



Yucca Breeze

THE UNITED CHURCHES OF HOT SPRINGS, SD

Pastor's Pulpit:

Probably one of the most challenging periods for a lot of us is the time following the Christmas Season. The Season of Giving is over ... or is it? I mean think about it. As Christians are we not called to live a LIFE ... not just a season of Giving? O man, that is a challenge. Yet in reality, when one considers all that the Baby Jesus of Christmas did for us as He grew up, providing us purpose in life and the promise of heaven in the future, to be a giver is not asking too much. I want to be like Him. Don't you? Which kind of leads to where I really want to go in this opening article in a new year.

Looking ahead, especially at our church budget, it does indeed seem daunting. We are being challenged in the year ahead to be super diligent and overly generous in our giving. What is really interesting is that in the **New Testament**, you will not find a call to tithe. I know that's shocking. You would think that those Jewish writers would at least have some teaching on the subject. Don't get me wrong, if you'd ask me a good paradigm or place to start in your giving, the Old Testament teaching of 10% is a good starting place. But it only a starting place. You see, I wonder if that's really what Jesus would have us to do? When we attach a number like 10%, we can fall into the trap of thinking that 10% is God's and the rest is ours. And let's face it, some of us can give more than 10%, and lots of folks at this time in their lives can't even come close. So, what's the answer?

I was listening to Allister Begg the other day and he actually broached this very subject. His text was Paul's second letter to the church at Corinth where He wrote in chapter 9:
⁶ The point is this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. ⁷ Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. ⁸ And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all sufficiency in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work.

The First Letter of Paul to the Corinthians, probably written about 53–54 CE at Ephesus, Asia Minor, deals with problems that arose in the early years after Paul's initial missionary visit (c. 50–51) to Corinth and his establishment there of a Christian community. The letter is valuable for its illuminations both of Paul's thoughts and of the problems of the early church. Saddened by reports of dissension among the converts of various Apostles, Paul begins his letter with a reminder that all are to be regarded "as servants of Christ and stewards of God's mysteries."

In the second letter, Paul expresses his joy at the news, just received from Titus, that the Corinthians had repented, that his (Paul's) authority among them had been reaffirmed, and that the troublemaker had been punished. After expressing his happiness and relief, Paul urges the Corinthians to respond generously to his plea for contributions to assist the poor of Jerusalem.

Notice Paul's instructions, no 10% rule, just give as one had decided in his or her heart. Not reluctantly, or under compulsion. But rather in light of not just who you are, or how much you have or don't have; but more, in the real light of **whose** you are ... a chosen and convinced and converted person, part of a church family, claimed and changed by Jesus. The very things that money cannot buy. Give He said, in light of that reality.

Paul understood that the life of a believer is not about percentages. If God doesn't have all of you, then you will struggle with God having all of you. He doesn't just own 10% of your heart. Jesus paid it all ... all to Him we owe. All we have, all we are, all we do, all we give is more of a reflection of how we truly see ourselves in light of God's super mercy and generous grace than anything else.

Begg went on to say his church actually operates on this example. They understood that the bottom line was more a heart condition than a fiscal reality. They also understood that people are at different places financially. Some can and some can't. I don't know, it just kind of made sense to me. And maybe, that's how we ought to view our budget. Read these verses again.

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The "season" of giving may be over, but how cool is it to know that we have a new year ahead of us, to actually live a Life of Giving that we have the real privilege to do. God loves a cheerful giver, but let me assure you, so does every church board member as well!

Blessings, Pastor David

Our heartfelt thank you to our church family
for all the cards, gifts and goodies
that we have been receiving over the Christmas season.
May our sweet Abba Father bless you and keep you, each one!
With our love,
Pastor David & Bernice



JANUARY ANNIVERSARIES

26 Pastor David & Bernice Cook

1 Marley White Face	24 Patricia Coffield
4 Paul Swenson	27 Aiden Swift
20 Kye Kutz	27 Katlyn White Face
22 Jerry Wyatt	31 Jan Speirs
22 Arika Brink	

If your name is not included on the Birthdays and Anniversaries list and you would like it to be added, please contact the church office by email: uc@gwtc.net or call 745-5640.

