

Media and Graphics Notes

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| Sermon Starter Video? | Yes |
| Sermon Notes? | Yes, there is one scripture on the screen. Also, at the end of the sermon, there is a “Cardboard Testimonies” Video which I will introduce. After the video, I will close the sermon in prayer. |
| Other Notes | There will be a slide for UMW Sunday which will be just before the Stand and Greet in each service. |

Key Questions

What is this sermon about?

This sermon is about the life-giving work of God through the ministry of First United Methodist Church

Why is this sermon important?

It is important because what we do as a congregation brings joy in the kingdom of God. We join the work of the Holy Spirit changing hearts and lives.

What is the context of this sermon?

This is the first sermon in a five week capital campaign series seeking to raise \$800,000 for electrical infrastructure and sanctuary renovation.

What are the next action steps?

Continue to pray, “Lord, what do you want to do through me?” as it connects with the mission of our church.

What is the good news (bottom line)?

The good news is that God is changing hearts and lives through the ministry of this church and there is rejoicing in God’s kingdom.



Metadata

Topic(s)

1. Change Lives
2. Give
3. Make Disciples
4. Share Christ

Sermon Books of the Bible

1. 2 Peter
2. Luke

Tags

sermon, worship, church, Methodist, UnitedMethodist, UnitedMethodistChurch, FirstUnitedMethodistChurch, ElDorado, Kansas, GreatPlains, AnnualConference, GreatPlainsAnnualConference, giving, generosity, stewardship, CapitalCampaign, impact, ministry, lost, found, KingdomofGod

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Growing Forward - Sharing and Testimony

Each week during our capital campaign, we are sharing words of support and testimony for our capital campaign. Today, I would like to invite forward Steve Johnson to share a few words.

Along with David and Nancy Wagner, Steve and his wife, Leanna, have served as co-chairpersons for our capital campaign. I am grateful for their willingness to serve in this way. Steve, we hear you gladly...

Word of Support from Steve Johnson

Ministry Celebration

Today, we are celebrating the impact of ministry. Our Gratitude and Ministry team have prepared posters to represent the many ways that God is at work through the ministry of this church. We will present them during worship today and later they will be posted here in the sanctuary, so that you can remember all the ways that our ministry contributes to our mission to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

Listen for the ways that God is at work among us:

- **Vacation Bible School** - providing a place for children to grow in their faith each summer.
- **First Kids Serve** - engaging our children in serving beyond the walls of the church each Wednesday night
- **Middle and High School Classes** - building the faith of our youth as they prepare to encounter the world on their own
- **Choir and Praise Team** - singing praise to God and leading us in worship each week
- **Bell Choir** - Offering a gift of music here and across the community
- **On Going Groups** - Creating opportunities for people to grow in their faith with others outside of worship.
- **Sunday Morning Kids** - Inviting our children to grow in their faith each week here at the church
- **Outside Our Walls** - We seek to join God's work of transforming the community beyond our walls
- **Sunday Evening Youth** - Creating a safe place for youth to be themselves and discover God together
- **Worship Volunteers** - Welcoming people every Sunday to worship God
- **Leadership Teams** - Providing support for our entire congregation as we live out our mission
- **Discipleship Pathway** - Inviting each person live as disciples of Jesus Christ as we worship, grow, give serve and share.
- **UMW** - Women of the congregation who serve our church and support global missions.

6th Sunday of Easter
Growing Forward - The Impact of Ministry
First United Methodist Church of El Dorado
Text Online at <http://j.mp/1N90GPc>

May 1, 2016
Luke 15:1-10
Preaching Target Word Count: 1,180
Audio Online at <http://j.mp/1TqaMlw>

- **Serving the Community** - We serve the community so that El Dorado and Butler County look more like the Kingdom of God because we are here.

We celebrate God's work through our ministry.

Prayer for Celebration of Ministry

Will you pray with me?

O God, we offer ourselves in ministries of love and service by the example of Christ.

We dedicate the ministry of First United Methodist Church to you.

Unite us in your work in the world.

We pray in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

Luke 15:1-10, CEB

All the tax collectors and sinners were gathering around Jesus to listen to him. The Pharisees and legal experts were grumbling, saying, "This man welcomes sinners and eats with them."

Jesus told them this parable: "Suppose someone among you had one hundred sheep and lost one of them. Wouldn't he leave the other ninety-nine in the pasture and search for the lost one until he finds it? And when he finds it, he is thrilled and places it on his shoulders. When he arrives home, he calls together his friends and neighbors, saying to them, 'Celebrate with me because I've found my lost sheep.' In the same way, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who changes both heart and life than over ninety-nine righteous people who have no need to change their hearts and lives.

"Or what woman, if she owns ten silver coins and loses one of them, won't light a lamp and sweep the house, searching her home carefully until she finds it? When she finds it, she calls together her friends and neighbors, saying, 'Celebrate with me because I've found my lost coin.' In the same way, I tell you, joy breaks out in the presence of God's angels over one sinner who changes both heart and life."

Response to Scripture

One: The Word of God for the People of God.

All: Thanks be to God!

Introduction

Sermon Starter Video

[Play sermon starter video.](#)

Series Review

We are a growing church, growing family, moving forward. Our story began in December 1869 as the church first church organized in Butler County. In the first sixty years of our church's existence, we worshiped in seven different locations and built three brand new buildings. We have the opportunity to build on the legacy of generosity and sacrifice of those who have come before us. Today, we focus on the impact of ministry.

Sermon Notes and Scripture Study

Take Notes - Bulletin

I invite you to take notes during the message today. You can find a place in your bulletin or if you have a mobile device you can take notes and save them in the Bible App. Just open the Bible App, click on "More"

and then “Events”
You’ll find us on the map.

God Speaking

I pray that you will hear God speaking to you sometime during the service today. Listen for God’s word for you – something that helps you live as a disciple of Jesus Christ. Whenever you hear it, write it down.

Tool for Spiritual Growth

Then, take this bulletin home with you so that you can grow in your faith outside of worship by reflecting on what you heard today, praying for others connected with our community and reading scripture.

Prayer

Will you pray with me? O God, use these words to speak good news so that as individuals and as a congregation we will fear nothing but sin, desire nothing but you and live as part of your kingdom on earth as it is in heaven. Amen.

The Impact of Ministry

Yesterday, on Facebook, I invited people to share stories of the impact that First United Methodist Church of El Dorado has made in their life and I want to share one of the responses with you today.

Testimony

“We were “church hopping”....kinda like people go “bar hopping”, but we were church hopping. We were looking for that one church where we could make a connection in worship ideas, people, attitudes....where should we belong?

Because we had casually met Andrew [in the community], we thought we'd stop in one Sunday morning just to see how we felt about the Methodists.....you all were on trial!

We knew so many people who were in attendance, the music was making me tap my fingers on the back of the pew, and the message was a message of hope for us and the congregation. We've now joined the church and want to find ways to add to the well-being of God's house. This is a great church filled with the spirit of the God we worship!”¹

This is just one of the stories of people who have connected with God and other people here at First United Methodist Church. The ministry of this church makes an impact in the lives of people.

¹ Facebook message from congregant about the impact of ministry

Transition

In the scripture passage that was read today, Jesus tells stories about the impact of ministry.

The Lost Sheep and the Lost Coin

In Luke 15, Jesus tells three parables – The Lost Sheep and The Lost Coin, which were read today, and a third – The Lost or Prodigal Son.

Jesus' Audience

Let's take a closer look at who is hearing Jesus' words. There are two groups - those gathered to listen to Jesus and those that were grumbling about Jesus.

Tax Collectors and Sinners

Those that had gathered to listen to Jesus were tax collectors and sinners.

Then, as now, tax collectors were not very popular.

In Jesus' day, "Toll collectors paid in advance for the right to collect tolls, so the system was open to abuse and corruption. The toll collectors were often not natives of the area where they worked, and their wealth and collusion with the Roman oppressors made them targets of scorn."²

Sinners were people who had strayed from the path that God had in mind for their lives - people like you and me.

Pharisees and Legal Experts

Those that were grumbling about Jesus were Pharisees and legal experts. These groups were both deeply connected with the institutional religious leadership of the day. They just couldn't believe that Jesus is spending time with tax collectors and sinners, so they are griping and complaining.

Jesus Message

The parables that Jesus tells to these audiences is at the very center of the gospel message – finding those who are lost creates joy in the Kingdom of God.

The lost sheep...

The lost coin...

The lost son...

Each one telling the story of something that has been lost and found again.

Every person has value.

All are welcome.

² Leander E. Keck, ed., *Luke*, vol. IX of *The New Interpreter's Bible* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2002), 127.

God invites us to a life filled with “love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control”³

Key Scripture - 2 Peter 3:9

We read this in 2 Peter 3:9:

The Lord isn't slow to keep his promise, as some think of slowness, but he is patient toward you, not wanting anyone to perish but all to change their hearts and lives.⁴

Transition

This is message is in our DNA here at First United Methodist Church.

