

Valley Views



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Pastor Dave Shultz

One thing people find dependable in life is their faith. Hebrews 13:8 tells us “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.” He never changes his mind or has one opinion one day and another the next. He is always for us. That is important to know because while Jesus never changes, our world does and it has an effect on the church. Which tells us how we do ministry and be the church of Jesus Christ in the world must adapt.

In an article from a few years by Carey Nieuwhof, a pastor, author, and researcher on coming trends in society and how they will affect the church, he wrote about a coming split in the church and how it is not the kind of split we normally think about. He listed four areas in which churches must evaluate their ministry. The split is between churches that will survive and church that will not. It has been a split that has been happening for the past 50 years and has left 85% of churches either plateaued or declining. I will briefly cover them here.

1. Online-Optional vs. Fully Hybrid - We live in a world that is increasingly technological. Each year more people are working from home. Computers make this possible. We have meetings via the internet. Many people are getting used to doing life this way and that includes worship. Studies show that many people will worship with a church online for a year, before they ever visit the church, if they ever do. What is increasingly evident is that online worship is just as important and necessary to provide as in person worship. This reminds us that we are engaged in a ministry, not in a service to ourselves.

2. Bring people back vs. moving people forward – The pandemic is over, and we want everything to get back to normal. Now we hope that people will come back. But getting people back is not a vision, moving them forward is. A church that has a vision of moving people forward by growing them as disciples/apprentices of Jesus Christ and in mission and ministry to the world will have a future. Those who just hope people will come back will not survive long in a post-pandemic world. Because of the pandemic people see life differently and unless the church helps people to see Jesus in a way that is bigger than their fears and uncertainties, then the church becomes irrelevant.

3. Churches that embrace vs. churches that judge – This one has to do more with attitudes. The world is full of judgmental attitudes and when people seek out God, they want to know a God who accepts them in spite of their failings and helps them through their personal darkness. The problem for most churches is that Christians are often just as judgmental as the rest of the world. A recent Barna study revealed that 62% of lapsed Christians said that the #1 quality they look for in a person with whom to discuss faith is non-judgment. Only 34% said they know any Christians who possess this quality. While churches say they are friendly, they are usually only friendly to each other, and sometimes only to a select group. Carey writes, “Churches that embrace the people they’re trying to reach will have a much better future than churches that judge them.”

4. Ideologically driven vs. Gospel-driven – There is one final area that is widening the gap in churches. Since the beginning of the pandemic “a growing number of church leaders have used their influence to weigh in on everything from politics to partisanship, to masks vs. no masks, vaccines, supreme court nominees, to tax policies, to immigration.” Partisan divide has really grown in the church in the past year. Carey says, “this is actually quite predictable for a culture that’s rapidly moving from Christian to post-Christian. It’s tempting to want to hang onto power, to blame the culture for changing, or to see politics as your salvation.” Carey continues, “Both Jesus and the first-century church were paradoxically apolitical while being deeply subversive. They were apolitical in the sense that they were deeply nonpartisan, yet subversive in that that they turned the world upside down through an ethic of truth and love that made existing politics pale by comparison.” He adds “the culture needs an alternative to itself, not an echo of itself.” We are a very divided country, and it is tearing us apart. So much so that I know people who have quit watching the news. I grow very tired of it myself. “In a divided culture, Christians should be the help and the hope, not the hate.” After reading the article I was more convinced than ever that the church cannot, absolutely cannot go back to the way it was, because that is just more of the same and it is a big part of why we are as we are today. The call to church today is to be the church and we must look to Jesus to lead us, for we have lost our way. But, “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.”

PPRC Committee Meeting Scheduled for Tuesday, August 8th, 2023 at 6:30pm at the Elimsport Church. PPRC Committee members are Lauren Bryson, Christa McCormick, Retta Moore, Jeremy Kennedy, Gary Taylor, Fred Kennedy and Donna Satteson.



Various means to keep updated:

website: evpumc.org

Face book: Elimsport United

Methodist Parish

Electronic sign at Elimsport church

email Pastor Dave: dshultz@susumc.org

email church: elimsportumc@gmail.com

Call Pastor Dave: 570-547-1162

Text Pastor Dave: 570-439-0004 (please identify yourself when texting)

Be pro-active in getting the word out to others in the church.

Please be sure to check the church website evpumc.org and Elimsport United Methodist Parish face book for up to date church news.

There will be a blood drive on Tuesday, June 6 from 2-7 in the Fellowship Hall.



- Items for July's newsletter are due June **20th**.
- Items for the weekly bulletin's need to be to the church office by **Wednesday morning** each week.

(Items received after these dates are not guaranteed to be printed.)

Wednesday morning breakfast at the Elimsport church is Wednesday mornings, from 7:30 am to 9:30 am.



St. John's is in need of an outside custodian. Please contact Steve Burrows at 570-337-8520 for details.



Elimsport Ad Council meets the second Monday of the month at 6:30.



St. John's Ad Council meets the second Thursday of the month at 6:30.



READY, SET, LAUNCH.... Vacation Bible school will be Sunday, July 9th through Thursday, July 13th. 6:00-8:30pm. Dinner provided. Closing Program and Carnival is Friday, July 15th at 6.

Calling all astronauts and space stars who are ready to blast off into space. Our theme this year is Stellar. At Stellar VBS kids will explore how Jesus shined hope, love, forgiveness, and joy into the world- and how we can do the same with his power! We will explore epic adventures that help kids grow in friendship with Jesus!! Please spread the word. Kids aged preschool through entering 7th grade. READY, SET, LAUNCH!!!

Any VBS questions contact Taryn Myers, Christa McCormick or Sharon Heintzelman



Kid's Corner



ELIMSPORT VALLEY UNITED METHODIST PARISH

Worship Schedule:

Elimsport UMC

Worship 9:00 am
Sunday School 10:30 am

St. John's UMC

Sunday School 9:15 am
Worship 10:30 am

Parish Youth Group

Check weekly Bulletin for current schedule and events
(at Elimsport)

Parish Bible Study

Varies according to the season.

Parish Office:

16145S. RT 44 HWY
Allenwood, PA 17810

Parsonage Phone:

(570) 547-1162

Pastor Dave's Cell:

(570) 439-0004

Parish Website:

www.evpumc.org

Parish email:

elimsportumc@gmail.com

www.evpumc.org



Our Mission Statement at Elimsport UMC



We gather together as a community of Christian believers to worship, fellowship, and to learn more about God. By the unity of the Spirit and the support of each other, we are able to reach out to the community and the world.

Our Mission Statement at St. John's UMC



The purpose of St. John's is to both evangelize and nurture. We are called to show God's love in our world by giving aid and by spreading the Good News of Christ. We in turn provide an atmosphere for nurturing where Biblical truths are shared enabling people to become spiritually enriched. By providing this, people will learn and through learning, become more effective witnesses.