

We are embarking on a new season of growth here at Baldwin Community! In 2009, our church developed a vision team. **This vision team met, prayed, discerned the way God was calling our church to go.** After discerning many different structure opportunities, the vision team developed a structure and a purpose, mission and vision for Baldwin Community.

The structure, purpose, mission and vision of the church was presented to the Leadership Council and then voted upon and approved by our Church Conference in December.

Over the next four weeks we will be looking at each area of our Purpose, Mission and Vision as well as our structure and will celebrate the areas of ministry here at Baldwin Community.

Today we are going to focus on the Purpose of the church here at Baldwin Community.

What is the purpose of the church? **The purpose of this church is to “invite in and reach out to our community, embracing the love of God in all people.”** The purpose of this church is to reach out, bring in and nurture people with the love of God.

That is an awesome task, but one that is filled with many possibilities. Let me explain.

Share the story of Dave and Jenn Pogany

“When Jenn and I where searching for a new church. We really wanted something that was kid friendly and had some younger families,so Baldwin UMC was a perfect fit. **Our old church was nice and the people were very friendly but they just didn’t have much to offer kids or younger families, so we felt kind of disconnected from the church.**

I remember Jenn saying that she talked with Trish who was Shane’s preschool teacher at that time. She told Jenn about Wednesday Night Live. So I took the boys and went. We didn't have dinner but I did go to the parenting group. **And WOW! they were all so welcoming. We could not be happier. We found a great church with a great church family and great pastors too.**

So I guess what drew us to the church was the younger families, and all the activities. We have grow so much in our faith in the past two years. And have made lifelong friendships”

It is because of the fellowship of this church that a couple and their four children felt welcome here! We reached out with the love of Jesus Christ and a family responded.

We are going to look at a Scripture lesson this morning that Paul says are necessary for building the Kingdom of God.

1 Corinthians 9:19-27 (The Message)

19-23 Even though I am free of the demands and expectations of everyone, I have voluntarily become a servant to any and all in order to reach a wide range of people: religious, nonreligious, meticulous moralists, loose-living immoralists, the defeated, the demoralized—whoever. I didn't take on their way of life. I kept my bearings in Christ—but I entered their world and tried to experience things from their point of view. I've become just about every sort of servant there is in my attempts to lead those I meet into a God-saved life. I did all this because of the Message. I didn't just want to talk about it; I wanted to be in on it!

24-25 You've all been to the stadium and seen the athletes race. Everyone runs; one wins. Run to win. All good athletes train hard. They do it for a gold medal that tarnishes and fades. You're after one that's gold eternally.

26-27 I don't know about you, but I'm running hard for the finish line. I'm giving it everything I've got. No sloppy living for me! I'm staying alert and in top condition. I'm not going to get caught napping, telling everyone else all about it and then missing out myself.

What did Paul mean when he said he became “all things to all people”? **You may have something in your minds as to what this might mean, but let me tell you what Paul really meant here.**

Paul was not going to compromise the Good News of Jesus Christ in any way. He remained committed to staying firm to the Word of God. He was not going to water down the Scriptures to make people happy so they could grow the church. Paul was not wishy-washy when it came to different situations. **He would not do that. He was not a people pleaser.**

But still Paul said that he became all things to all people. Paul was saying he would do whatever it took to bring people to a saving grace in Jesus Christ. **He would go to any level without compromising the Good News of Jesus.**

Paul also said that he “became” all things to all. Paul didn't say this would be overnight and boom, the change would occur. It was a process, it took time, but in that time, conversion took place.

As we see in the letter to the Corinthians, Paul became all things to all people, so we too must become all things. **How does this apply to the church today in 2010 at Baldwin Community United Methodist Church?**

Pastor Jeff St. Clair

January 17, 2010

1 Corinthians 9:19-27

For us as a church it means that if we, as a church, desire to see more and more of the people in our community and our world come to know the joy of having Christ in our heart, we must continue to get out of our comfort zones.

We can't just think that people are going to come to church on Sunday morning to worship. It's not going to happen. **Unfortunately, that is what is happening to other churches. They are satisfied going on being comfortable with the status quo.**

We have to take a look at our ministries and see what are the opportunities God has given us to share the Good News in means of fellowship and Outreach.

