

The Primary Core Value of our Chapel

In May of this year members of our Board of Directors were asked to spend time in thought and prayer to discern our Chapel's three essential core values. Their eleven suggestions were then transformed into a membership survey where over half of the respondents declared the following to be the number one core value of the Chapel in the Pines:

We enjoy interdenominational worship with quality preaching and music.

So, what is interdenominational worship and even more importantly for those of us who call this Chapel our home, what defines an interdenominational church?

The definition of the term "interdenominational" is:

Interdenominational - occurring between or among or common to different churches or denominations; as in interdenominational prayer groups or interdenominational cooperation

Taken literally, one can see that "interdenominational" is not actually the correct term for our Chapel. We are not a place where we primarily promote cooperation between various churches or denominations. So, what are we actually?

Well, often I am asked:"

*What is the difference between an interdenominational church
and a non-denominational church?*

My quick response has always been...and there is some truth in this,
"An interdenominational church is made up of people from different denominations and a non-denominational church is often one that originally was associated with a particular denomination, but there was some controversy causing a group to get mad and break off from their denomination and form an independent or "non-denominational" church.

But, let's look at the actual definition of "non-denominational":

*A non-denominational church is one that does not follow
(or is not restricted to) any particular religious denomination.*

Well, that does get a bit closer to describing our Chapel, but perhaps there is an even better term:

*Multi-denominational - having, involving, or intended for members of more than one
religious denomination*

Now, this term really gets to the “core” of who we are. From its conception our church was intended to have and involve people from various denominational backgrounds...even folks from outside the Protestant tradition, and even folks with no religious background at all. We are a true community church with doors held wide open to welcome everyone.

So, now we know what our church is, but with that in mind, what makes our worship service “multi-denominational”?

In my early years here at the Chapel Reverend Fran Stark (a Methodist) and I (a Presbyterian) often had long discussions trying to answer this very question and here is our conclusion:

*Worship services at the Chapel in the Pines must contain at least one portion that will cause each of our participants to say to themselves,
“That felt like home to me!”*

Today when Edward, Tamara, and I craft each worship service our goal is to include at least one aspect of the service, so that regardless of your religious background, you can feel that the Chapel is your spiritual home. Sometimes it shows up in the liturgy, sometimes in the prayers, sometimes in the homily, sometimes in the music...and on a good Sunday, through the guidance of the Holy Spirit, it shows up in all four.

I challenge you to look and listen for the part of the worship service that makes you feel right at home and rejoice in the knowledge that all the other parts of the service are doing the same for all your Chapel Family and Friends, because regardless of whether we are “interdenominational”, “non-denominational”, or “multi-denominational” being at home with Christ and with one another is exactly how we should expect to feel when we come together to worship God.