

The Connection

Volume 7, Issue 1, January 2009

from Pastor Mike...

By the time you receive this newsletter we will have already rung in the New Year. How time flies, seems only yesterday that we were turning the calendar to 2008. But, now, here we are, already into the first week of 2009. And, it won't be long (perhaps I'm getting older?) and we'll be looking forward to Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter, and another new year to begin.

We have begun a New Year, but the God of yesterday is still the God of today, and will be the God of tomorrow. He never changes. He is there in every situation. Perhaps you aren't feeling like He is there, but, He is there just the same. He's a God that knows the number of hairs on your head.

So, if He knows those minute details, then He surely knows all the things about us that we feel He isn't aware of. We sometimes feel that He doesn't care, but He does. Matthew 6:33 tells us to "*seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be added unto you.*" Philippians 4:19 says that "*God will supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.*" So, when our need isn't met, we need to look inward and not blame God. For he never changes, and what He will do for me, He will do for you.

Heavenly Father, we thank you for the New Year that you have brought us to. Help each of us to continue to put our faith and trust in you. We give you praise. In Jesus name, I pray. Amen.



New Class starts January 11th at 6:00 PM!

Free Preview January 4th at 6:00 PM

Childcare available by reservation only. Call 529-1212 to reserve care for your children.

What is Financial Peace University?

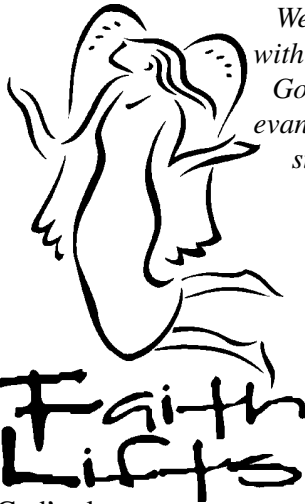
FPU is the most important step to changing your financial future. It takes the knowledge from God and turns it into real action in our lives through a step-by-step process taught by best-selling author and financial counselor Dave Ramsey.

FPU is a 13-week life-changing program that empowers and teaches you how to make the right money decisions to achieve your financial goals and God's plan for your life. The course includes practical lessons on eliminating debt, building wealth, giving like never before, and much, much more!

Who is Financial Peace University for?

It's for EVERYONE!...from the financially secure to the financially distressed. Over 650,000 families and individuals have attended Financial Peace University.

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Welcome to a new section of our newsletter -- a place to share your stories with the rest of the church! As we walk through trials, joys, and stages of life, God reveals things to us that he wants us to share with others -- that's what evangelism is all about. Here is a safe, affirming place to begin to share your stories. If God is doing something amazing in your life that you want to share, please write it up and send it to bmcc_newsletter@charter.net.

by Rebecca Oertel

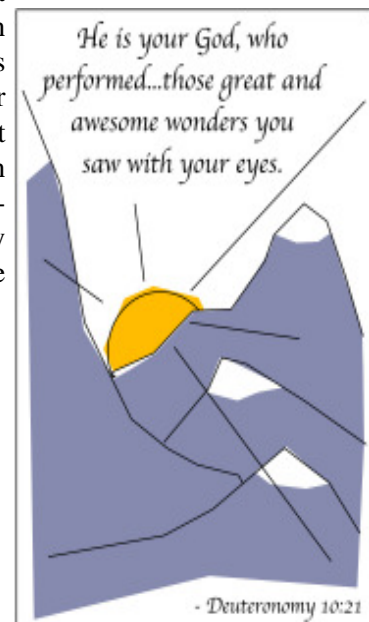
God's plan never ceases to amaze me and I'd like to share with you a recent experience that has left me grateful in more ways than I know how to express.

The severity of my recent illness required that I have a lot of care after leaving the hospital, so my parents brought me home to Western Washington to be surrounded by family to support, care for and hold me accountable for the things I needed to do. The night after we arrived home, my mom's dad had a stroke. It was a minor one and though hospitalized, he was recovering very well and after a few days they were talking about bringing him home. Like many in the family, I was able to visit with him and show him that my health was no longer in danger. It was a wonderful time with all the family; his beloved wife, his daughters, grandchildren and even some great grandchildren. His youngest daughter arrived December 22nd and was able to have a long visit.

