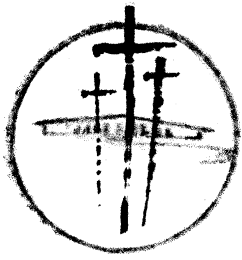

FIRST UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
NAMP A, IDAHO



Half-Link



**Nampa First United Presbyterian Church
Purpose Statement**

To bring people together to love and magnify God through worship, to minister to the needs of all His children, to fellowship in God's family, to spread the Good News, and to develop people to Christ-like maturity for their mission in the world.

Office Hours

Monday - Friday
9:00am - 1:00pm

Office email:

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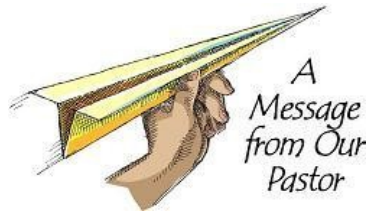
Pastor's Office Hours

Mondays & Thursdays
10:30am - 1:00pm

MID-FEBRUARY 2018

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Do You Want a Demanding God?

We live in a time of personal freedom. At least, we think we do. But we assume a specific definition of freedom. Our freedom is the absence of external limitations. In other words, our idea of freedom is the absence of something telling us what to do.

No wonder many people have walked away from church. The church is a place where people are told what to do. Repent, believe, pray, worship, confess, forgive, serve. Just to name a few of the demands the church makes. But really, they are demands God makes through the church, and the church gets the blame. Many people walk away from the church because they resent the demands it makes on them in body, mind, and soul. They don't always say that is the reason. The excuses are many: "They are hypocrites." "They don't care enough." and so on.

One response churches have made is to tone down the demands of faith. Churches soften, cover up, and apologize for the demands in order not to offend people's freedom loving sensibilities. Churches try to say, "we're relaxed and easygoing. We won't tell you what to do, or get too serious, and we're sorry if we ever inconvenienced you!"

The results have not been good, those churches are dying, and there are two reasons.

Reason #1 is because God is demanding and commanding. Jesus gave commands. And His commands are harder, not easier than the Old Testament. "Love your enemies" is harder than anything Moses ever dreamed. And make no mistake. It is a command, and a demand on anyone who calls themselves a Christian. So churches have not softened or covered up an embarrassing past, they have covered up Jesus.

Has the church in the past sometimes abused its authority? Yes. Has the church sometimes used its authority to demand the wrong things? Yes. But that does not mean we should apologize for, or cover up the good, true commands that Jesus gives.

God commands us for a reason. All of God's commands have the same single purpose, *to draw us to Himself*. All of us were meant to experience God, love God, and enjoy God's beauty, goodness and truth for eternity. Every command directs us to that single purpose. So to soften, or hide, or even apologize for the commands is the ultimate cruelty and deception; it is to hide from people their true purpose and happiness. It is normal to fear that being too demanding will push people away. But in the end we see that it is better to be honest. Honesty is always the best policy.

Reason #2 is that it is hard to respect anyone who doesn't respect themselves. Football coaches kick players off the team if they don't show up. Orchestra leaders don't give you a solo if you don't practice. Soccer teams don't give playing time to those who miss practice. Everyone respects that, because they respect the importance of the sport or activity. Churches are the only institutions who don't do this. We apologize to people when they miss church! I have personally apologized to someone who felt guilty for missing church to sleep in and go out to breakfast. I regret that, *because I essentially told her that church wasn't important*. I am not happy she felt guilty, but at the same time, she made the choice. She chose to miss out on something important, and I shouldn't apologize for the consequences of her choice.

Jesus commands, and God is demanding. I'm not sorry about that. It is for our own good. In worship, in prayer, in Bible study, in serving others, we come close to the eternal God. If God made those things optional it would only mean that He did not care about their purpose.

At a place I once worked there was a sign over the boss's office that read, "I yell because I care." We can say something similar about God, He commands because he cares.

-Pastor Aaron

Coffee Hour Questions for Contemplation

Starting March 11th, we will have a few study questions on the tables at Coffee Hour and the Christian Ed committee will serve a soup lunch. We are encouraging more inter-generational conversation. Get to know your closest friends and maybe even those you

don't know so well. Pastor Aaron is preparing the questions and they will be on the tables once a month. Your feedback is welcome!

-Sharyn Barrett

Change to Sunday School

In order to give our older youth the opportunity to participate in the worship service and communion, we will no longer be holding Sunday School for 6th –12th grade youth on the first Sunday of each month. This will begin Sunday, March 4th. Pre-K— 5th grade will continue to meet every Sunday after the Children’s Sermon.

Save the Date—Youth Mission Retreat

This year we will have a local Youth Group Mission Retreat. This retreat is for students going into 7th - 12th grades. We will stay here in town and serve our own community! The dates will be June 27th - 30th. We will “camp out” in the Lolley backyard, work at a few local organizations, and have some fun activities as well. Mark your calendars and plan to join us!

Movie Night



The next movie night will be **Saturday, February 17th** at 5:30 PM. The movie is “Wonder” available for viewing in theaters. Watch the movie ahead of time and then bring a potluck dish to share, your own table service and beverage and join in the discussion and fellowship.

Bunco Group



Congregational Life is forming a Bunco group. Anyone interested in playing can sign up in the Narthex at the church. As a group we will decide on dates.

Camp Sawtooth

We have money available to help pay for youth to attend Camp Sawtooth. Contact the church office for more information.

Camp Sunday will be March 11th. Wear your camp shirts to church!!

Camp Sawtooth has a variety of opportunities for you to get involved. You could volunteer as a Cabin Parent, or Camp Host. Older



youth may choose to apply to be a (PSIT) Program Staff In Training. College age students might check into the applications for summer staff. Work weekend, over Memorial Day weekend is a wonderful way to become acquainted with Camp Sawtooth. Join the fun in preparing the camp for the upcoming season. Information available at: www.campsawtooth.org or directorscampsawtooth@yahoo.com

2018 Camp Dates

5th & 6th Grade / June 24-29

3rd & 4th Grade / July 1-4

7th & 8th Grade / July 8-13

9th & 10th Grade / July 15-20

11th & 12th Grade / July 22-27

Lunch at The Sandbar

Congregational Life is planning a lunch at The Sandbar in Marsing on Wednesday, February 21st. Meet at the church at 10:45 AM and we will drive over together.

Dates for Youth Activities

Upcoming Activities for Youth Group (YG) and Presby Kids Club (PKC):

2/18/18 – @ Urban air after church potluck

3/4/18 – @ church – YG scavenger hunt, PKC craft & games

3/18/18 – swimming at Rec Center

4/1/18 – Cancel – Easter Sunday

4/15/18 – Camelback Park Picnic, hike for YG & playground for PKC

5/6/18 – Ceramics outing YG & PKC

5/20/18 – End of year BBQ & games – invite congregation & do potluck





Soup Supper at 6:00 PM and Service at 7:00 PM

Thursday, February 22: Nampa First United Methodist Church
2717 12th Avenue Road

Thursday, March 1: Nampa First Presbyterian Church
400 Lake Lowell Ave

Thursday, March 8: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-
Day Saints, West Stake
11288 Roosevelt Ave.

Thursday, March 15: Nampa United Church of Christ
55 S. Midland Blvd.

Thursday, March 22: Nampa Southside Boulevard
Methodist Church
5420 Southside Blvd.

If this publication is no
longer needed, please
notify the church office.

**FIRST UNITED
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400 Lake Lowell Avenue
Nampa, ID 83686-6617

