

03-27-19 Wednesday Musing

As the days get longer... and the sun gets warmer... I try to get outside more... working in the yard or taking long walks through the woods behind my house. As some of you may know I live in the southern part of the county... on family land. It is where I grew up and eventually moved back to. When I was a child my Dad would often take us for long walks in the woods... asking us to name trees that were growing along the paths we walked... On a regular basis, on Sunday afternoons... after church, we'd pack a picnic lunch and blankets and pile into the trailer behind the tractor... travel about a mile back into the woods... and enjoy a leisurely lunch... then my Dad and Mom would take naps while my sister, brother and I would play in the water in the creek memories I cherish...

Later in life I was introduced to 'hiking'. We bought all kinds of backpacks, tents, clothing and cooking equipment suited to 'packing up life' for a few days and wandering through trails far into mountainous country. This was long before cell phones and GPS came to be readily available. We would dehydrate our own meals and cook them on tiny camp stoves miles into the wilderness. We even once cooked a tiny birthday cake to celebrate one of our fellow hikers' special day while out enjoying God's beautiful world.

Today... when I take a walk along paths and trails that lead me deep into forests bursting with the beauty God has created for us, I often talk to Him... praising Him and thanking Him for his magnificent work... but it's also a time I can bear my soul... because I never doubt that He is right there with me. As I'm sure you know... Jesus walked almost everywhere He went... and traveled many roads... paths... and trails... and was never alone... His disciples were with Him... but God was there also... Scripture instructs us to "walk with God" ... "walk in the way of Jesus" or to 'walk humbly in the presence of God'.

Micah 6:8 tells us pretty much without confusion... "8 He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God? ... and we can find in Deuteronomy 8:6 "6 So you shall keep the commandments of the LORD your God by walking in his ways and by fearing him." Paul tells us in Colossians 2:6-7 "6 Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him, 7 rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving." This gives us three terms inconsistent with each other to express the same idea, the terms of walking, being rooted, and built up. They do, however, have in common that they suggest an initial act by which we are brought into connection with Christ... a successive process flowing from and following in Christ's footsteps... For when we walk in... are rooted in... and built up by Christ we will never be in the ever-present darkness of the world around us... as Psalm 119:105 reminds us... "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path."

As we learn to walk with God, we grow in our faith. We grow in our capacity to know and understand who God is. We grow in our ability to receive what He has to give us. We grow in appreciation of all that He is and all that He has done for us. The more we learn, the richer and fuller and deeper our relationship with God becomes.

This week's sermon title is "The Broken-Hearted/Distraught Face of Jesus" The scripture reading will be from Matthew 23:23-33 and Mark 2:23-3:6.

Things happening around the church:

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- You are invited to bring special crosses for display in our connecting walkway during Lent.
- **THIS SUNDAY...** March 31st - the Fifth Sunday - we will gather at 9am in the Bray Fellowship Hall for a covered dish breakfast and some great fellowship.
- Also, March 31st is the day we collect our 'One Great Hour of Sharing' offering. See the bulletin for more details.
- April 7th - Hot Dog lunch after worship and Cake Auction to benefit the "Relay for Life" in their fight against cancer.
- April 18 - 6:30 pm - Maundy Thursday Service and Tenebrae Service in Bray Fellowship Hall. See the newsletter and bulletins for more info.
- April 14th - 7:30 am Sunrise Service followed by Breakfast in Bray Hall, 10:30 am Easter Worship Service.

As you go to the Lord in prayer this week, please remember to lift up:

Jeanne Williams, Mary Jane Pettigrew, Harvey Sharpe, Donna Freeman, Anna Gerow, Nancy Thomas, Margaret Turner, Louise Walters, Elizabeth Woodlief—mother of Peggy Johnson, Frances Morgan, Selma Simpson and friends: Mike Thaxton, Claire Spence, Janette Hudson—mother of Connie Collins

Grace and Peace from Above....

Joan 😊