Tuesday night after my grandmother left the hospital, he suffered a major stroke from which he would not recover. The winter storm held off and Grandpa's heart kept going strong for 48 hours, allowing everyone in the family a chance to say goodbye. I was able to witness the faith of many in my family I didn't know were believers. My sister has long resisted a

relationship with God because she believes herself unworthy. I was in the room with her after the second stroke and witnessed my sister hit her knees to pray the most beautiful prayer. I haven't heard my sister pray since she was nine years old. I was able to pray from my Bible unembarrassed and out loud for the first time in my life and have it witnessed by my mom, her sisters and my grandma.

I don't think words exist that can express what this experience has meant to me, but I continue to be amazed by God's timing. He used my illness to bring me home in time to visit with and say goodbye to one of the most important people in my life. I hope this story is a reminder to everyone that miracles exist, even when we don't understand why things happen the way they do.



Winter Fog

by Larry Wachtel

Winter is a wonderful time of year in many ways. The holidays, time off from work, family reunions, wonderful dinners. Yet winter is also a time when daylight is slow to come and early to leave. Clouds tend to rule the skies, making even midday seem half lit. Travel, when necessary, can be a real adventure. Take the fog for example. It often strands air travelers, slows vehicle traffic and all too often is responsible for accidents which dramatically change lives. It often creeps in, as a thief stealing the daylight, almost without notice. The deeper it gets, the darker it gets also. Or is it the other way around?

I've been in one of those dry spells we all hear about. You may have experienced one in your own life – perhaps more than one. Dry spells remind me of the fog. They creep in, stealing the light of our lives, almost without notice. The longer they go on, the darker things become. In my situation I got to the point where I had lost my true longing for my Heavenly Father. I had allowed myself to fall into a routine in my daily life where He had become shrouded by the fog of my sin. I began totally neglecting my need for His leading.

Sometimes we do just fine in the fog. The plane is able to take off and, perhaps after circling of the

airport a time or two, we are able to land and go about our business. We scarcely notice and become almost accepting of our inability to clearly see and feel the sun, or to look up at the night sky and enjoy the stars. As time slipped by, I got to the point where I focused all my waking hours on my job and family. Since nothing serious had gone wrong, it seemed like all was well.

Our three day fast, and the prayer meeting which followed, allowed the Son to shine thorough for me again. The fog, or more accurately my sin, was burned away and once again I felt the warmth of His love, the closeness of His spirit, the cleansing of my soul.

I hope that when you begin to experience the fog creeping in, concealing the Light from your life, that these words will come to mind and you'll allow the Son to come back into your life as well.

Newsletter Deadline

If you have an upcoming event you'd like to promote, faith story or poem you'd like to share, or anything else that pertains to the life of the people of Blue Mountain Community Church, please consider writing a small article (300 words or less) and submitting it to the newsletter. The deadline for articles is the second Wednesday of each month. The editor reserves the right to edit for content and space.



Ner ocity

by Pastor Brent

For those of you who are married, take a moment to think back to some of the high-points of your relationship together. For some, this is pretty easy to do. For others, however, recognizing high-points in marriage is a bit more difficult. Well, no matter what your marriage looks like I would suggest that we all have had mountain-top experiences. The trick sometimes is simply being able to identify them.

Do you and your spouse live in harmony with each other? Can you see yourselves making it to your 25th and 50th Anniversaries? Regardless of how you answered, would you like to be able to say ‘yes’ emphatically to both?

“Not only is a harmonious, long-lasting relationship within every couple’s grasp, but emotional security is the cornerstone for the relationship you’ve always wanted. That means you don’t have to be a relationship guru to connect deeply with your spouse after all!” – Gary Smalley

‘**I Promise**’ is a DVD led marriage series that will begin on Sunday, January 11th @ 9 a.m. I have a burning passion for marriages in our church to be more than they are; to be more like what God wants for us and less like what society says is normal. Whether you feel like you have the most amazing marriage, one of you is often sleeping on the couch, or anywhere in between, this study can help to take your relationship to a new level of honor and love. I hope to see you there!



Celebrate Recovery

by Penny Knight

Christmas is a time of joy and celebration. It’s a time for peace and goodwill to all people. Families gather together, playing games, eating, laughing and making memories. Just how it should be. Even the promise of a fresh start in the new year sounds pretty good to most.