Sometimes, that even means saying goodbye to ministries that no longer work and saying welcome to new ministries that do.

Are we a church that will do whatever it takes to see lost people come to Jesus? Do we have that kind of mentality as a church?

Will we think creatively of how we can do whatever it takes to reach more lost people in our community and world with the message of God's love for them?

Paul speaks of "all possible means" in v. 22. **So often, we lose sight of the fact that, as Christians, it is NOT about us – It is ALL about Jesus! Worship is not about us. It's all about Jesus.**

Wednesday Night Live is not about us, it is about Jesus!

Friday Morning Men's Breakfast is not about us, it is about Jesus!

Family Fun Night is not about us, it is about Jesus!

Asbury @lternative on Sunday is not about us, it is about Jesus!

Our purpose says that we invite in and reach out to our community, EMBRACING THE LOVE OF GOD in all people!

We are not putting together a social club or a country club here! **We are putting Christ's church in motion to embrace ALL of God's people with the love and saving grace of Jesus Christ.**

Outreach and Fellowship are the first lines we do that. Through outreach, our intent is to reach out to the world and share the joy we have as a Body of Believers here at Baldwin Community!

When people see the joy from our outreach efforts, then a desire to be a part of the fellowship becomes a next step in the journey.

I ask that you pray for our teams as they get ready to do some incredible things this year.

I ask that you pray for

Outreach:

Arleen Gealey, Chair

Pastor Allan, Pastor Rep

In-House

Jim Foster

Julie Hall

Ann Bryce

Pam Rhodes

Barb Brown

Dr. Bruce Bryce

Joann Wilson

Community Based Outreach

Betsy Pugh - Steward

Suzanne Everett

Steve Mongelluzzo

Christina Coffey -

Sue Eyrolles - Lord's Pantry

Sherrill Shepler-Platts, Tom Platts - New Hope Soup

National and World

Myra Mann - Steward

Elizabeth Bjerke

Joyce DiCarlo

Jeff Deal

And the many volunteers that have been called to serve through outreach.

I ask that you pray for our Fellowship Team, because they are planning and visioning where God is calling us as a church to develop nurturing and fellowship ministries to strengthen and to **“by all possible means” bring the joy of Jesus to those who are new and existing to our church.**

Fellowship -

Danielle Hamil & Eric Diethorn - Chairs

Pastor Jeff St. Clair - Pastor Rep

Anne and Dick Wolfe - Wednesday Night Live Steward

Dale Crowley - WNL Purchaser

Peggar Dixon - Chef

Jenn Pogany - Mom's Together

Jim Lombardi- Children's Sports Program

Amy Ferkett and Laura Rohland - Date Night

Dave and Elaine Lewis - Bus Trips

Eric Diethorn - Congregational Meals

Kitchen Coordinators - Rhonda Abraham, Helen Akers, Lori Deal, Diane Evans, Helen Pomilio, Gerry Tinder

George and Mary Ann Belles - Advent Program

Patty Diethorn - Family Fun Night

Kathryn Wells - Movies In the Park

Bobbie Deal - Jumonville Day

Rhonda Abraham and Helen Akers - Funeral Luncheons

For dreams we have already such as Senior Adult Ministries, Golf League, Swim Party, Church Picnic, Singles Group, Adult Sports Events

Pray for the many volunteers who make these events possible and for the dreamers who we allow to dream dreams.

Can you see that we have so much growing here at the church? It's amazing to look at and can be overwhelming at times, but we are not doing it for ourself. We want to GROW for Jesus!

Keep the Spirit alive in your service to Him! Be passionate and do as Paul speaks of v. 22-23, "I've become just about every sort of servant there is in my attempts to lead those I meet into a God-saved life. I did this all because of the Message! I didn't just want to talk about it, I wanted to be in on it!"

Let's get in on it! Let's GROW God's church together! Amen? Amen!

Grow Series at the @lternative

Pastor Jeff St. Clair

January 17, 2010

Who We Are

1 Corinthians 9:19-27