

## May/June 2009

# Sermon Series Gets National Coverage

The CW, Channel 33 covered the sermon series "The Theology of Twitter" on May 24. The broadcast was picked up on affiliates around the country, CNN, ABC, Dallas Morning News and dozens of other sources. The Fox national morning show, FOX & Friends also covered the story which will air the week of June 1. Fox 4 News locally covered the series on May 31, which was broadcasted on all three newscasts that day. Following is the original press release about the series and then the Channel 33 and Fox 4 coverage follows.

Beginning May 17, Dr. John Allen will begin a three-part series about "Theology of Twitter," at Trietsch Memorial United Methodist Church in Flower Mound. As part of the series, Dr. Allen is encouraging everyone to follow his daily thoughts on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/jallenjr](http://www.twitter.com/jallenjr).

Social networking is all the rage these days, with over two-thirds of the global online population visiting these "member communities" – a percentage that puts it ahead of personal email, according to the Nielsen Company's March report.\*

But what accounts for the dynamic growth of Twitter and Facebook? Simply put, people don't want to be alone; they want to be connected to other people, and online communities are an easy way to do it.

"There is interdependence among people, a need for each other," Dr. Allen said. "The church is called to be the ultimate social network." In the series, Dr. Allen will address the role the church should play in connecting people to each other; how there is unity in diversity, based on the scripture in 1 Corinthians 12.

Trietsch exists with a three-fold agenda – *to come, to grow and to serve together*. The church should not be just about coming together for weekly worship, but about growing together in community and in faith, and in serving together to help those in need. Our mission is "*To know Christ and to make Christ known.*"

Dr. Allen will also address the backlash against Twitter and Facebook, which is in many ways the same complaints people have against the church. That those involved are narcissistic and only concerned about themselves. The one element that separates the narcissistic from the true community is love, based on 1 Corinthians 13. If you care about your followers on Twitter and your friends on Facebook, you no longer are acting out of selfishness but out of genuine affection.

In the final week of the series, which is Pentecost (the celebration of the church's beginning), Dr. Allen will issue a call to action based on Acts 2 to move community from the virtual to the real, from just being involved in online communities to finding community in the church. He will also talk about ways the church can use social networking sites to take care of each other.

One Trietsch member recalls posting on Facebook having to make a midnight run to the emergency room, and how within seconds had almost a dozen replies from members of his online community with offers of help and prayers.

We encourage you to join us for this insightful and inspiring series about "The Theology of Twitter," from May 17 to May 31 at all three worship services – 8 a.m. traditional, 9:30 a.m. contemporary, and 11 a.m. traditional.

Trietsch is located at 6101 Morriss Road, Flower Mound, Texas, 75028. You can find out more about Trietsch Memorial United Methodist Church ministries at [www.tmumc.org](http://www.tmumc.org) or by calling 972-539-8547.

\*The Nielson report can be found at [http://www.nielsen-online.com/pr/pr\\_090309.pdf](http://www.nielsen-online.com/pr/pr_090309.pdf)

## **Channel 33, CW Newscast – May 24**

<http://www.the33tv.com/news/kdaf-twitter-church-kdaf,0,4385246.story>

Len Wilson is listening. But he's also tweeting tidbits about the morning service at Trietsch Memorial United Methodist Church in Flower Mound. Len Wilson says, "People look to social networks to find community. Our point is for the church to be the ultimate social network, the place to find community."

It's part of a 3 week sermon series called the Theology of Twitter. It's designed to get congregation members to better connect with family, friends, the community and church.

Pastor John Allen says, "Our world doesn't operate one hour a week or one day like it used to. The world is 24-7. We've got to use whatever means as a church to be 24-7 for each other."

Today, week 2, was about love. Pastor Allen asked every one to get out their phones and text someone. "Let them know you care about them and want to connect with them."

Several members told us the gratification was as immediate as the message sent. Church member Pam Taylor says, "I just kind of really got on twitter a few weeks ago, so it was new to me. But it was fun."

Youth Minister Kris Melvin was new to Facebook. Some of his teens helped him set up an account. Now he returns the favor readings theirs. Kris Melvin says, "A lot of times they share what's going on in their daily lives and what happens is if they're struggling with something, I call them I text them."

Other members told us this use of social networking sites feels natural. After all, we use our phones and computers for everything else. Kristi Webb says, "We need to use today's technology to do more to help others." Pastor Allen realizes this might be difficult for some people, especially older members of the congregation, but he's encouraging everyone to try. He says it's not really about Facebook or Twitter or whatever, but all about the message.

## **Channel 4, Fox Newscast – May 31**

[http://www.myfoxdfw.com/dpp/news/Pastor\\_Encourages\\_Twitter\\_in](http://www.myfoxdfw.com/dpp/news/Pastor_Encourages_Twitter_in)

Dionne Anglin

FLOWER MOUND, Texas - Changing technology is finding its way into north Texas churches. One house of worship, Trietsch Memorial United Methodist Church in Flower Mound, is now urging the congregation to "Tweet" during Sunday service. FOX 4's Dionne Anglin has the story.