Conclusion

Our mission is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. For generations, our congregation has been searching for those who are lost – sharing Christ in El Dorado and beyond.

The ministries of the church, which are represented all around you, are focused on our mission and they make a difference in the lives of people.

Good News

The good news is that God is changing hearts and lives through the ministry of this church and there is rejoicing in God's kingdom.

Call to Action

For almost 90 years, people have gathered in this place to worship God, lay their burdens down and experience God's presence in real and meaningful ways. Lives have been changed by the power of the Holy Spirit right here in the seats you are sitting in. In the days ahead, I invite you to continue to pray, “Lord, what do you want to do through me?” as it connects with the mission of our church.

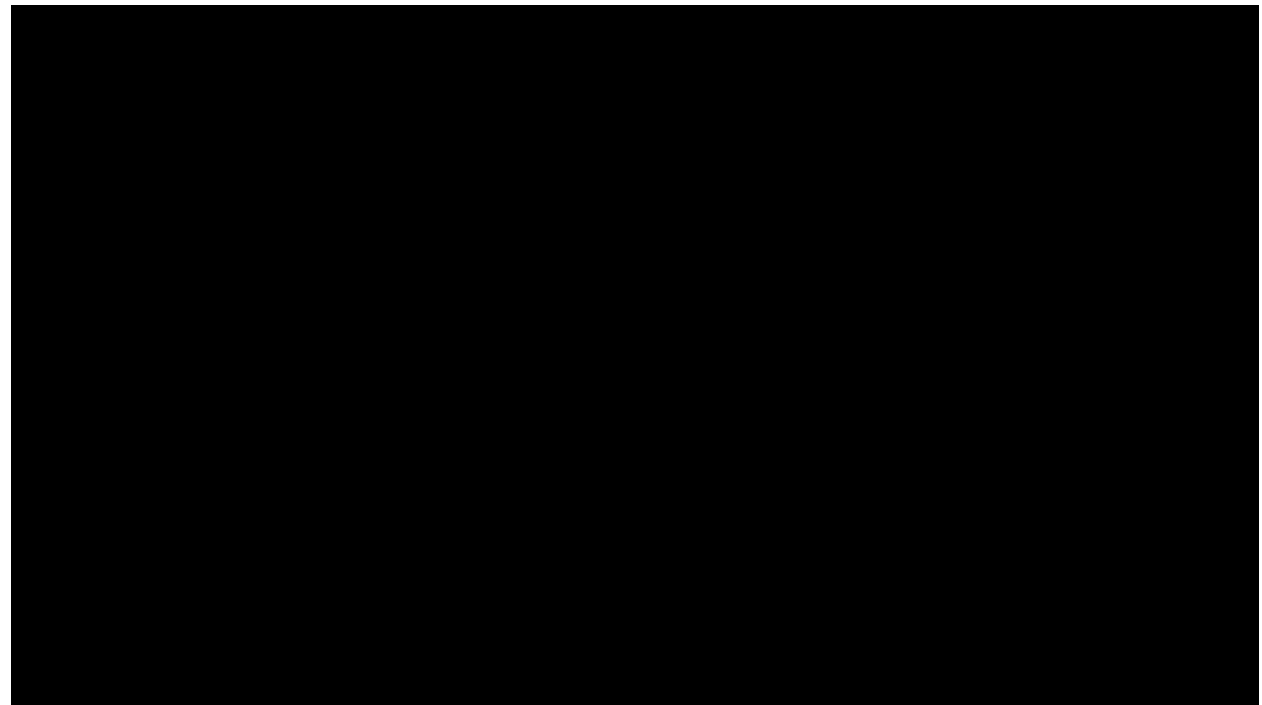
Your financial commitment to our capital campaign will help make sure that the life-giving work that God does through the ministry of this church will continue for generations to come. There is no greater return on the investment from our dollars than changed lives.

Cardboard Testimonies

We have prepared a video which captures the story of some of the people whose hearts and lives have been changed. It gives you an idea of the impact of ministry. We call it Cardboard Testimonies. Take a look...

³ Galatians 5:22b-23a, CEB.

⁴ 2Peter 3:9, CEB.



Invitation

These are a small sample of the stories of people who have experienced the life-giving power of God through the ministry of this church. You can help make certain that stories like these will continue to be told for generations to come.

God's invitation is to change your heart and life.

There will be great rejoicing in the kingdom of God.

Closing Prayer

O God, we want you to change our hearts and lives.

Pour out your Holy Spirit on us, we pray.

Enable us to live as your children, as part of your kingdom.

Send us out together to share Christ and make disciples.

In your holy name, Amen.