The holidays may not be so merry for some people. For those with addictions, depression and compulsive behaviors, holidays are less than merry. They are downright miserable. Very often, people with these problems have been alienated or have separated themselves from their families. Alone, these folks are depressed and often turn to thoughts of self -destruction.

We all have struggles or hurts. Celebrate Recovery is full of ‘those people.’ We are people who know we need Jesus in our lives and we need each other. The Bible tells us in James 5:16: *“Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed.”* We need each other; to believe in the goodness of someone who struggles and also the power of Jesus to heal them

The doors to CR are open absolutely every Friday night of the year. No exceptions.

Celebrate Recovery is beginning its sixth year here. Everyone is welcomed with open arms and not judged by their hurts, habits, and hang-ups. CR is a place of unconditional love partnered with accountability and forgiveness. Lives are being changed.

I’d like to ask you to remember Celebrate Recovery in your prayers. It would mean so much to our group to know the church is lifting us up in prayer.

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Applying God's Word radically changes your life. On average, FPU graduates have paid off over \$5,300 in debt and saved \$2,700 during the 91-day program!

What Will I Learn?

In this life-changing program you will learn:

1. Step-by-Step Cash Flow Planning

Luke 14:28: *"For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not sit down first and count the cost, whether he has enough to finish it."*

2. Debt Snowball Plan Technique to Eliminating Debt

Proverbs 22:7: *"The borrower is slave to the lender."*

3. How to Invest Wisely

Ecclesiastes 11:2: *"Give portions to seven, yes to eight, for you do not know what disaster may come upon the land."*

*Text provided by The Lampo Group



Team up! with Women's Ministries

by Cailey Dumler

God is currently raising up a team of faithful women at BMCC to shape Women's Ministries into a dynamic, God-centered part of our church.

Part of this new vision is to meet the spiritual, physical, and emotional needs of women of all ages in our congregation as well as throughout our community.

If you are interested in learning more about being a part of this amazing opportunity, we invite you to attend the kick-off gathering on January 24th at 2:00 p.m. Come and enjoy worship, food, encouragement, and sharing of vision for Women's Ministries. There will also be various door prizes given out. Bring a friend! Please RSVP to the church office by January 21st.

"Let us hold tightly without wavering to the hope we affirm, for God can be trusted to keep his promise. Let us think of ways to motivate one another to acts of love and good works. And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another, especially now that the day of His return is drawing near."

