

Cut for Time:

EXCERPTS FROM TODAY'S "STATE OF THE CHURCH ADDRESS"
"A Resurrection People"

My revelation is this:

PEUMC is a genuine friendly, open, and affirming congregation. We didn't have to *work* at it. It's not a *program*. We do it **naturally** – because it's in our DNA – because ***that's*** what God wants as the product that we push here.

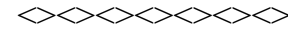
The challenge is getting not only our name out there – but also our **story**. So, we plan on doing some new things next year as part of our witness ministries.

- (1) *For one, we want to set up a booth at both the Rapids & Rome Farmer's Market – not weekly, but a few times each year.*
- (2) *I would like to produce a little pamphlet that showcases the best of our church through the words of the people.*
- (3) *We want to give new residents in our area information about our church by providing welcome bags.*
- (4) *I have made up bags myself filled with safe resources and information about our church for those in the LGBTQ community.*
- (5) *We want to continue providing appreciation dinners for community leaders.*
- (6) *Sometime next spring, we want to provide a dinner for our local firefighters and law enforcement officers.*
- (7) *Perhaps reexamine our logo-wear; Get some nice polos or a t-shirt we can get dirty with ministry.*
- (8) *Figure out ways to reach into the Nekoosa, lakes, and Rapids area (being aware of that only 1/3 of our congregation lives in Port Edwards).*

Next year is a year of expanding our reach and telling our story!

I no longer care that we don't provide long, robust lists of programs ("what all do you have to provide for me?"), or about some silly competition with the proverbial "church down the street." I'm not interested in spinning off more time-consuming programming, but to return to the value of intimate & communal relationships. We'll turn to our young families and our inactive

members – and instead of asking (which we never would have – but they fear we will): "*where have you been & why aren't you supporting our programs?*" we will ask: "*What can we do for you where you are now? How can we fill your cup?*"



When it is time for me to look back on my ministry here (don't worry, the end is not yet!), I don't really care if I didn't start huge, flashy ministries or programs. In fact, it feels like I've discovered the 2,000 ways NOT to plan and execute a church event or unroll a church program. I will probably not leave behind here anything fancy or shiny. But I hope that I would have **organized** us – as my ordination requires of me – for perpetual and effective ministry that will outlive me and all of your lifetimes; ministry that brings out the best of who you are and what's inside you!

In other words – I don't do ministry *for you*. Remember, you don't pay me to bring in new members, or grow **your** children's programs, or visit the **your** sick and **your** elderly. The people of PEUMC are foremost **your** people, not mine. (Yes, I am the shepherd of a flock – but even sheep can take care of one another.) I want to ensure that you continue taking good care of **your** own people. My "job description" is to empower & activate you, the laity! For wherever the laity step up to serve and take the lead in the nurturing and outreach of the church, it ALWAYS grows! Wherever the clergy is expected to do it all, (or the clergy ***wants*** to do it all), the church ALWAYS suffers! We are in ministry *together!*

I want you to be **organized** and **responsible** for your own effective ministry and outreach. That's why I need more than just a Council and financial officers at my side, but ministry leaders for Nurture, Outreach, Witness, Worship, Children and Family, and Social Justice. A lists of members-at-large willing be on call in case we ever need them for something specific (Connection Lists), including givers and pray-ers.

You all are the key to spreading the Good News about Jesus Christ and the Good News about the people of P.E.U.M.C.! If we can unlock this, the floodgates open and the rivers of justice and righteousness will flow through this place.