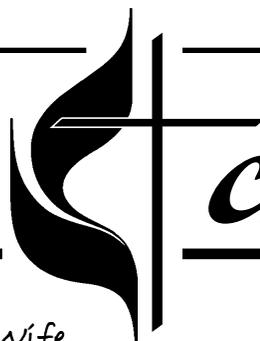




the



chimes

Ringin' out the Good News of God and of the Adrian United Methodist Church

Confessions of the Pastor's Wife . . .
"Fighting Against the Wind"

And when they climbed into the boat, the wind died down. Matthew 14:32

A few days ago, my husband and I saw an interesting sight. It was a decidedly windy day, the kind Winnie the Pooh would refer to as "blustery". Suspended vertically in the air was a small bird. Its wings were out on either side of him, but they looked like feathery arms. He was beating them up and down, relentlessly pushing against the invisible force that had suspended him midair. Finally, he stopped beating his wings and dropped, straight down. I craned my neck to see if he would hit the ground, but instead, he soared. You see, when he dropped into the wind, he made his body horizontal. Wings out, the currents of air moved under him and allowed him to glide. By giving way to the wind, the bird could fly.

My husband and I chuckled at this funny little episode. But then I thought, that bird is probably smarter than most of us humans. Like the little bird, we tend to fight against the invisible forces of this life. We beat our wings in futility against the problems that push against us like a fierce wind. We think that if we just keep fighting we can mend that broken relationship, find that perfect job, gain enough wealth to make us happy or even reverse the doctor's diagnosis.

We live in a society that tells us when you face insurmountable odds you have to just push through. Struggling to finish a research paper? Push through. Having trouble meeting a project deadline? Push through. Can't seem to lose that last twenty pounds? Push through. The ends of the checkbook won't meet? Push through. Push. Push. Push.

I tend to be a push through girl. Just keep going, keep doing, keep fighting until you get what you want. The great irony of my life is that things never seem to really change or improve until I let go.

Fill Those Backpacks!

Let's defend our title as the "most generous congregation in town" as we collect cans of soup and other items for the "Blessings in a Backpack" program. Bring donations in any time between now and February 7.



Sunday School News & Notes

We enjoyed having all of you as we learn more about God's promises to Abraham. Join us this week as we continue with the story of Abraham and Lot. Thank you to Mary Ann Green for our delicious treats last week! **See you Sunday at 9:45!**



Upcoming Acolytes

January 31: Jordyn M. & Bo P.

February 7: Jackson B. & Colton B.

February 14: Kianna L. & Kailee H.

If you cannot be there on your assigned Sunday, please find a replacement to take your place.

About twelve years ago, I was in a really dark place. I was struggling with anxiety and depression. After teaching for four years, I was burnt out, frustrated, and looking for a change. I kept pushing through. I called principals at schools I wanted to work at, only to be told they just didn't have a position open. I pushed on. Finally, in the middle of a Good Friday service, God said, enough. Bowing my head, I stopped pushing. I fell into God's plan, the one he'd been trying to direct me to for the past six months.

When I finally let go, when I stopped pushing and fell, God was right there. His plan was infinitely better than mine, although I didn't know it then. When I stopped pushing, when I stopped fruitlessly beating against the problems in my life and gave them fully over to God, I was able to soar.

The next couple of years were a sort of sabbath period for me. I went to seminary. I met my husband. I rested. I grew. Life wasn't easy or perfect—it never is. But there was peace. There was purpose. There was God.

My friends, I don't know what you're trying to push through today. But my advice to you would be to stop. Stop trying so hard to make a situation perfect. Stop trying so hard to fix a problem. Stop trying so hard to figure it all out. Because you can't. You won't. Like that little bird, you'll just beat senselessly against the wind.

Instead, let go. Lay whatever it is that's keeping you up at night before the throne of God. Tell him you're done pushing. Tell him you've had enough. And then, allow him room to let you soar.

Let go.

Blessings and Peace,

Sara

Souper Bowl Sundae!!!

UMW Mai Gray circle will host a "Souper Bowl Sundae" lunch following worship on February 7! Come enjoy soup and chili, plus make your own ice cream sundaes. See you there!

Umbrellas Up! Calling all UMW members: show your support to DEFEND against human trafficking. Bring your umbrella to church on February 7 for a photo opportunity to raise awareness!



Lord, Hear Our Prayers...

