



First United Methodist

Become a part of God's family at First UMC

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*Vision: Hamilton First: a growing extended family sharing Christ's love
in the heart of the city (A United Methodist Congregation)*

Mission: To Know Christ and Make Him Known in the World

July 7, 2010

Dear Friends,

Greetings this warm July summertime. I hope you are keeping cool. I am, but what I want to write about this week is building a building, and that is hot work in this warm weather.

Have you ever built a building? Do you know what a plumb line is? A plumb line is a piece of string with a weight on it that when it stops swaying tells you what is exactly straight. It is a way to measure whether your building will come out alright or be "off." It helps keep a wall straight.

The prophet Amos used a plumb line in his prophecies. He told the people of Israel that they needed to judge their actions by the plumb line. If they were following God, it would stand up to this measure. If they were not, well God was not pleased with them. The exact verse is:

⁷This is what he showed me: the Lord was standing beside a wall built with a plumb line, with a plumb line in his hand. ⁸And the LORD said to me, "Amos, what do you see?" And I said, "A plumb line." Then the Lord said, "See, I am setting a plumb line in the midst of my people Israel;

God was not happy with the way the people were living. God felt that they needed a way to measure their actions against God's will. This is the image that is given to us in Amos, a plumb line. Am I living "straight" enough for God.

Of course, our plumb line is Jesus, the symbol of love, grace, and service by which God wants us to measure ourselves. Jesus is the one by whom we need to measure ourselves to see if we are living the way that we are called to live. Jesus is the one who reminds us that there is a way God wants us to live and that way includes generosity, love, and grace for our neighbors.

Think of the plumb line in your life. Is your life as straight as Jesus would want it? If not, what is in the way of it being what Jesus asks? What do you need to do to make it straight? If your plumb line is straight, good for you!

Just as we want a building to come together with square corners, straight walls and a roof that can stay up, so we need to measure our lives. As we measure them, we can remember that Christ's call is to come and follow him, not to watch out or you will be punished. We need the plumb line. We also need to remember that grace abounds, so we can take the risk to change for the better.

Amos mentions the plumb line to remind us that God cares how we live. God wants a relationship with us. Think about that as you have your walk with God this week. Stay cool on your walk, but remember to talk with God about your plumb line.

Grace and Peace,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Peggy". The letters are fluid and connected, with a prominent initial "P".

Rev. Peggy