

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

LAY LEADER REPORT

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Anybody remember what it was like to be younger? Our bodies didn't hurt (as much). Our brains were sharp. We could remember things. Nobody could tell us anything; we already knew everything. We didn't know we could ever fail at anything. The thought of failure just never occurred to us. If one thing didn't work we simply tried something else.

Our future lies in the "youth" of this congregation.

Several young adults have chosen this congregation, this church, as their own. They have served church dinners, lent their voices to the choir, advertised church events via email and have displayed an enthusiasm that perhaps we "old timers" have recently not.

Our church has survived another year but we "old timers" are getting weary. The problems keep coming. Hard, sometimes unpopular decisions still need to be made. How can we make ourselves young again to more easily face these dilemmas? Where is that confounded fountain of youth that Ponce DeLeon was looking for? (and ironically was looking for in Florida).

What can we tired old people do to help our church?

The old adage is "you can be part of the problem or part of the solution". Let's all be part of the solution - together! The young folks have the right attitude and some answers. Computers are not the future; they are part of everyday life now! Advertising church events on-line is a quick, cheap and easy way to promote participation. Just talking to a church member (or potential church member) on line is a way of opening the door to Christian knowledge. Meeting people "where they are" is a positive and reinforcing way of being a friend. Once a line of communication is open and friendship is established, the benefits can be overwhelming! Encouraging our "youth" and these new ways is important to our future.

What can we all do to support positive change?

Let's all become young again! Instead of lamenting the fact that "things were better in the old days" let's accept the fact that we live in the here and now. Our focus is God. Jesus went to the people, where they were. We can too! Positive communication is the best way to "sell" anything. If we complain loudly and openly about things that don't suit us, we've just lost a sale. Negativity is a cancer. It is one of the most destructive powers in the world. It is better to say something positive (or say nothing) than to make a negative comment.

What "new thing" can we do that reaches out to our friends and family where they are - today? Do we ever consider another's feelings and needs? We tend to think that others think and feel the same way we do and if they don't, they're wrong and we're right. Not true! How can we make others want to belong - to join us? Do we treat each other (fellow church members) the same way?

If we are going to tell ourselves there's nothing we can do, then we have to step aside and let the "youth" do it. The youth can do it - whether they're 20 years old or 90 years young! It's all in the spirit!

I pray that this day finds you well as we work toward the future of our faith, together.

Your servant in Christ,

Dan Waters
Lay Leader
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