Hebrews 10:23-25

Imagine Yourself **DEBT FREE**

1 Marty Ybarra
Sierra Ybarra

2 Reva Ewing

3 Jeff Simmons
John Ermacoff

4 Doris Cook
Maegan Houk

5 Michael Klicker

6 Jason Cowles
Elizabeth Thomaston

7 Holly Carrera
Angie Williams

8 Carol Schirman

9 Gary Burns
Kariss Carrillo
Travis Haen

Mike Lydon
Rosalie Vogt

10 Xander Freiberg
Dona Rahn
Allison Snider

11 Ben Brink

12 Russ Kroum
Kendra Voeks

13 Shelby Mountain

14 Dave Sept

15 Carol Grubb
Marie Hickman

16 Ethan Guse
Shane Mings

17 Louise Doyle
Rick Guse

Keilsee Leisle
Frances Winters

18 Rick Maxwell
Chris Osborn
Austin Walker

19 Carrie Freiberg
Ed Hendricksen

Dave Houk

Erik Jensen

Elise Pettyjohn

Nancy Stewart

21 Andrew McMillan

23 Chelsea Steiner

24 Jessica Groat
Michael Hinrichsen

25 Robert Joshlin

26 Morghan Carrera
Jerold Cook

Betty Eyestone

Donna Hibner

Stephanie Sept

27 Jean Lamb

Steve Mize

29 Brenda Hobbs

30 Anna Frazier

Ron McBride

Bill Parker

31 Randy Knudson
Myron Rogers

7 Dave and Cindy Houk

9 Jack & Debbie Sands

Paul & Leanne Howard

17 Rick & Jolene Queen

24 Vincent & Kelle Cannone

Birthdays &



Anniversaries



Monthly Events

- 1 **Office Closed for New Year**
- 8 MOPS * 9:00 AM
Board of Elders Meeting 6:30 PM
- 9 Pastoral Care Meeting 8:30 AM
- 10 Men's Breakfast 7:30 AM
Board of Elders Retreat 9:00 AM
- 12 EOD Commission Meeting 6:30 PM
Worship Commission Meeting 6:30 PM
- 13 Quilter's Guild 6:30 PM
- 14 Prayer Meeting 7:00 PM
- 15 SAMS* 10:00 AM
CE Commission Meeting 6:30 PM
Missions Commission Meeting 7:00 PM
Building & Grounds Commission 6:45 PM
- 17 Greeter Training 10:00 AM
- 19 Missions Project Dinner 6:30 PM
- 20 The Ark Commission Meeting 6:30 PM
- 22 MOPS * 9:00 AM
- 24 Women's Ministry Planning Meeting 2:00 PM

* SAMS- Senior Adult Ministries
MOPS- Mothers of Preschoolers

Weekly Events

- Sunday (beginning Jan 11)**
Middle School Group 6:00 PM
Financial Peace University 6:00 PM
- Tuesday**
Taking Off Pounds Sensibly 5:30 PM
Boy Scouts 7:00 PM
- Wednesday**
Women's Bible Study 9:00 AM
Adult Bible Study 6:30 PM
High School Group 7:00 PM
- Thursday**
Worship Team Rehearsal 6:30 PM
- Friday**
Celebrate Recovery Dinner 6:00 PM
Celebrate Recovery 7:00 PM

Special Days

- 1 New Year's Day
- 19 Martin Luther King Jr. Day





REJUVENATION UPDATE

by Larry Wachtel

Believe it or not, you'll soon be seeing the first construction workers on site! The first step in the construction process will be to have a sprinkler system for fire suppression installed in all of our existing buildings *except* the main sanctuary.

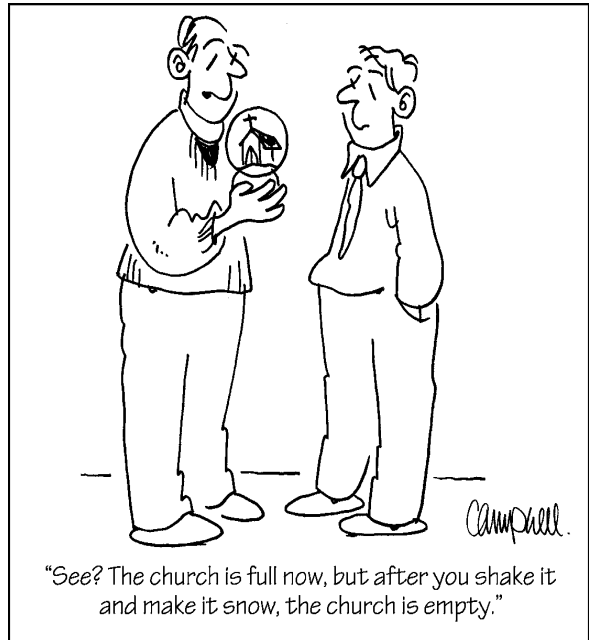
While we had hopes of being able to avoid this expense, the city has determined that, due to the limited amount of water we have available to the fire hydrant on the other side of Sturm, the sprinkler system will be required. On the surface this may appear to be disappointing news but actually, once installed, it will provide us much greater protection in the event of a fire. It will likely also allow us a reduction in insurance premiums.

Our floor plans have now been refined to the point where we feel we're ready to have a licensed architect and engineer review them and add the details we will need for project bidding and construction. The current level of detail, while giving an overall scope of the project, does not contain the level of detail we need for construction. The greater the level of details on the drawings, the fewer questions and change orders we deal with later. The engineer needs to review the plans to determine things such as roof loads, soil compaction and drainage, foundation requirements, etc. This is a necessary component of any construction project.

At the November 20th meeting of the building committee and Board of Elders we put together a list of prospective contractors which we will be contacting when we have our plans finalized.

