

A Few Words From Your Pastoral Staff

Dear Fellow-Follower of Jesus,

This is the first of what we hope will be a bi-weekly note from one of your pastoral staff members. It is not intended to be a replacement for our terrific Church Newsletter, but is rather a chance for us to communicate directly with you and to update you on any late-breaking church news.

The Auburn Adventist Church is unique in its mission and purpose. To quote our Mission Statement, "Our mission is to attract and develop passionate followers of Jesus."

There are plenty of churches out there, Adventist and otherwise, that focus on leading people to Christ; there are many, Adventist and otherwise, that live by a model that is based on getting people to accept certain theological positions and then getting them to join a particular denomination.

The Auburn Church is unique in that we are not so interested in conforming people to a particular model as we are in transforming them so that they are changed from the inside out. That is what happens when we work to lead people to become disciples of Jesus - intent on following him.

A favorite author of mine says it this way in a little book written more than 100 years ago called Christ's Object Lessons:

No one can really understand their failings themselves because, as God reminds us in Jeremiah 17:9, "The human heart is deceitful above all things, and very committed to doing things our own way; who can know it?"

"It is one thing to say that we are powerless and our lives are unmanageable without God's help and guidance; it is something else to really believe it and act on it from the heart. We can use the words, even in prayer, that we know how hopeless we are without God and at the same time be very proud of how humble and righteous we are.

"There is really only one way we can really see ourselves as we are. We need to keep our eyes on Jesus. It is ignorance of Him that makes us so proud of our own righteousness. When we contemplate His purity and excellence, we will see our own weakness and helplessness and defects in their true light. We will see ourselves helpless and hopeless, dressed in self-righteousness, like every other sinner. We will see that if we are ever saved, it will not be through our own goodness, but through God's infinite grace . . . No outward observances or obedience based on personal determination can take the place of simple faith and complete renunciation of self.

“Therein lies the problem. No human being can empty themselves of self. We can only consent for Jesus to do what we cannot do ourselves. When we finally come to that point, then our prayers will change; then from the very core of who we are we will realize that we can only say, “Lord, take my heart; for I cannot give it. It is Thy property. Keep it pure, for I cannot keep it for Thee. Save me in spite of myself, my weak, unchristlike self. Mold me, fashion me, raise me into a pure and holy atmosphere, where the rich current of Your love can flow through my soul.”

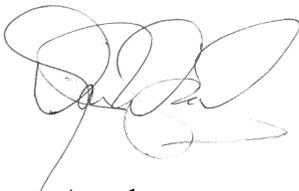
“This repudiation of self is not only true at the beginning of the life of a follower of Jesus. It has to be renewed every step of the way toward heaven. We have to recognize that any good thing we do is dependent on a power outside of ourselves. Therefore, there needs to be a continual reaching out of the heart after God, a continual, earnest, heartbreaking confession of sin and humbling of the soul before Him. Only by constant renunciation of self and dependence on Christ can we walk safely.”

Christ's Object Lessons, Page 159 (paraphrased)

This is what Jesus sends us out into the world to do, to lead those around us to look at Jesus and to trust him to do whatever is necessary to prepare them for eternity with Him. Following Jesus, that is what it means to be a disciple.

The Auburn Church is a special and unique place, a place where people broken by life, damaged by religion masking as following Jesus, wrestling with addictions and failings and faults can find a safe place to get to know God.

I am so glad that you are a part of our family!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Pastor Appel', with a stylized, cursive script.

Pastor Appel

Upcoming Events

Sermon this week: Pastor Appel, Part III of the Vacation Series - Looking Like Your Passport

Sermon Next Week: Pastor Appel, Part IV of the Vacation Series - Traveling First Class

Sermon August 22 - Mark Witas - Teacher Dedication

John Rudometkin Funeral: August 16, 2015 1:00 pm.

Tulio and Donna Robinson (Head Elder) - Going Away Reception - August 29, 2015