Jeremy Maus	Aaron Pearson	Jamie Bise
Eric Sechrest	Lynn Saathoff	Jonna Petty
Sharon Findley	Jack Rouborn	Harvey Cumpton
Mary Cumpton	Hubert McCall	Jack Willerton
Sandy Maxwell	Barbara Pruden	Ava Sutton
Beverly Cornelious	Andy Tyhurst	Brent Fletcher
Lu Hooper	Johnny Cates	Sam Weeks
Oliver Oates	Rhonda Lemer	John Morris
Rhonda Batschelet	Scott Collier	

Peace...

Remember our military personnel...

Grant Bunch, Dustin Delmont,
Randy Hubbard, Casey Talley, Kaylee Tindle

Worship Wrap Up for January 24, 2016 “Suffering and God’s Will”

This week’s sermon in the message series was “Suffering and God’s Will.”

Why do bad things happen to good people? For centuries people all over the world have been trying to reconcile the goodness of our Creator and the suffering of some. Is it all part of God’s plan or God’s will?

God does have a plan for our world but possibly the evil and suffering are due to choices made by humans.

Christ suffered on the cross for us so that we might thrive. God wants the best for us. How could he allow us to suffer?

God granted us free will or the ability to make choices. Possibly our decisions veer us off the road or the journey he has planned for us.

Are natural disasters in the world actually “acts of God?” Perhaps we should rename these “acts of Satan.” God does not use natural disasters to punish or prove a point in judgment. He does not punish many people for the acts of a few. If God wants to get our attention, he can speak in other ways.

Evil does happen. Where is God when disasters occur? We know that God is there, suffering alongside us, giving us strength to go forward. God is in the midst of tragedy shining the Light of Christ. We can’t put God in a box by saying he causes this or that. God calls us to be with those who suffer just as he is with us.

Please join us on Sunday as we ask God to guide us on the journey he has planned for us and thank him for always being with us by shining his light in our lives.

Submitted by Linda Casey

Upcoming Meetings and Studies

Sunday, Jan 31: Worship at Passaic UMC, 9 am

...Worship at Adrian UMC, 10:45 am

Monday, Feb 1: Adrian Youth Cheer,
5-7:30 pm, FH

Tuesday, Feb 2: PAT, 8:30 –noon, FH

...Houston Plaza Bible Study, 1 pm, Clubhouse

...Tuesday Table Talk, 6:30 pm

...Girl Scouts, 5:30-7 pm, FH

Wednesday, Feb 3: Youth, 6-8 pm, FH

Thursday, Feb 4: Passaic Bible Study, 9 am

...Church Ladies, 9-11 am

...Al Anon, 6 pm, Classroom #2

...Fit Club, 7 pm, FH

Friday, Feb 5: Fellowship Hall in use 5-8 pm

Saturday, Feb 6: Tai Chi, 8-9 am, FH

...Karate Club, 9-10 am, FH

...Fellowship Hall in use 2-5 pm

Sunday, Feb 7: Worship at Passaic UMC, 9 am

...Worship at Adrian UMC, 10:45 am

...Mai Gray Souper Bowl Sundae lunch, following
worship, FH

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Sunday School . . . Children, 9:45 am Adults, 9:45 am

Worship . . . 10:45 am

S tudent advice

This was written to me 29 years ago in red ink on a 3x5 card by one of my students but the wisdom and advice in it lives on into 2016.

“A kind word never goes unheard, but too often it will go unsaid.”

“Take a kind word into the street, and share it with everybody you meet.” (from “Shake Somebody’s Hand” by the Oakridge Boys)

*To Mrs. Ray from Mike Burris 8:55 p.m. 3-17-87
46 degrees*

It amazes me how there are always student/teacher relationships throughout life, even past the days of the student actually being in the teacher’s class—one influencing the other.

We are one or both all of our life, either a student or a teacher. And in this case, the teacher learns from the student with this great advice written on a little 3x5 card many years ago.

Another instance of the tables being turned is every Saturday morning at 8 a.m. where the student I once taught in journalism has now become my teacher in Tai Chi.

Yes, Dr. James Womelduff, or Rusty, has been my teacher for five years now.

And when he can’t be there, another one of my former students, Susan Taylor, takes over as my teacher.

I’m glad though we don’t have grades in this class. I don’t know what I would get.

For all beginning teachers, I think this would be wise advice, *“Be careful how you treat your students, for one day they may become your doctor or your plumber or your neighbor.”*

All my life though I hope I am a student of Jesus, the Greatest Teacher of All.

And since He is the Greatest Teacher of All, I know I can trust Him in all aspects of my life to teach me exactly what I need to know.

And, by the way, I hope I get an A.

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths.” (Proverbs 3:5,6 NKJV)

Love in Jesus,

God’s “student” servant,

Liz Ray

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