# Congregational-Presbyterian Church

 **“Every Member Doing Their Part”**

**Ephesians 4:14-16**

 **October 31, 2021**

“I will build my church.” Those were Jesus’ words as recorded by Matthew in his gospel. “I will build my church,” and by “church” Jesus meant the community of those who call him Savior and Lord. Jesus lived in this world, died on a cross for our sins, rose from the dead, and ascended into heaven from whence he had come. Before he left, he promised to send the Holy Spirit to live in us and equip us to be the building blocks with which he builds his church. How does the Spirit do the work of equipping us to be Christ’s church?

Our current Stewardship sermon series has been addressing that question through our study of Ephesians 4. Two weeks ago we discussed verses one through six where we learned that the Spirit is building Christ’s church through the gift of unity. When we act humble, gently, patiently and lovingly toward one another, when we are committed to each other’s wellbeing more than to our own, and when we look out for each other’s interests and not merely defend our personal positions, we are taking good care of the gift of unity. Last Sunday we discovered in verses seven through thirteen that Jesus has given spiritual gifts to his church in order to build a diverse ministry of love and service in his name, one that mirrors his ministry when he was here on earth. No one person in the church can do all that Jesus desires of his church, but when each of us uses the gifts we have been given by the Spirit for the common good, then the church is able to fulfill its God-given purpose. That brings us to today’s passage. If the gift of unity is being taken good care of, and if the diverse gifts of spiritual abilities are being practiced, what is the result? I invite you to turn with me to Ephesians 4:14-16

Then we will no longer be immature like children. We won’t be tossed and blown about by every wind of new teaching. We will not be influenced when people try to trick us with lies so clever they sound like the truth. Instead, we will speak the truth in love, growing in every way more and more like Christ, who is the head of his body, the church. He makes the whole body fit together perfectly. As each part does its own special work, it helps the other parts grow, so that the whole body is healthy and growing and full of love.

“Healthy and growing and full of love.” Does that sound like a church that you want to be a part of? That’s the kind of community of faith that Jesus wants each one of us to enjoy, but for that to happen each one of us needs to get on board with Jesus’ building program of unity in mutual commitment and diversity in the use of our gifts.

First, you need to show up. You can’t enjoy a healthy and growing and full of love church if you’re not here. Some Christians believe that they can do just fine without the church, but that’s not what the word of God says. The Greek word we translate into English as “church” is *ecclesia* which literally means “gathering.” You need to be part of the gathering.

Second, you need to look around and decide where to be involved. Check out the tables in Fellowship Hall where you will find shoeboxes to be filled for third-world children, snacks to be provided for our youth, help with our fellowship time after the services, and stewardship packets which contain a financial commitment card to support the budget of our church. Take a look at our monthly newsletter, the LINK, and our Sunday bulletin, and there you will find a variety of ministries with which to be engaged, from service to fellowship to the study of God’s Word.

Third, you need to be committed to helping others enjoy a healthy and growing and full of love church. Returning to verse sixteen of our passage: “As each part does its own special work, it helps the other parts grow.” As you show up and get involved, putting to good use whatever gifts God has given you to share within this community of faith, you will be an encouragement to the whole community. Be as excited about supporting the ministries of our church that you are not involved with as you are about the ministries where you spend your time and energy. We have a unified church budget that supports all the ministries of the church, and we encourage every person involved in the life of our congregation to support that budget so every ministry may thrive.

Show up, look around and decide where to be involved, and be committed to helping others enjoy everything this church has to offer in the name of Christ. Then you will be on board with Jesus’ building program for a healthy and growing and full of love church.