

September 4, 2020

Jesus Is the Answer

I remember the first time I saw a huge billboard that said, “Jesus is the answer.” I chuckled and wondered aloud, “But what is the question?” I grew up in a community where believing in Jesus was very important. Folks called him Lord and talked about him as if he lived next door. They said things like: “The Lord was with him, alright.” “What do you think the Lord would say about that?” We prayed, praised and worshipped this Lord.

As a seminary student, it became clear to me as I studied the scripture that Jesus was always pointing to God, never himself. . . that believing in Jesus was not the point. It was more important to believe *with* Jesus that God is the Creator of the universe, Sustainer of life and an expression of love in the world. That’s why at Plymouth we say we follow Jesus, worship God and embody the Spirit. In the theological world, that’s considered a low Christology. I once heard someone say about Plymouth members that because they do not worship Jesus, they worship the senior minister. I hope that was hyperbole, but maybe there was a thread of truth to it.

We are on the exquisite threshold of welcoming a Lead Minister to our ministerial team. Elsewhere in this email you will find information about the Lead Minister Search committee candidate, Rev. Dr. DeWayne Davis. I am thrilled with their choice. I believe Rev. Dr. Davis has a great deal of charisma, wisdom and passion to bring to the team and to this church. Assuming a positive vote, you are blessed to have him walk with you in the coming years.

I offer a gentle reminder to pay attention to your language. Rev. Dr. Davis is not the answer to Plymouth’s problems. He will not be the solution to our racism challenges. DeWayne, Beth and Seth will always be pointing to the divine connection that empowers us all. They will walk with you as you discern the future path.

You will have an opportunity to meet DeWayne online this month. Then, on September 27, he will preach before the congregational vote. DeWayne’s first Sunday will be January 3, 2021. In the coming months, I encourage you to think about how you will support this new partnership so it will succeed.

Blessings on this Labor Day weekend!

Paula