

Everyday Missionary // Commitment Sunday // 11.06.16

Have you ever noticed? Our lives are FULL of commitments? We get married and make a lifelong commitment, until death do us part, to our spouse. We accept a job and make a commitment to work, be on time, and produce results. We sign our children up for a sports team and commit them to practices, games, and tournaments. We take out a mortgage on a home and commit to make payments for 30 years. We commit to presidential candidates who make 4-year promises. We even commit to root for the Cubs to win the World Series, year after year, for 108 years, and finally, they win! Go Cubs!

Today, we celebrate **Commitment Sunday**. For those of you who've never been here on a Commitment Sunday before, let me explain what today is. Today is the time of the year here at New Song where we are one month away from our annual Voters' Meeting on December 4. And, we are two months away from a new year of mission and ministry in 2017. This is the day where I, the pastor of New Song, stand up and say what I believe God has called us as a Church to BE in our community. But, it is also where I stand up and say why you, the Church, the Body of Christ, should commit to BE part of it!

Recently, our Management Team, Staff, and I, as the Pastor, met and prayed about what we believe God has called for us as a Church, New Song, to BE in our community... 1. BE the place where people from our community come to know and grow in their personal relationship with Jesus Christ. 2. BE a church full of everyday missionaries who join Jesus on His mission and see themselves as God's (the church's) main mission tool. 3. BE more than a building on Hafenrichter Road but to be a community center for the entire 60503, Fox Valley, and SD308 area. And, we want you to BE part of it all!

How can you BE part? 1. BE part by believing in our vision. I'm truly excited to BE part! 2. BE part by committing to us your time, talents, and treasures. In regards to your time and talents, Paul says in 1 Corinthians 12:27 (NIV), "You are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it." Paul says in Romans 12:1 (NIV), "I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship." Have you ever thought about tithing, giving back 10% of your time and talents to God and Church? If not, you should!

In regards to treasures, I could quote this "Generosity" guide, "Generosity imitates the grace of Jesus Christ. It means giving cheerfully and enthusiastically. It is personal, regular, and pleases God. It flows out of a concern for those in need. It requires preparation and careful planning." I could quote Jesus in Matthew 6:21 (NIV), "For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." And, I could quote Paul in 2 Corinthians 8:7 (NIV), "You excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in the love we have kindled in you—see that you also excel in this grace of giving."

But, mostly, I want you to make a commitment today to BE. Like the fellowship of believers in Acts 2:42-47, BE a follower of Jesus. BE the hands and feet of Jesus in this community. BE part of us with your time, talents, and treasures. And, as part of our service today, take a few minutes right now, pray, fill out your pledge card, come forward when you're ready, and, place it in this basket. If you're new or not ready, write, "I'm praying!" And, remember 2 Corinthians 9:7-8 (NIV), "Each should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver."

Commitment Cards. Trace plays music.

Let's pray. Lord, as a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, and Your special possession, help us BE. Help us BE the Church, the Body of Christ. Help us BE imitators of You and walk in love. Help us BE the hands and feet of Jesus in the lives of others. Help us do good to all people, especially those who belong to the family of believers. Help us join Jesus on His mission and BE everyday missionaries in our neighborhoods. Help us BE faithful in our time, talents, and treasures both in service to our Church and our community. And, help us BE excellent in all things, including the grace of giving. Amen.