While it may not appear to the naked eye, we're making progress! Please keep Rejuvenation in your prayers as we seek God's leading in every step and detail of the building process. The pace may very well be slower than it could be, but we continue to learn more as we go, avoiding costly mistakes as we pray, and discuss all the options available to us.

Thank you all for your contributions to the project. We're now well over \$300,000 in donations. Please prayerfully continue to donate as the Lord leads you. Our entire congregation will benefit from its completion.



Faith Promise News

by Charlotte McPherson

Warm greetings to you!

We are very thankful for your prayerful support.

Your prayers give us strength and help. Thank you for your words of encouragement sent by email and regular mail.

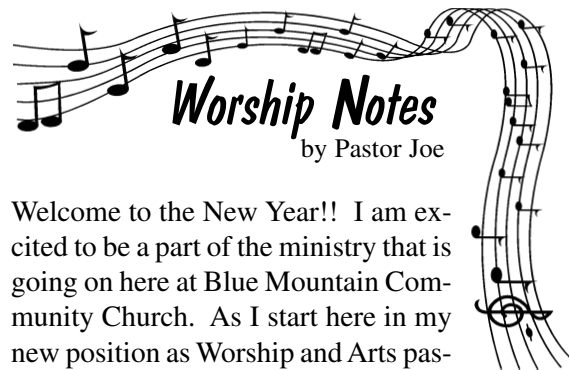
As Christmas approaches quickly, we are reminded of the Christmas spirit of peace and joy. I am so glad I can know His true peace and joy because of the miracle of Christmas. It is hard to have this when living here. This year, Muslims will be celebrating in the early part of December where they sacrifice an animal, usually a sheep.

We have begun playing Christmas music in the bookstore. The words of Christmas carols are so beautiful and we hope will touch people's hearts as they listen when they visit. We have an increased flow of visitors during this time, because we are one of the few places in the city, or maybe the only one, who actually has the manger scene on display. That in itself is a witness.

Please continue to pray for visitors on the web and to the bookstore. People keep asking us to open branches nearer to them since the city is so large and travel around the city is difficult, plus gasoline is about \$13 (US) per gallon! We travel all over the city for book fairs but we are not in a position to open branches. Going on the web is the best solution.

Please take time to open the website and browse the site and pray for it to be used as a way to make new contacts and build relationships with visitors.

<http://www.greenhousekitap.info/>



Welcome to the New Year!! I am excited to be a part of the ministry that is going on here at Blue Mountain Community Church. As I start here in my new position as Worship and Arts pastor, I am excited about what could be coming up in this "New Year" for all of us. In this coming year, one emphasis we will have is on expanding our worship team. I know that there are several out there who are talented musicians and artists who may be asking the question, "I wonder if they could ever use me on the worship team?" Let me answer that for you...YES!! I would love to meet with you and talk about how you can be involved.

All of us are called to ministry, whether it be as a musician or artist, mother or father, son or daughter, all of us are called to be ministers of the gospel of Jesus Christ. As a worship pastor, it is my desire to see all of us take the scripture in Romans 12:1 to heart. *"Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship."*

Worship is not just about singing or drama, it is about sacrificing our lives daily to the will of God. Whether you join the team or not, I want to encourage you to make this year a year of worship! Happy New Year!

Dear Lord,

I thank you for this day. I thank you for being able to see and hear this morning. I am blessed because you are a forgiving and an understanding God. You have done so much for me and keep on blessing me.

Forgive me this day for everything I have done, said, or thought that was not pleasing to you. I ask now for your forgiveness.

Please keep me safe from all danger and harm. Help me to start this day with a new attitude and plenty of gratitude. Let me make the best of each and every day to clear my mind so I can hear from you. Please broaden my mind that I can accept all things.

Let me not whine and whimper over things I cannot control. And give me the best response when I'm pushed beyond my limits. I know that when I can't or don't pray, you know my heart. Continue to use me to do Your will.

Please continue to bless me that I may be a blessing to others -- of and for Jesus Christ.

Keep me strong that I may help the weak. Uplift me that I may have words of encouragement for others.

I pray for those that are lost and can't find their way. I pray for those that are misjudged and misunderstood. I pray for those who don't know you intimately. I pray for those who don't believe.

I thank you that I believe that God changes people and things. I pray for all my sisters and brothers. For each and every family member in their households.

