

From Our Pastor...

Thoughts about our Unity

For more than twenty years, Ingleside has been a remarkably united church. Across those two decades, we have learned some important truths about our unity – some of which probably ought to be highlighted again today.

“Why,” some will ask, “does our church need a fresh reminder of what the Bible teaches about unity? Is there some problem or issue?” Thankfully, the answer is no. To my knowledge, our church remains strong in unity with high levels of harmony and trust. And, for that we need to give thanks to God!

So, why address the question of unity? I would suggest at least three answers.

The first is because many newcomers to Ingleside have not heard teaching on this topic – teaching that many other long-termers take for granted. Consider, for example, that just since we opened our Worship Center in 2004, our membership has grown from 2,855 to more than 3,780 – an increase of over 900 people!

The second reason to talk about unity is because of the change that we are contemplating in our Sunday schedule for the fall. With one more “pilot” Sunday remaining on May 23, we are considering a “four service/three style” schedule every Sunday beginning after Labor Day. Wise leaders know that any significant change can be a challenge to unity. So, because of the change we are contemplating, it’s wise for us to be reminded of where our unity lies.

The third – and perhaps the most important – reason to discuss the dimensions of our unity is rooted in Scripture. Even a cursory look at the New Testament reveals that teaching and exhortation related to unity ought to be a part of the regular spiritual diet of every healthy congregation. Consider what the Apostle Paul wrote to the various churches.

To the church at Rome → “May the God who gives endurance and encouragement ***give you a spirit of unity*** among yourselves as you follow Christ Jesus,” (Romans 15:5, NIV).

To the church at Ephesus → “***Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit*** through the bond of peace” (Ephesians 4:3, NIV)

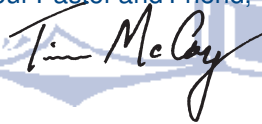
To the church Philippi → “. . . then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, ***being one in spirit and purpose***” (Philippians 2:2, NIV).

A similar message was sent to the church in Corinth (1 Cor. 1:10) and to the church in Colossae (Col. 2:2, 3:15). Why? Every church, including the church called Ingleside, needs periodic teaching about unity to combat the drift toward division that is rooted in our old nature.

So, in the next few articles of our newsletter and worship folders, join me here for a fresh look at some basic biblical teaching on unity. ***Unity in the church is good for us and brings glory to God!***

I’m grateful for your partnership in the gospel and am convinced that *the best is yet to come!*

Your Pastor and Friend,



Tim McCoy