Shah Khan, Islamic Center of Minnesota; Dr. Onder Uluyol, Islamic Resource Group; Zafar Siddiqui, Al Amal School; Imam Sharif Mohamed, Islamic Civic Society of America — Masjid Dar Al-Hijrah, and Owais Bayunus, Islamic Center of Minnesota.

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Our mission is to make
disciples of Jesus Christ
for the transformation of
the world



Jan/Feb 2016

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