



The Fruit of Awakening

Message Notes, January 8, 2017

We don't dwell on last year, but we do celebrate the positives of last year – the new Sunday Morning Gatherings, the strengthening of our Kingdom Kids ministry, the renewed commitment to “big” church gatherings that bring us together as a whole church family, the positive leadership transition in our Student Ministry (from the Williams to the Hofers), and new ministries that emerged (foster care support and a community garden).

This year God is stirring among us, awakening us to His presence, power and purposes. He is calling us to come after Him – to pray, seek His face and ask Him to lead us and cultivate in us His extraordinary life. Do we really want this? Are we hungry?

We have been around long enough and we have gotten big enough such that we are vulnerable to the drift towards institutionalization. We want to swim against this current. We want to cry out to God to awaken us and do a fresh, new thing among us.

God is awakening us to who He already is! To see Him, hear His voice, know His heart, believe in His purposes, surrender to His grace, walk by His Spirit.

Read Isaiah 43:16-19.

- What does God call His people to do? (v. 18)
- What are these “former things”? (vv. 16-17)
- What is the nature of this “new thing” He is doing? (v. 19)
- What might this look like (tangibly) in our church right now?

Read Ezekiel 47: 3-9. Here is our beloved image of the “river of the life of God.”

- Why do we like to stay in the shallow water?
- What happens when we move into the deep, over our heads? What negatives surface in us? What positives emerge?

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- Deeper love for Jesus (and more passionate worship of Him).
- Fuller surrender to His Lordship (to seek Him first and walk in His ways).
- Greater yearning for holiness (a keener awareness of our sin and our need for the Holy Spirit to grow His fruit in us).
- Bolder faith (to believe and step out in faith).
- Deeper burden for the lost (zeal to share the love and gospel of Jesus with others).
- A radical love for each other (deeply devoted brothers and sisters).

Which one of these most stirs your heart?

What would this look like (tangibly) in your life?



Pastor Keith discussed the plan for him to move on from Christ Community to a new place of strategic leadership in the Kingdom:

- This “move”/transition will take place over the next two years.
- The specifics of this new direction for Keith and Pam is not fully known, but the call to move on is clear.
- Our church board and staff are in unanimous agreement about this leading of the Lord.
- Let’s not speculate about “who” will be filling Keith’s role. Let’s pray and trust God to lead in our process.
- There will be a clearly defined transition team (our Board, a few outside “consultants”, and our Free Methodist leadership)
- We are the Lord’s church (not Keith and Pam’s). He is leading us; we can trust in Him. Our future in His hands is good! This transition is a part of this awakening God is stirring.

This surely stirs a wide array of emotions (fear, confusion, sadness, anger, excitement, etc.). Give full room for expressing these feelings and talking through them together, before the Lord.