

## TAKING IT HOME

11. To which government official could you write or talk to this week and express your concerns?

12. The secular world makes it easy for people to divide themselves. Think of one thing you can do this week to reach out to someone who is different from you and show them an act of Christian kindness.

13. Spend about 5 minutes with the rest of your group and write a prayer about today's topics. Make sure everyone in the group has an opportunity to add to this prayer. If your group is so moved, use this prayer as your closing prayer.

## PRAYER GUIDE

### Praise & Thanksgiving:

Baptism of Emma Rhea Royer and Gabe Hillman Wilson  
Growth Groups

### Pray for healing:

Curt Johnson, will undergo treatment for cancer in Pittsburgh  
Harold Morris, Carol Kendall's father, Jim Vander Pas, Diane Lukas

### Pray for:

Healing of the injured, and comfort for the families of those who lost their lives in the devastating earthquake and its aftershocks in Haiti. The relief efforts to protect thousands of displaced people in Haiti as a result of the devastating earthquake and may God's Church respond with compassion and support over the coming years.

Each week we pray for a UMC from our district, this week: Trinity, their pastor Amanda Stein and its 103 members.

Verona Area Food Pantry

Families and friends who have lost loved ones to suicide bombings in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Pakistan.

---

---

---

## Sugar River United Methodist Church SERMON OUTLINE for Sunday, January 24, 2010

### When Christians Get it Wrong: When In Conflict With Science and Married to Politics

Text: Genesis 1:1-8, Matthew 22:16b, 21      Pastor Gary Holmes

#### 1. Christians are perceived to live "sheltered lives."

Are we closed-minded?

Are we afraid that our faith cannot withstand the scrutiny of science?

The lessons of Galileo...

From the book, *Unchristian*

*Perception: Christians are boring, unintelligent, old-fashioned, and out of touch with reality.*

*New Perception: Christians are engaged, informed, and offer sophisticated responses to the issues people face.*

Is the Creation Story a scientific lecture?

#### 2. Are we married to our Politics?

From the book, *Unchristian*

*Perception: Christians are primarily motivated by a political agenda and promote right-wing politics.*

*New Perception: Christians are characterized by respecting people, thinking biblically, and finding solutions to complex issues.*

Jesus' lesson for our political life  
Who's image do we bare?

Resources: *Unchristian* by David Kinnaman and Series by Adam Hamilton

# GROWTH GUIDE – Sugar River UMC

For the week of January 24, 2010

## GETTING TO KNOW YOU

1. Talk about something that you have seen that leaves you in awe of God's power.
2. Think back to your experiences of learning about creation in Sunday School and evolution in school. How did you handle the conflict of tenets?
3. If you could select the topic of conversation at a dinner table with a group of complete strangers, would you pick religion or politics? Why?

## DIGGING DEEPER

### Genesis 1:1-8 (NIV)

<sup>1</sup> In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

<sup>2</sup> Now the earth was <sup>la</sup> formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.

<sup>3</sup> And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. <sup>4</sup> God saw that the light was good, and He separated the light from the darkness.

<sup>5</sup> God called the light "day," and the darkness he called "night." And there was evening, and there was morning—the first day.

<sup>6</sup> And God said, "Let there be an expanse between the waters to separate water from water." <sup>7</sup> So God made the expanse and separated the water under the expanse from the water above it. And it was so. <sup>8</sup> God called the expanse "sky." And there was evening, and there was morning—the second day.

4. Many people turn away from Christianity because it appears to them that to be a Christian means that you must be anti-intellectual. What must we as Christians do to change that perception? How can we a Sugar River change that perception?
5. There are those Christians who, when science and Christianity are in conflict, try to shield their children and shelter them from

any arena where these conflicts are discussed. Share your thoughts on the wisdom of such a decision.

6. Do you believe that Christianity is being enhanced or eclipsed by modern science? Why?

### Matthew 22:16b (NIV)

*"Teacher," they said, "we know you are a man of integrity and that you teach the way of God in accordance with the truth. You aren't swayed by men, because you pay no attention to who they are.*

### Matthew 22:21 (NIV)

<sup>21</sup>*"Caesar's," they replied.*

*Then he said to them, "Give to Caesar what is Caesar's, and to God what is God's."*

7. Talk about a time where you saw something done in the "name of Christianity" that upset you. What did you do in response?
8. Jesus responded carefully and wisely to the men who questioned him about paying taxes. How can you be careful and wise in answering tough questions posted by unbelievers?
9. Why is it more difficult to discuss politics with other Christians than with non-Christians? Do you think Jesus would exercise his right to vote if he had been born in the United States?
10. What political party do you tend to side with? How much do your religious beliefs tie into this decision?