



Colonial Park

UNITED METHODIST

Monthly Newsletter

Volume 38

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Issue 10

From Pastor Jathaniel

There are steps, layers, and levels to every decision we make. This is true in much of life. When we make a decision or choose a course of action, it involves more than that single thing. We typically don't think of it this way because there are many steps that we assume or have become a foregone conclusion. If you want to go to the grocery, there are many things that have to happen—most of which we don't even think about. We need to be dressed. We have to have our wallet or some way to pay for what we purchase. We need to get our keys. Drive to the store. You get the point. We say we went to the store, but we actually there were many other actions that went into that one simple thing. We typically don't slow down enough to consider all the steps that going into a simple trip to the store...unless you can't find your keys.

There are many occasions in which we really need to slow down and contemplate the process. We have to observe what is truly happening. Following Jesus is exactly one of those things. If you ask most people, there was a time when, if asked, people would say that in order to be a faithful disciple of Jesus you had to go to church on Sunday and be in Sunday School or a bible study. But, as we all know, you can do those things and still not be a faithful disciple of Jesus. As the old saying goes, sitting in church doesn't make you a disciple of Jesus any more than sitting in a garage makes you a car.

What is a faithful disciple of Jesus? When you hear me talk about discipleship, what I refer to is not a particular class or event. Discipleship is being in a relationship with Jesus, where we are spending intentional time learning to be the kind of person Jesus is and do the kinds of things Jesus does. The two words I use frequently are character and competency. We want to grow in the character of Jesus, and we want to grow in the competency of Jesus. The Church has historically been at the center of this work, and it still is! The Church is a group of people who are called out as disciples, who join together to encourage one another to stay connected to God and one another, to help one another grow, and to serve the world witnessing to the love of God.

What helps you grow into being more like Jesus? What practices are there that help you be the kind of person Jesus is? You will often find that you cannot truly be the kind of person Jesus is without doing the things that Jesus did. You also can't truly do the things that Jesus did without being the kind of person Jesus was. It's somewhat of a symbiotic relationship between the being and the doing.

Nothing helps us grow into being more like Jesus than following Jesus, actively and intentionally. I want to challenge to do a little thinking. Particularly, I want to encourage you to think through every little step or detail that it takes in your life to follow Jesus intentionally and actively. Now this might be overwhelming at first. To follow Jesus, what does it mean? Where does it lead? What steps does a person need to take or make to ensure that we are following Jesus and not everybody else?

What helps you grow into being more like Jesus? Take a moment to write a couple of things down on a sticky note and put it in a prominent place so that you can be reminded of what you need to be focused on in this season as you grow in your discipleship.

May the Lord bless you and keep you; The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you; The Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace.

Yours because I am His,
Pastor Jathaniel

Discipling Ministries

Check out two new things we're experimenting with in Children's Discipleship!

Why use the word *experiment*? Mainly because we're giving these two initiatives intentional effort and time to see if we discover meaningful and fruitful results as it relates to the discipleship journeys of those in our church and in the community. To do that, we plan, launch, and evaluate. Here's what we're doing:

Colonial Park Kids: Being a 3-d Family!

This is a take-home resource that corresponds with the Sunday morning lessons.

Growing to be disciples of Jesus means we are always working towards doing the kinds of things Jesus did and saying the kinds of things Jesus said. We call it a 3-dimensional (3-D) life because it was focused on 3 key areas: Up, In, and Out.

- He spent time UP with God, his Father.
- He spent time IN with his disciples who were his family. They nurtured relationships with one another and spend quality time together.
- He spent time OUT in the community serving his neighbors and he was sure that his disciples were a part of that service.

A key component of our children's curriculum is that it works most effectively in collaboration with parents and the church.

3-D Family + 3-D Church = Greater Impact as Growing Disciples

We remind parents that what they do every week matters more than they think, and Colonial Park comes alongside them with resources and support to encourage them in learning and engaging with God as a family.

For parents, some of the most important things they do for their child doesn't happen in a single day. Parents make small deposits in the lives of their children week after week over time. This weekly resource provides them with simple, daily tools to engage in conversations about the scripture and lesson their children discussed on Sunday. This isn't a to-do list or something burdensome to add to their already busy lives. Their encouraged to meet their family where they are - for example:

- read the story at the breakfast table;
- discuss a question while in the car; or
- discuss a common thread between the story and their day as parents tuck their children in at night.

Each week families are given scripture and a prayer (UP), discussion questions and family activities (IN), and service ideas (OUT) – all of which correspond with Sunday's thematic lesson.

Colonial Park only has the children for 1-2 hours a week. The goal is that by partnering with parents, this tool will enrich their individual and family's relationship with Jesus. It is a lightweight, transformative addition to how families grow together as disciples.

