



LUMP OF KOHL

Blessings!

I am excited about so many wonderful things that are taking place within the church.

- Have you seen your beautifully remodeled nursery? Soon it will be furnished with toys and supplies. After that, we pray that the Lord will begin filling it with children.
- Have you seen the newly remodeled Sunday School classrooms? If you can manage the steps, please take a stroll.
- Did you know that remodeling work is underway in the parsonage? The plans are still developing but are headed in a great direction.
- Soon you will have a state-of-the-art website. It's all approved. It just needs to get installed.
- Even before our "Board of Communications" was approved in the bylaws, a team went to work on doing more to "market" the church in the community.
- I'm excited about several bylaw changes: the statement of faith, the church covenant, the Pastoral Search Committee which was missing in the document, the annual review of the pastor and all employees, the evaluation and long-range planning that will take place every leap year, and I'm glad it has a dissolution clause though I hope it will never be needed.
- You have something of a picture in mind of what you would like FCC to look like ten years down the road in your *Vision and Direction Statement*.
- You also have agreed on what you will be looking for in your next pastor. You have agreed upon dealbreakers and preferences.
- Did you know that the SLT members are reaching out to inactive members to establish what they want their relationship to the church to be?
- Did you know some deacons have visited 46 homes of people that have moved into Boylston over the past year? They met them at their doors and gave them a little gift bag from the church along with some literature.
- And isn't it exciting to see people returning to church as the pandemic slowly subsides? Isn't it wonderful to be able to return to some normalcy?
- And hasn't it been great that the pandemic did not cause FCC to suffer financially.
- Given the way my mind works (rather, doesn't work), I'm sure I'm forgetting to mention some obvious and important blessing that has befallen us. But we can **praise God from whom all blessings flow!**

I will confess, when I first came to FCC, I met a beleaguered congregation and I worried that there might not be enough energy left in the place to advance the Lord's work. My worries were all unwarranted. You folks love your church deeply, you make commitments, and you follow through with those commitments. On top of that, the Lord has blessed this church with some very generous givers.

Let us continue to keep in mind that unless *the Lord builds the house, the builders labor in vain* (Psalm 127:1). So how do we assure ourselves that we are not building in vain?

When the people of Israel were rebuilding the Temple, they were told that they would finish the project, *Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the Lord* (Zechariah 4:6). In other words, the Lord's work is not advanced by human ingenuity and energy. It is accomplished by the Holy Spirit working in and through God's people. It is accomplished by unleashing the presence and the power of God through prayer. As you know by now, I've been talking about prayer in recent sermons. I hope you will follow along.