

"Making disciples of Jesus Christ who worship passionately, love extravagantly, and witness boldly!" That's the mission statement of the Global Methodist Church. An email article stated, "Recently, the Global Methodist Church was recognized as a religious organization in three countries – the Central African Republic, Panama, and Tanzania." I am amazed at how the GMC is growing around the world! I know that God has blessed us and our decision to become Global! Ron and I were talking yesterday about how the denomination is growing with so little "overhead." Few paid staff, working remotely, have accomplished so much! May God continue to bless all those who love Him and seek to do His will.

I also got thinking about how Avoca Methodist Church measures up as a Global MC. You know I'm a teacher at heart, so here's my end of (school) year comments and grading: I enjoy our worship and I believe many of you do also. I pray each week that our worship is pleasing to God. As we pray together, sing together, listen to God's word, and find new ways to live out our faith (C = Commit our lives to following the example of Jesus Christ by serving one another), I feel confident that the Spirit of God is active in our midst. I'll give us a B+; how would you grade us?

Do we love extravagantly? I've heard many times that visitors feel so welcome just walking into our building. Our church (the people) greets people, chats with them, gets to know them, hands them a bulletin, etc. Most people like to be recognized. I remember that in my first sociology class, the professor played the opening of Cheers. Do you remember the show's theme song? "I want to go where everybody knows my name, and they're always glad you came, where people are all the same." Where are people welcomed unconditionally? Usually a bar! When you walk into many church buildings, you are either being judged or ignored. I know someone whose family faced criticism for their "church clothes", when their home had just been destroyed by fire! Where was the love? There's always room for improvement; we have some territorial issues and some backbiting. Unfortunately, we're all still human. Let us repent and try to do better! I'm giving us a B-.

How's our witness? Do we really witness boldly? I try to give an example every week, but putting it into practice can be a whole other thing! Does our walk AND our talk tell others about Jesus' sacrifice for them? Do we act and speak differently from the rest of our society? Sadly, most Christians don't. Our food pantry and the Ramp Guys are very hands on. Many others support these and other missions by donations and prayers. Given our demographics, I'd say we do well showing our faith in the missions we support. Most of our support is not hands on, though, so we seldom get to speak about our faith with those who most need the hope and peace that Christ offers. I'm going to give us a C. What do you think?

So, what are you up to this summer? Got company coming? Invite them to church. Travelling? There's almost always a church you can attend (bring me back ideas!) It's a matter of priorities! God doesn't take time off from loving you; don't miss an opportunity to worship Him with your Christian family!

And don't forget to **Bee A Disciple!**

Pastor Barre

