October 2026

The Scroll

Mallard Creek Presbyterian Church

Of Sheep and Wolves, Snakes and Doves, Scammers and Church Folk

"I am sending you out like sheep among wolves. Therefore be as shrewd as snakes and as innocent as doves." Matthew 10:16 (NIV)

In this verse Jesus confronts us with an uncomfortable truth - the world is a dangerous place because it is full of wolves, those who would prey upon us. He also tells us that we are not to hide away. We are to be engaged with the world. Like sheep in the midst of the wolves. And Jesus tells us how to conduct ourselves - be shrewd, like a snake (meaning don't make yourself an easy target). But be innocent, like a dove (do no harm yourself).

All of this is good to meditate on given the recent scam that was plied against our congregation via text. We know this won't stop, there will be others. We know that scammers work very hard at their scamming. So, be like sheep among wolves - watchful and wary. Be like snakes - shrewd, and smarter than other snakes. And be like doves - don't prey on others. Here are some considerations to help in that direction:

*Our staff, and leadership, will never ask for gift cards to be purchased, and the registration numbers photographed and sent via text.

*Our staff, and leadership, will never contact you on a Saturday claiming to be held up in unnamed meetings and unable to talk. This is a dead giveaway.

*Our staff, and leadership, will never contact you with such an urgent, time sensitive request. There is always time to verify. (And we will NEVER ask for an urgent electronic transfer or transaction).



So, stop. Wait 24 hours, and then verify the request with the church office, or Pastor Rich (or the apparent sender) directly. That one simple move will block *most fraud attempts.*

This is also a good opportunity to inform you of some other security measures we have taken following this most recent incident.

The SCROLL will now be sent out on the first Monday of the Month. To clear up any confusion about when the SCROLL is released in relation to the weekly email (sent on Fridays), watch for the SCROLL on the first Monday of the month.

We are no longer posting the full worship bulletin on the website. We are now ONLY posting the order of service. We will not be posting any part of the bulletin that contains personal contact information or phone numbers.

This is also the reason I do not state particular prayer requests from the pulpit during the *Prayers of the People. I know this has been a long standing practice at MCPC, but I am uncomfortable disclosing personal details from the pulpit given that we livestream our services and post recordings online.*

Finally, I checked with our technical support service, Modern Impressions, who assured me that we have a reliable firewall protecting our database. It is Modern Impressions' belief that we were NOT "hacked". In fact, they report that most scammers are not trying to break INTO systems anymore, they are on the hunt for personal details being sent OUT. Scammers work very hard at capturing and collecting unguarded personal details, which may explain the random sample selection of those from the congregation who were targeted in the last scam.

In the meantime, pray for protection; pray that the Lord would protect those being preyed upon; pray that the Lord would thwart and frustrate the scammers. (You could even pray that some of them would be converted, and turn from their crimes to follow Jesus and love their neighbors.)

All of this to say, be wary, be watchful, but don't be afraid.

Peace,
Pastor Rich