

Kevin's Korner

By Kevin Arensman, Senior Pastor

And God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that by always having enough of everything, you may share abundantly in every good work. (2 Corinthians 9:8)

Anyone receive a blessing Sunday morning or early afternoon? I did. I could feel a spirit of joy and gratitude from the moment I arrived before worship. I should reverse the order, gratitude and joy, because joy seems so natural when you begin the day, and worship service, with gratitude. I was thankful before we ever got to our list of "Reasons to give thanks for First Christian Church," reasons to thank God for FCC. And then came the pictures during dinner. Of course, the dinner was certainly reason to give thanks in so many ways. I tried almost everything and loved every bit of it.

But back to the pictures. I wished I knew everyone in them. Sitting next to Tammy Ostermiller helped me. I was reminded of how many people came before Shannon and I came to town and to FCC. It takes a village to build a church it seems. I was reminded that FCC has been in multiple buildings with multiple worship spaces over the years. And clearly God was present in all of them and all the many events that occurred in those spaces. You could tell by the smiles. God was surely present and at work. And there was gratitude and joy!

I noticed how many pictures were taken outdoors, especially at the Glade Park cabin and grounds. I wish I could have experienced some of those moments of joy that were captured in those pictures. Clearly God was present and at work in those outdoor settings, even outside the church building. Hmm... outside the church building. That would mean that God can be present and creating beautiful moments, memories, relationships, learning opportunities, and gratitude, leading to joy, even outside the church building. What an amazing God!

140 years of worship, fellowship, hospitality, friendships, learning, serving, sharing Good News, being Good News, baptisms, weddings, births, funerals, memorials, celebration after celebration, and gratitude, leading to joy. When you looked at those pictures, where did you see God at work? Were there any surprises? Were there any reminders of what God can do? Were there any hope filled moments of what God might still do through First Christian Church? We have sure been blessed by this old, but beautiful, building! Could God continue to grow ministries and transform people's lives through this old building? Could God transform lives and neighborhoods and offer ministries of hope with this old building, or in another building, or outside of any building? Imagine!

Could God gather up 140 years of memories and ministries and relationships and celebrations and hospitality and gratitude and joy, and build a foundation for 10, 20, 50, 140 more years of sharing the Good News of God's love for all people and all of creation,

right here in Grand Junction, Colorado? Imagine! *And God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that by always having enough of everything, you may share abundantly in every good work. (2 Corinthians 9:8)*

I want to encourage you to find the movie, “A Christmas Carol,” and watch it early in this holiday season. Shannon prefers the musical version of Dicken’s classic story, with Albert Finney starring as Ebenezer Scrooge. There are many versions available to stream or rent, or read the book. I invite you to prepare for Advent and our Advent worship journey based on Matt Rawle’s book, “The Redemption of Scrooge.” We’ll try to bring a little “Old English” atmosphere into the sanctuary. And you are welcome to come in costume, if you like. Certainly, come prepared to find anew the Peace, Hope, Love and Joy, which entered our world through Jesus’ birth and continues to enter through our own lives in relationship with Jesus the Son of God. As Andy Williams used to sing, “It’s the Most Wonderful Time of the Year.”

Blessings, Pastor Kevin