THIS AND THAT

FOOD PANTRY CLIENT PROFILE:

Number of Active Clients=373; Single=174; Family=199; Veterans (included in sgl/fam count)=68; New Sign-Ups (since Jan 1, 2022)=98 (5 additions in October; Average Days Open Each Month=16.

UNITED WOMEN:

The United Women will meet on **Tuesday, January 17th at 1:30 pm in the Fireside Room.**

MONDAY WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY:

The Monday Women's Bible study will begin meeting again on **Monday, January 9th at 9:00 am.** Watch for more information!

TIME IS MOVING ALONG!

*And it is time to get those Annual Reports into the church office! **Our Annual Meeting will be held on Sunday, January 22, 2023, following the Worship Service.** We need to be able to have our Annual Report Booklet available for the Sunday *before the meeting*. As it takes time to assemble all the documents needed for this report, we really need all our committees and teams to get your reports turned in! You may either drop them off to the church office, or email to uc@gwtc.net. THANK YOU!*

METHODIST ANNUAL MEETING:

The Methodist Annual Meeting will be held on **Sunday, January 8, 2023 at 11:15 am** in the **Fireside Room.**

NEW UMC SW DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT:

The New District Superintendent for the UMC SW, Pastor Dan Bader, will be worshipping and visiting with us on Sunday, January 22, 2023.

A NOTE ON OYATE CONCERN SCHOOL:

Effective January 2023, Oyate Concern School will be: **OYATE HOPE ACADEMY.**

FROM OUR HOT SPRINGS MINISTERIAL ASSOCIATION:

If you are an Amazon shopper, please consider selecting the Hot Springs Ministerial Association as your charity.

- **Go to [Smile.Amazon.com](https://www.smile.amazon.com)**
- Sign into your account just as you would sign into Amazon.com.
- Select Hot Springs Ministerial Association from the list of charities
- Click "Select and Start Shopping"

JANUARY MISSION EMPHASIS — The Joshua Fund



What Is The Joshua Fund?

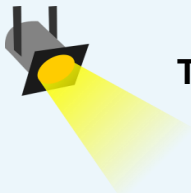
“Now the LORD said to Abram: ‘Get out of your country, from your family and from your father’s house, to a land that I will show you. I will make you a great nation; I will bless you and make your name great; and you shall be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.’” (Genesis 12:1-3)

Founded by best-selling author Joel C. Rosenberg and his wife Lynn in 2006, the Joshua Fund (TJF) is a non-profit organization dedicated to “blessing Israel and her neighbors in the name of Jesus, according to Genesis 12:1-3.”

"Our unique 'both/and' approach to ministry is focused on sharing God's love with Jews, Arabs and Palestinians living in Israel, the West Bank and neighboring nations (Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria & Iraq). Building relationships, coming alongside pastors and ministry leaders on the ground and working primarily through the local church, The Joshua Fund seeks to: Care for the Needy; Equip and Encourage the Body of Believers; Preach the Gospel; Educate and Mobilize the Global Church to learn to Pray, Give and Go."

Our January "Loose Change Offering" will go to this vital ministry. Offering envelopes will have a line designated to this fund.

For more information, visit The Joshua Fund Website at: <https://www.joshuafund.com>.



THE UNITED CHURCHES SPOTLIGHT

This year we will again be spotlighting of each of our three denominations:

BAPTIST ... METHODIST ... PRESBYTERIAN

Who we are ... What we believe ... What we do ... How to join.

If you are not a **already a member** of our church, we would like you to become one, but we want you to make an informed decision. In the upcoming weeks, information on each denomination will be available as handouts in the Sunday bulletins. There are also booklets of information on the table in the Bethany Room.

Your Denominational Representatives:

Garry Strauser, Baptist; Marce Largent, Methodist; Nancy Cape, Presbyterian

5TH SUNDAY MUSIC CELEBRATION

SUNDAY, JANUARY 29TH

Our first 5th Sunday of 2023

With Music by SOUL

Followed by a . . .

SOUP AND WHATEVER POTLUCK

We will have some folk sign-up to bring a pot of soup.

Otherwise ... just bring ... WHATEVER ... you like!!!

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UNITED CHURCHES



HOT SPRINGS, SD