CP Kids Sunday Nights at Sea Isle Park!

Five nights this fall, CP Kids is taking our Sunday night activities to Sea Isle Park. Not only are we meeting at a totally different location (Sea Isle playground), but we're also asking parents to bring a chair and join us. We have a brief, interactive lesson, an engaging activity, snack, and then the kids play!

The goal of this is go out into the neighborhood and create a welcoming place for kids and parents to plug in outside the walls of the church. Our volunteers are trained to keep their eyes peeled for kids that may be interested and invite the parents and children to join. These nights serve as a missional exploration of sorts – we get to see our Colonial Park families and meet and develop relationships with new families in our community.

That's a little bit of what we're doing! If the 3-D Family resource intrigues you, I'd love to talk to you about how to incorporate Up, In, and Out into your life. Remember, a 3-dimensional life is a life Jesus wants for each one of us – we can explore what's right for you at this point on your discipleship journey. If you are interested in seeing what Sunday nights are about, I'd love to tell you more about it. Email Megan at mwarren@colonialpark.org and let's get together.

Outreach Ministries

Wild Ride

I have to say that our churchwide study of Tom Berlin's book *Reckless Love* has shined a spotlight on Jesus' call to Love Our Neighbors. I look around my circle of friends and realize how much we have in common and how many folks that have more differences with me are acquaintances.

When you look at the 12 disciples the only thing, they had in common was they were willing to drop everything and follow Jesus. Actually, when you look at their former lives and reputations it's hard to see how they could have liked each other at all.

Churches used to be made up of a wide array of folks that were bound together by their common love of Christ. It seems we have moved away from that to churches that are made up of a more select group of folks with ideals that match in likeness. As Tom Berlin states it "one look at the groups Jesus first assembled as his followers tells us that something is lost when sameness is the defining characteristic of a church." Jesus teaches us that something is wrong when we leave out people who are different from us. His goal is not to make us more of what we are but help us be more of what we can be. Wouldn't it be great if our church looked more like our community? You know, like SIPfest, Sea Isle School or the way I imagine Heaven will look?

Christ commands us to love our neighbor and in doing so we will discover things about God and His Love. The act of loving another person no matter how hard it is to do so is seeing and experiencing the Character of Jesus.

In Romans 13 we see "Love you neighbor as yourself." "Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law." It is this love that teaches us what it means to delight in the one who is Love Himself.

In our discipleship journey with Jesus, he doesn't tell us where we are going or who we will have to love. I agree with Tom that if we knew the answers to those questions at the start, we might not take the journey. However, without those folks and without that journey we will never become the person God intended us to be. So, we can surely learn to love the Lord with all our heart, mind, soul and strength and love our neighbors as ourselves, but you better hold on tight because it may be a "Wild Ride" to be ALL IN.

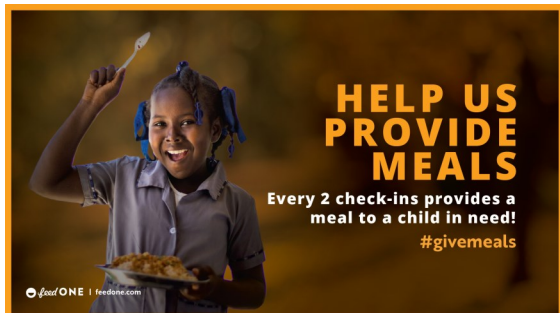
Blessings and Peace,

Gary W. Vaughn

Director of Outreach Ministries



Room in the Inn will resume on November 15. Please be on the look out for more information soon!



This November, while we pause to give thanks for what we have, you can help feed children just by checking in on Facebook at Colonial Park UMC. We've partnered with Reach by Causely and feedOne to make it possible and every 2 check-ins will provide one meal to a child! So don't forget to check in on Facebook each time you visit us. For more information about this month's cause, check out feedone.com.

We have openings for Altar Flowers on the following dates: November 14, 21, December 12, 19 & all of 2022.

Altar Flowers are a great way to remember & honor our loved ones. The 2 large arrangements placed in the front of the Sanctuary can be taken home with you. Order online today by scanning the QR code or calling the church office.





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Join us Sundays for In-Person Worship at 9:00 am for Traditional Worship & at 10:30 am for Casual Worship. Not ready to be in-person yet? Catch us on Facebook or YouTube at 10:30 am @ Colonial Park UMC. Or you may call the worship service hotline at 901-329-6527 to listen from your phone.

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Scan the QR code with your smartphone to go directly to Easy Tithe. This is an easy way to remain faithful to the ministries of Colonial Park.



This is a newsletter of Colonial Park United Methodist Church. The newsletter is published monthly & mailed third class, and e-mailed weekly except holidays.

Accelerate Update: \$344,377.14

Total 3 year pledge: \$623,184.00

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