

November / December 2012

PASTOR'S TWO CENTS:

As we enter the Liturgical season of Advent it is important for us to remember that Christ was born into this world to save it, to reconcile it with God and to teach us how to love. With this in mind I am hoping that before the end of the year, during this season of Advent, Trinity UCC will conduct an official vote to become Open & Affirming.

Open & Affirming means that we affirm the rights & equality of ALL PEOPLE. We don't discriminate regarding race, creed, color, ethnicity, gender, disability or sexual orientation. It means that whoever you are and wherever you are on life's journey, you are welcome here! It means that we affirm the rights and equality of the disabled by putting in a ramp to our downstairs fellowship hall through a capital campaign. It means that we affirm the rights and equality of African-Americans, Hispanics, Asians, Irish, German, and any other race, color or ethnicity through social justice missions and actions. It means that we affirm the rights and equality of both men and women in doing all aspects of God's work in ministry and in the workplace. It means that we affirm the rights and equality of gay individuals to love and marry.

It means that we take the words of Jesus Christ and put them into real life affirming action. We do more than just say the words.....we walk the walk and talk the talk. We live the life of true disciples of Christ radically LOVING OUR NEIGHBOR! Jesus was born to reconcile the world not condemn the world. If Christ is not going to condemn the world then why would we by refusing to affirm basic human rights to those who are oppressed and discriminated.

For the past year, we have been learning about Open & Affirming through educational opportunities during Sunday sermons, Thursday night presentations, and Adult Sunday school. If you believe that the Bible forbids same gender loving relationships then you need to either give me a call or come to the November 4th Communion Service and find out what Biblical scholar's research has found.

As Christ rebuked Peter: "Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; for you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things." When we look at the message of the Gospel we see an overarching theme of LOVE! When we refuse to give basic human rights to ANY group of people then we are not setting our mind on divine things; for God is LOVE and providing basic human rights to all people is a loving thing to do.

PLEASE contact me if you have a problem with Trinity UCC becoming an Open & Affirming Church. The UCC has over 1,000 churches that are Open & Affirming and our vote later this year has the potential to make us a thriving, vibrant and welcoming church for all.

Pastor Steve