

Ambassadors of Christ
Matthew 10:40-42
July 2, 2023
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Being welcomed in someone else's name is really an honor and a privilege. Whenever one of your adult children or grandchildren come to visit PPC, we welcome them in your honor. They get all the trust and the love that we have for you- it is a gift. Community is created through these bonds and extended relationships.

This is what Christ had in mind. The disciples were welcomed in his name even by strangers. My mom has been such a great aunt that basically anywhere I fly in the South- I can call a cousin who lives nearby if we get stuck at the airport. This really isn't an exaggeration. "Call cousin Mike" my mom said as we were stranded in Dallas because of weather. Sure enough he came and picked us up and we stayed the night with him; no questions asked. The goodwill built up from my mom was extended to me and my family too.

In the same way, we are all related in Christ, and we represent Christ to people. We are ambassadors coming in His name. An honor, a privilege and a responsibility.

As we are welcomed and welcome others. We humbly share with one another. We are all God's children and so it is important to share God's gifts.

Mother Teresa wrote:

"We have a sign on the wall of the children's home in Calcutta that reads:

Take time to think
Take time to pray
Take time to laugh

It is the source of power
It is the greatest power on earth
It is the music of the soul

Take time to play
Take time to love and be loved
Take time to give

It is the secret of perpetual youth
It is God's given privilege
It is too short a day to be selfish

Take time to read
Take time to be friendly

Take time to work

It is the fountain of wisdom

It is the road to happiness

It is the price of success

Take time to do charity

It is the key to Heaven

Prayer in action is love, and love in action is service. We are all God's children so it is important to share God's gifts"

By this community is formed. Dr. Bruce Tuckman, a psychology professor came up with the idea of a group development stages model. In short it can be summed up as Forming, Storming, Norming, Performing. As new people are welcomed into any community and other people leave, a natural phenomenon happens in the group. When a new pastor for example enters the equation, usually there is a time of forming as a ministry team with the pastor. Emotional connections and a shared vision form. Then maybe these connections will be strengthened and become more authentic through storming and going deeper. If communication is respectful and constructive the team will become stronger and more effective. As the team grows closer and learns to appreciate each other and how the different gifts brought complement one another and the whole church community, norming begins. Then as the team develops and continues to maintain respect for one another and true relationships grow, the performing begins.

In the weeks to come we will be looking at Plymouth's Mission Study Report. How has PPC become who it is today? What are the hopes and dreams for the future?

As we are welcomed by God with open arms, we welcome others. Welcome of the other brings CHANGE and CHANGE is hard. It isn't a 4 letter word though. It's a 6 letter word that can open up new possibilities.

In the AF we learned the motto "Attitude is Leadership." As others are welcomed and change occurs, one of my prayers for you is that you will have an open and hopeful attitude because everything we do, we do in the name of Christ Jesus. Amen.