

**“One for All and All for One”**  
**Rev. Joyce Kirk-Moore**

**I Corinthians 12:12-27**

**San Dimas Community Church, United Church of Christ**

**May 22, 2011**

I've never been very good with sermon titles and this one just popped into my mind after I read today's Corinthians text. I think this title comes from *The Three Musketeers*, which doesn't quite resonate with the religious tenor of worship. However, this text makes it pretty clear that Christ is One for all in the church, and all who belong to the church's body are to be one for Christ. It describes the interrelatedness that IS church.

This text builds on last Sunday's text in which Paul emphasizes the importance of honoring all the variety of gifts people bring to the work of the church. Now Paul says, "Don't just appreciate one another's gifts, understand that you are inextricably linked as one body of Christ."

We've already had several sermons today: such as receiving new members who affirm that they want to be part of us, honoring our youth and encouraging them as important to this community, and soon as we share a meal, we will celebrate our life together as ONE.

As I think about the beginning of our last year of our first century as church and as I reflect on the good work of all of you guided by our Centennial Long Range Task Force, I am grateful to be part of this community that is "all for One."

I am also very grateful to you to be given this time of sabbatical and especially grateful to those who will work extra so that I can have this time. Some of you have asked what I'll be doing. Well, the first week is vacation and we'll be traveling with our girls and their boyfriends to Maui for what I hope is complete rest. After that I plan to read, do some reflection on sermon topics and prioritize for our future ministry. I will visit some places that I hope will renew a spark of inspiration, and hopefully, come back refreshed with some interesting and important ideas to share and especially new energy.

I have every confidence that the spiritual life in this church will continue and will thrive. Every good pastor wants to know that the church is not dependent on him or her to survive, but that the church is strong because of Christ who is for All and because of the All who are bound together for Christ. I hope that in this last year of our first century all our members will feel empowered to contribute and guide our future. As you may have heard in some of our group meetings, churches our size tend to be pastor-driven or pastor-led.

Sometimes out of respect the church defers to the pastor. It is true that I love being here and doing the work of the church with you and sometimes I have big picture information that is helpful. But I hope and pray and believe, that you can sustain the church's future without my presence but rather because of the Spirit that is in you as the whole community.

Last January in a church vitality workshop that I attended, the presenter said that he had his congregation walk the neighborhood around the church and notice what was happening and pray for all they saw and experienced.

I'd like to invite you during the next month or so, to notice this sacred piece of creation where we reside. What can we do to make it more inviting, more accessible, more revealing of the God we worship. Look for the little things. Sometimes churches don't feel they're doing enough unless it's a huge project, but little things mean a lot. If you were visiting for the first time, what would help you feel comfortable in this place? Hospitality is such an important theme in the Bible. How can we offer spiritual hospitality?

Today we welcome members with whom we promise to share the journey of faith. We begin a year that will culminate in an important marker of 100 years in San Dimas. We anticipate with curiosity and wonder all God has awaiting us as we learn, grow, and thrive together: Christ, the One for All, and All of us for Christ. May God bless and keep us in the days ahead.