I pray for peace, love, joy, and the grace of our Heavenly Father to be with all.

I pray for every eye that reads this to know there is no problem, circumstance, or situation greater than God.



In Jesus Name. . . . Amen

submitted by Lorene Buff

A Time of Seeking

by Rebecca Livermore

The words, “Happy New Year!” bring a lot of different images to mind. Many people think of silly hats and noise makers; others may think of getting drunk or other reckless and ungodly behavior, and still others make a list of resolutions. Some of the resolutions are spiritual, such as reading through the Bible, and others are on a more physical plane, such as exercising three times a week.

Although resolutions may have a place and are certainly not necessarily bad, a more meaningful exercise may be to have a time set apart specifically for seeking God regarding the old year ending and the New Year beginning.

Here’s how it works:

Spend a short time in worship, to prepare your heart to hear from God. Spend at least 20 minutes in prayer for each of the following:

1. A Time of Laying Down Concerns

“Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.” (1 Pet. 5:7 NIV)

If you’re entering this Time of Seeking with a lot of concerns, start by listing them. Jot down everything that concerns you, no matter how small. One by one, go through your list. If you can’t do anything about the concern, bring it before the Lord in prayer. If you can do something about it, spend time praying about it, and then write down the action you need to take on a “do list.” Conclude this time by committing all of your concerns to the Lord.

2. A Time of Reflection

“I will remember the deeds of the Lord; yes, I will remember your miracles of long ago.” (Ps. 77:11 NIV)

Think over the events of the past year. On one page make a list of struggles and failures in the past year. One by one, go through each item on the list. Confess your sins to the Lord. Ask for His forgiveness, and thank Him for an opportunity to start fresh.

On another page make a list of blessings and successes from the past year. Thank and praise God for His goodness in your life this past year.

3. A Time of Looking Forward

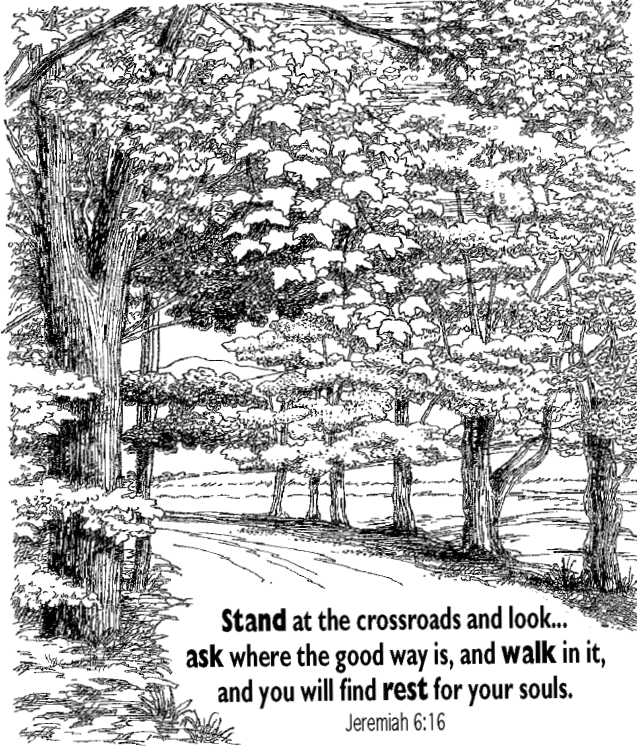
“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, ‘plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.’” (Jer. 29:11 NIV)

Ask God what He would like to accomplish in and through you in the coming year. You might want to consider the following areas: spiritual life, family life, ministry, career, and finances. Take one area at a time and wait on God, asking Him to reveal His plans for your life. Jot down your thoughts as they come to you. Spend time praying about each area.

Conclude this hour by thanking God for His forgiveness, His provision in the past, and His plans for your future.

Answers to last month’s puzzle:





**Stand at the crossroads and look...
ask where the good way is, and walk in it,
and you will find rest for your souls.**

Jeremiah 6:16

Our Ministry Team

Senior Pastor — Mike Hinrichsen
Administrative Pastor — Dan Huntley
Associate Pastor of Family Life — Brent Dumler
Student Ministries Pastor — Isaac Freeman
Worship and Arts Pastor — Joe Webb

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