



FIRST PRESS

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FRIDAY, FEB. 27, 2015

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Mar. 1, 9 a.m.

Sunday School:
Num. 22, "An Internationally Acclaimed Wizard!"

Mar. 1, 10 a.m.

Morning Worship:
Mark 2.1-12, "The King's and the Contrarians"

Mar. 1, 4:00 p.m.

Sunday Night Study,
Psalm 16, "A Sheltered Life"

Mar. 4, 5:15 p.m.

Wednesday Night
Bible Study, "The Nature of the Church"

From the Pastor's Pen . . .

On Monday night this week, your officers gathered together in a joint meeting to address the situation with the dome and roof over our historic sanctuary. The meeting was a time of remarkable unity and concern for the future of this congregation here in Winona.

The Problem

For some time now, our beloved dome has been showing signs of serious wear with leaks, rust, and other decay visible at the street level. The dome was constructed a century ago by hand out of metal coated in zinc. As many of you who have zinc sinks in your homes know, zinc stands up remarkably well to water and the elements. However the zinc coating on our dome was painted about 40 years ago.

The original design of the dome was to be unpainted except for at the joints where the panels met. Painting the dome created air pockets that trapped water, neutralized the zinc

coating, and thus exposed the metal to the elements causing the rust and allowing the water to pool underneath and leak into the sanctuary.

The Solution

The damage to the dome from the elements cannot be simply repaired or patched. In order to continue meeting in our current facility, the dome will have to be completely resurfaced.

The Plan of Action

On Monday night, the Session accepted the recommendation of the Diaconate to contract with Lipford Sheet Metal of Memphis, Tenn. to reconstruct the dome and restore the building to its historic design. The deacons had been in contact with several companies with various proposals for addressing the dome's dire situation. Lipford Sheet Metal offered a plan that not only promises to solve the problem, but also to restore the historic integrity as well as preserve the appearance and character (Cont'd on pg. 2)

Westminster Shorter Catechism Meditation

We made it through the third commandment which teaches us to honor God's name and everything that reveals Him to us. The Fourth Commandment concerns the Sabbath Day.

Q57. Which is the 4th commandment?

A57. The 4th commandment is, Remember the sabbath day to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work: but the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.

Perhaps no other command is more counter-cultural than the Fourth Commandment. In this command, God exercises His Kingship and Sovereignty over even our time. In giving this com-

mand God exerts His crown rights over a significant portion of our week.

Striving to keep this command will quickly set apart God's people from the worldlings. The worldling spends his time pursuing pleasure, wealth, approval, legacy, and - in short - his own desires. The Christian, by contrast, structures his time, his days and weeks around God's time, remembering that God is Lord over even his minutes, hours, days, and weeks.

As we read this command, we see something remarkable about it; God not only commands that His people and the heads of households rest, but also the servants, laborers, and even children within a household have rest also. **As we look at the Sabbath in the coming weeks, we'll see many things, but we first notice that God gave the Sabbath not only for our rest, but also as a day to give rest to others.**

Honoring the Sabbath is a way that we can bless others by allowing them to rest as well.

The Dome Situation

(Cont'd from pg. 1) of this beautiful worship space.

The Deacons' plan, which was adopted unanimously by the Session, calls for Lipford Sheet Metal to completely rebuild the dome as well as inspect for (and correct) any structural damage to the roof itself caused by the leaking.

Lipford will construct each piece of the new dome onsite out of copper, customized for our building. The shape and character of the dome will be basically the same as we've seen except without the rust stains. The main difference will be that the dome is to be restored to its original design and remain unpainted, displaying the beauty of the copper.

Copper was chosen because, if left alone, will last for at least two centuries and over time will *increasingly* enhance the beauty of this historic and sacred space. Copper was slightly more expensive than the zinc, but will last longer.

Work will begin, God willing before the month is out and conclude before June. As noted, every single piece will be constructed onsite here and hand-assembled by one of Lipford's skilled craftsmen. The Lipford family has been working with sheet metal in new construction as well as historical reconstruction work for more than a half a century.

The Financial Cost

The new dome will cost in excess of \$65,000 assuming that there has been no significant structural damage from the water leaks over the years. If the water pooling and leakage did cause serious structural damage, the repair costs will mount very quickly! This is a cost that we will have to bear if we want to continue meeting in this place.

Joining and Supporting the Restoration

As you know, such a repair cannot simply be absorbed by the church budget. The church reserves can cover the cost of the restoration, however if we make such a withdrawal from the reserves it will immediately and drastically reduce the amount of income that is generated and imperil the continued financial stability of this congregation.

The dome repair is a necessary expense; there's no way to get around that, and without any attention the leaks will only get worse and eventually make the whole structure unsound. Restoring the dome is not optional if we want to continue to minister here to this community.

In order to meet this vital and serious need, we all have the opportunity to make a special offering toward the cost of the dome. Please prayerfully consider whether you can **increase** your giving to the work of the church to meet this need and support the future of this congregation.

Your ruling elders are very optimistic that we can, as a community of God's people, raise the money to meet this need and so preserve this historic building which not only serves this congregation in worshiping the true and living God, but is also a landmark in Winona.

Please consider your own financial situation and priorities to see if you can be a participant in this work. If you would like to contribute, please contact the church treasurer, mail a check to the office with "Capital Improvements" in the memo line, or starting this Lord's Day, you can use one of the special envelopes in the sanctuary.

Sermon Snapshot: "Clemency from the King"

This Lord's Day we began the "second act" of Mark's Gospel. In the opening act, Jesus was introduced. Mark explained to us the reason for Jesus' three year ministry prior to his arrest and execution: to preach the word. He told us that Jesus' preaching could always be summarized as: "**the time is fulfilled, and the Kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe the gospel**" (Mark 1.15).

This past Lord's Day we considered Jesus teaching back in Capernaum and being interrupted by a paralyzed man who is lowered through the ceiling (Mark. 2.1-10). Can you imagine the reaction of Peter and his family as their roof is taken apart to lower this man down? I have a rather humorous image in my mind of Peter chasing after the men saying something along the lines of, "Get back here! Who do you think is going to clean all this up" (Although I'm sure that did *not* happen)!

We didn't look at the whole episode last week, but focused on the first five verses. Jesus' response to the paralyzed man is most remarkable. First we note that Jesus didn't become angry or irritated that this man was interrupting His preaching. After all, Jesus had come to *preach* not to

heal the sick. Any healings that Jesus did were subordinate to and served to verify the truthfulness of His words.

Second, Jesus says to this helpless, paralyzed man who has just been laid in front of him, "your sins are forgiven." That is likely not the declaration Jesus was expected to make on a person so mangled by the fall and sin. But as Jesus makes that declaration, He reveals His knowledge of the deepest need of that man and every man.

The man who laid at His feet (and every other person born on this earth) had a much deeper need than simply to be healed of some physical infirmity: the need for forgiveness, mercy, and pardon from God because of sin.

Jesus recognized the faith, saving faith, that these men had which led them to go to these great feats to bring him to Jesus. Because Jesus saw saving faith in this man, He doesn't simply heal him and send him on his way, He first proclaims God's forgiveness, that God has dealt with the man's fundamental need. As Jesus does this, He confronts us all with our own need of forgiveness. Is that what you are seeking from Jesus and His church, or something else? There are many reasons people come to church; what are yours?



The time is fulfilled, and the Kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel