



# Faith Church

# CONNECTIONS

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It's resolution time again, right?! I saw another cartoon recently where a businessman, sitting at his desk and eating donuts, is writing his resolution – to drive past the gym at least twice a week. Loopholes and lowered expectations seem like the way to go if you want to avoid the guilt and shame of failure. However, it's a far cry from some resolutions I recently came across. (There is a better way!)

Back in 1723, ten years before the outbreak of one of the greatest revivals our nation has ever experienced, a young preacher from Massachusetts made his own list of resolutions. Not because it was January 1<sup>st</sup>, but because the Holy Spirit convicted Him of a need to depend 100% on Christ. Rev. Jonathan Edwards, at the age of 19, made a list of 70 radical resolutions over the course of that year, as he prepared to enter the ministry.

It's amazing how God can use a person who gets serious about their commitment to Him!! A key statement Edwards made at the start of his list reveals his desire –

*"I am unable to do anything without God's help. I humbly entreat him, by his grace, to enable me to keep these Resolutions, so far as they are agreeable to his will, for Christ's sake."*

How often do we consider whether what we're doing is really "for Christ's sake?" (My grandfather used that phrase often-in a derogatory way, usually when something wasn't going his way.) The apostle Paul says to "do all for the glory of God" OR "for Christ's sake." (1 Cor 10:31)

James 1:22 says to "be doers of the Word and not just hearers". It's not simply what we listen to or fill our minds with that matters, but the affect it has on our life. A member of the Gratz church prayed for me a few weeks ago – "let Pastor Kyle's words not go in one ear and out the other". I recently realized that in 9 1/2 years at Faith Church I've preached over 425 sermons and have spent over 500 hours in leading small groups and pastoral discussions. Sadly, I also realized that it's a lot easier to be a "talker of the Word" than a "doer". Edwards' "Resolutions", is a challenging reminder that I too need to depend on God in order to live "for Christ's sake".

I fear that we have developed a church culture (not just at Faith, but also in the Church at large) that has the external appearance of fruitfulness & business, but lacks the power of Christ to change lives (2 Tim 3:5). Part of the answer may be in that simple phrase – "for Christ's sake". His Way is the only one worth following. So, as "followers of the Way," (Acts 9:2) our actions, attitudes, words and deeds, are meant to serve Christ in every area and season of life. At church, at home, in the workplace or community, when we're frustrated or disappointed as well as when we were satisfied or feel like celebrating, we live "for Christ's sake".

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## IMPORTANT NEWS

**PASTORAL CHANGE** In early November, our Pastoral Relations Committee met to request a pastoral change. Pastor Kyle and Lori also felt that God may be calling them elsewhere. Our District Field Director, Rev. Brad Hatter, has helped to guide our discussions and starting in mid-January, an EC "stationing elder" will be assigned to oversee the transition and search for a new pastor. Ministry assignments are typically announced in May and take effect on July 1st. Any questions can be directed to our current PRC members (*Claudia Maffei, Leona Dunlop, Deb Reigel, Dolly Keister, or Henry Klinger*). Please be in prayer for the search committee (at Faith EC and Good Shepherd EC) and for Pastor Kyle and his family over the next several months.

**ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING**  
**Sun., January 7th during worship** (*Snow date: 1/14*)

Our yearly meeting is a bit later this year, however, we hope you'll be able to join us! At a congregational meeting on Nov. 19th we voted to use an *interim governance structure* for the next year while we discern if a permanent change from Official Board to Ministry Council is beneficial. This will involve 5-7 elected officers serving as a Leadership Team. The following important decisions will be made by members at this meeting. Please join us for:

- 2017 Review & Reflection
- Election of Officers
- Expansion of PRC for Pastoral Search
- Approval of 2018 Budget

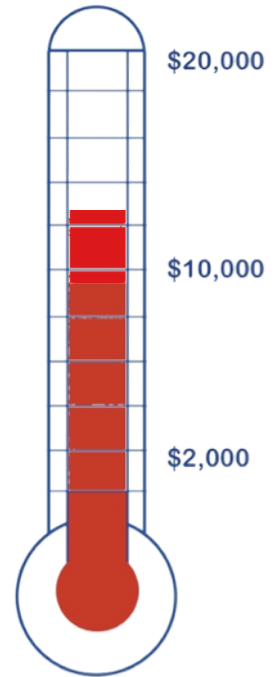
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Unfortunately, we've seen the full gamut of missteps this past year, even here at Faith Church. And I can't help but wonder how much more God could have been glorified, or how much closer Wiconisco would be to genuine revival if we'd sought to radically honor Him with our lives. Thanks to God! Another year is upon us to be used "for Christ's sake." *How about you? Are you ready to join us in 2018 in ending the lip-service and resolving to truly walking in His Way?!*

Serving the Lord with you,  
*Pastor Kyle*

# Heating System Loan Update

In the Fall of 2014 we had a new heating/cooling system installed after a failed system left us with frozen pipes. **THANKS TO ALL WHO HAVE CONTRIBUTED** to pay off this 5-year loan, we are about two-thirds of the way to paying it off! *Please consider helping us on the home stretch.*



## EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

### CHURCH SECRETARY NEEDED

*Paid position (\$180/mo), approx. 4 hours per week to perform basic office functions.*

### MEN'S BREAKFAST

**Saturday, January 20 at 8am**

*All guys from Faith EC & Good Shepherd EC invited for a full breakfast & meaningful discussion. Meets at church in Gratz.*

### INDOOR PICNIC

**Saturday, February 10 at 5pm**

*Join us for a night of fun, food, & fellowship together to beat the winter 'blahs'. Lots of games & activities for all ages.*

## In Our Community

### CHRISTIAN UNITY SERVICE

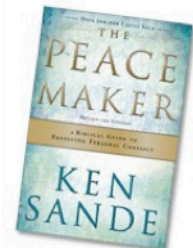
**Sunday, January 21** at 4:00pm at Grace UMC in Muir, local churches are coming together to celebrate Jesus and pray for our community. A few pastors will give brief meditations, special music will be shared, and refreshments & fellowship will follow.

**FREE WEEKLY COMMUNITY MEAL – DO YOU KNOW SOMEONE IN NEED?** "Neighbors United Café" serves a hot meal to anyone in need every Wednesday from 4:30-6:30pm at Ebenezer EC in Williamstown.

### Church-Wide Study (through Feb 2018)

## BIBLICAL PEACEMAKING

*based on the best-selling book, "The Peacemaker" by Ken Sande*



Sermons & Small Group Book/DVD study on following the **4 "G"s of Conflict Resolution:**

- 1) Glorify God
- 2) Get the Log out of Your own Eye
- 3) Gently Restore
- 4) Go and Be Reconciled

### SERMON SERIES

**"WORDS THAT HEAL"** [*Gently Restore*]

*Jan 14 – Words of Truth & Correction*  
*Jan 21 – Words of Discipline*

**"BLESSED ARE THE PEACEMAKERS"** [*Go & Be Reconciled*]

*Jan 28 – Forgive as He Forgave*  
*Feb. 4 – Serve as He Served*  
*Feb. 11 – Overcome with His Victory*

### SMALL GROUP – Wednesdays @ 7pm

*Jan 3 – Confession brings Freedom*  
*Jan 10 – Speaking Truth in Love*  
*Jan 17 – Between Two of You*  
*Jan 24 – Taking Others Along*  
*Jan 31 – Forgiveness*  
*Feb 4 – Consider Others Better*  
*Feb 11 – Overcome Evil with Good*