

Message from Brent Shaw, Minister of Christian Education

Well, it's hard to believe that I only just started a little over a month ago here at First United Methodist in the Christian Education department. What a blessing to see all that God is already doing and continuing to do!

The youth kicked off the year with a great concert and worship time with the Christian Band "This Fires Embrace."



The lead singer challenged us to find hope and faith in God even when the world around us tempts us every day. He shared his powerful testimony about how God helped him overcome his depression and alcohol addiction and choose to use his music to glorify God.



Children's Worship Xplosion/Sunday School kick-off was great! It was so wonderful to see so many children dancing, singing and worshipping in our renovated gymnasium! A huge thanks to all of our Sunday School teachers, helpers, youth workers, and interns reaching this and the next generation for Christ: Sheryl Pont, Brenda Bland, Missy Leypoldt, Heather VanBuskirk, Alea and Scott Woodward, Brent and Melissa Nelms, Jenna Rhodes, Erin Outson, Ross Janoveck, Gary Masters, Charity Helter and Susan Hanneman.



The Fall Festival was a great chance to see so many at our church fellowshiping, playing games, and laughing. We saw quite a few interesting characters coming from the face painting booth! That's Pastor Jamie getting made up!

One thing I was so moved to see was how many hungry children from our own church neighborhood we fed that night. Here we were being Christ's body and justice to a world of need right in our own back door! A huge thanks to Susan Hanneman and Doug Wilson in helping plan and make the event a possibility!

I have already been overwhelmed by the heart this family of God has for the church! There are so many ways I have seen church members being used by Christ ... but one particular instance stands out most to me. Just before our Fall Festival, everything was all arranged, most of the food had been donated, and I was looking over all the details when I sent to check the refrigerator. Alas, someone had walked off with all the food! What was I going to do? But, as he always does, Jesus knew the needs and answered my prayer with a "yes, I am with you!". Charity Helter stepped in, along with several other wonderful church members to make sure we had enough food and supplies to make the event a success! It's amazing the everyday people you end up seeing Jesus in!

I could go on and on about all that I've seen God do at First Church in just this short time ... but I think for now I'll just say "Thank you Jesus for your church ... and I'm excited more than ever for the future!"

Blessings in Christ, Brent