

**McCabe United Methodist Church  
Asking the Right Questions (Part 4)  
“WWJHMD?”**

**Micah 6:1-8; Matthew 28:16-20  
Pastor Ray Baker**

A number of years ago we would commonly see bracelets and clothing that said: WWJD (What Would Jesus Do). Most Christians thought it was a great question even if they didn't wear a bracelet. But, the question WWJD only lasted for a relatively short time. Now, it's uncommon to see WWJD unless it's on an old t-shirt or a worn out bumper sticker.

A number of people have said the reason why WWJD was only a passing fad instead of a lasting movement was because it didn't ask us to do anything. We acted as though being a disciple of Christ allowed us to sit back, put our feet up.

We thought it was enough to admire Jesus, to know what Jesus did. We associated knowing with doing. If we knew what Jesus did...we didn't have to think about what we should do...how we should live...how we should serve.

Last week Pastor Rick told us about his desire to play the piano. He really wanted to play but he wasn't willing to put in the time and effort. Being a musician takes hard work, dedication, and commitment. It's impossible to become a really good musician without these traits. We admire people who dedicate themselves to the art of music.

For example, I know an organist who is very gifted. I won't tell you her name, because I don't want to embarrass her. She is a gifted musician who spent a plethora of hours practicing and playing the piano and organ. I doubt she can even begin to tell us how many hours she's spent tickling the ivory. But it's paid off. She is a wonderful musician. When she plays we don't just hear the music...we experience it.

We all know that in order to be good at whatever we do, we must put in the time: to learn and to practice. We must invest the time to receive the benefits. It takes time...our time and our commitment our obedience to the task.

Rick knew he wanted to play the piano, but Julie dedicated her life to the art of music. Some people are happy to know what they want to do. Others are not content until they are doing what they were dreaming.

Asking WWJD is not enough. We need to ask another question.

The fourth question in our sermon series is: WWJHMD (What Would Jesus Have Me Do)? This is a bigger question. This is a scarier question, because it's a question that will change our lives.

- It's not asking what we can do in five minutes.
- It's not asking what we can do without any inconvenience.
- It's not asking what we can do without making a sacrifice.

What Would Jesus Have Me Do?

- Jesus would have me/us be faithful; to be involved in devotions, study, and worship to grow spiritually.
- Jesus would have me/us care about people's wellbeing; to provide people with food, shelter, and security.
- Jesus would have me/us spread the Good News; to share our faith through our words, actions, and deeds...we will heed the words of Matthew by "Making Disciples" of Jesus Christ.
- Finally, Jesus would have me/us participate in the Kingdom of God; by living out the words of the Prophet Micah "...to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with our God. "

Discipleship is not about knowing what Jesus would do. Discipleship is about DOING what Jesus calls us to do.

As many of you know I grew up in Williston. The community of Williston serves a banquet meal (like the one in Bismarck). It is called "The Banquet West." Members of Faith UMC take their turn serving the banquet. They recently serve about one hundred (100) people.

A couple of years ago our new members, Fran and Clarence Rau, (who moved here from Williston) were serving at the Banquet West with their Lions group. They were nearing the end of cleanup when a man approached their group and asked if he could

get a bible. He said someone at his Man Camp had stolen his copy of the bible. This man was lonely. He was a long way from his family and his home, so he depended on his devotions and bible reading to see him through. Their team looked around and before too long they found him a bible. For that man the bible was a special gift.

In the Bakken region there are thousands of people are living away from their families. They are living in Man Camps, RV trailers, sharing apartments, and sleeping in their pickups. They are also found sleeping in the window wells and under the handicapped ramp at Faith UMC, in Williston.

These people are looking for companionship and a home cooked meal. The Banquet West and Church Dinners are where they can find a home cooked meal and a group of local people to talk to. It's where they can feel just a little more connected, closer to home, and a little less lonely.

The UM Churches in Bowbells/Kenmare/Donnybrook, Dickinson, Minot, and Williston, are all looking for ways they can make a difference for people who are impacted by the oil boom. For example, Faith UMC in Williston is hiring a Church and Community Worker to help families who are moving to town. They will help families make important connections to care for their children and make the community a home.

A couple of years ago the Williston School Board cried out: "The Children Are Coming, The Children Are Coming." And they were right.

Eight modular classrooms were added to Hagen Elementary School for the 2011-2012 school years. They added six new kindergarten classes. One teacher reported her class room had a revolving door with students who moved in and out of town continually throughout the year.

This year the school district reopened McVey Elementary School and added twenty modular classrooms. The Head Start program had been using the school, so they were displaced and the community has been forced to do without a Head Start program for the year.

The rising cost of "Rent" is also a big problem in the oil patch. A new school teacher and her brother rented a basement apartment for \$1,200. They could afford to live there because the oil company he works for gives him an \$800 stipend for rent. His

sister pays \$400 from her salary. Next year her brother is moving back home and she can't afford to stay in town. She can't afford to pay her student loans and an increased rent payment.

The cost of rent has caused many people to move out of the area. They have been uprooted and forced to relocate. They are finding new places to call home in communities like Bismarck, but also small towns like McClusky and Harvey.

Last year a couple named Jim and Kathie Konsor moved from Watertown, SD to Watford City, ND. Jim ran heavy equipment for a construction company. One of the things they noticed was the small children who were living in RV trailers and apartment buildings. Jim and Kathie quickly realized these children were spending the days alone while their parents worked. They also knew they didn't have a safe place to play.

Jim and Kathie are members of Cornerstone UMC, in Watertown. They are people of great faith. They had a sense of calling and they knew WWJHMD. So they volunteered to help make a difference. They have worked with their pastor and the staff of our Dakotas Annual Conference (all the UM in ND and SD) to begin forming a plan. They want to move to Watford City and work with the children who are left alone. They want to offer them hospitality: a little food, something to drink, and a safe place for children to play.

The amazing thing about the oil boom is it brought a new mission field to our back door. If we ignore it and say it's someone else's problem...then we've neglected to ask ourselves WWJHMD? We need to be faithful disciples with the vision and the mindset to ask: WWJHMD?

Bishop Bruce Ough is also trying to ask this question. He is dreaming God size dreams and he is asking us to dream with him. He is calling us to help find the people, supplies, and finances to meet the PEOPLE needs in the Bakken region. He is working with the people in that region and our District Superintendent, Keith Nelson, to develop a plan of action.

The first step is to raise \$100,000. This will be used by Jim and Kathie Konsor to begin their ministry in Watford City. It will be used to start programs throughout the region for children who are left alone all day. We will start Sidewalk SONday School programs (a

public VBS in a city park) and provide scholarships to send children to camp. But this is only the beginning.

If every church in the Dakotas can raise \$400 we will reach our goal of \$100,000. But let me ask you, if a church like McClusky (with an attendance of 25 people) can raise \$400 what can a church like ours do? Our Council on Ministries has challenged us to raise at least \$5,000.

McClusky UMC will need to give \$16 for every person present in order to raise \$400. McCabe would only need to receive \$11 per person in attendance to raise \$5,000. How much money did you donate today? Did you give with a man size dream in mind, just \$11/person?

I hope and pray that during this month we will have the courage to dream a God size dreams and raise more money than any of us can imagine.

So let's ask ourselves: WWJHMD?