

April 14, 2010

Dear Church Family,

As a congregation, we are embarking upon a new and exciting undertaking as we launch *The Moses Project: A Year of Reflection, Action, and Celebration*. In February, our church Council voted that we would collectively commit to a church-wide social action project running over the course of a year. In this letter, I want to extend the first formal explanation and invitation pertaining to this project.

This past Sunday I shared with the congregation a parable that I have found to be the most helpful way of conveying what we are seeking to do. In the parable, a villager sees a baby floating down the river. He saves the baby, but the next day he finds two more babies floating down the river. On the following day, he sees four babies. The number keeps growing each day, and soon the entire village is helping to save the babies. Quickly overwhelmed by the task, someone eventually raises the question of where all the babies are coming from. It is proposed that a team be organized to go up river to the source of the problem.

In order to effectively address problems like homelessness, we need people who are in the water saving others. We need people setting up shelters and running soup kitchens, but, eventually, we are going to also need to go up river to address the source of the problem. To do this, requires taking social action. Our Mission and Outreach Ministry has carefully selected five potential organizations who we are confident can assist our church in taking action. You will receive information packets about these organizations on the first Sunday of May. Later in that month you will be invited to vote during worship for which of these five you would like to see our congregation have as a partner. The goal is to find an organization who can unify us as a church and inspire us to follow our passions.

Leading up to the vote, members of our church will be hosting “Burning Bush Parties” as a way to build community and to discern our social justice calling as a church. Last Sunday, I unveiled an enticing lure for these parties: burning bush marshmallow cookies. I am challenging the cooks in our congregation to come up with a burning bush dessert that is just as good. In the coming weeks, you will receive a detailed invitation to attend one of the parties.

Upon receiving the information packets in May, the concrete details and possibilities of this project should become apparent. In the meantime, know that there is a Moses waiting to be awakened in hearts and ambitions of our congregation.

Your brother in Christ,

Rev. Brooks Berndt