

Mid-Week Reflection

February 6, 2019

It's complicated.

Life is complex.

Our interactions and relationships range from a brief encounter
to a life-long shared journey of love and devotion.

So much and so many define us.

Part of who we become results from the unplanned and the unexpected.
That which interrupts what we thought we were going to do on any particular day
or time in our lives often dramatically redefines us.

I remember when my parents decided to move to a different house just
before the start of my 9th grade year. To them, it was fun and exciting. I was
devastated. The move put me in a different school district. My life-long friends
were now miles away in a different suburb of St. Louis. At 15 I was the new kid and
my mom did not understand why I couldn't walk down the street and ring door bells
until I found some other kids. It was a terrible summer. I was so bored I learned
to play golf. The thing is, that move turned out to be wonderful. Were it not for
that move, I wouldn't be here now. You see, the girl who became my best friend had
an older brother at KU. In the years to come, she convinced me that was where we
should go and room together our freshman year. Had it not been for Shirley and
her brother, Skip, I never would have found my way to Kansas.

Sarah Heath, author of "What's Your Story" calls those unexpected life
events: large and small, wonderful and devastating, "plot twists" as she makes the
connection between our lives and that of a good story-line. She claims, "If you
view all you are going through as just a plot twist, you realize there is a bigger
story going on. Plot twists are part of being alive." She continues claiming, "Many
of us likely have met people who are stuck on an event that has become either the
source of their greatest pride or the source of their greatest victimization.
Recognizing such events as an integral part of every life frees us from their hold.
Instead of dwelling on them, we can make sense of them within the larger narrative
of our lives." Ups and downs are normal.

Moving at 15 to a new neighborhood and school is traumatic, but
nothing like what many experience. Still, we do all quickly become self-focused. Our

challenge is to recognize that God is with us. God does not promise that we won't be disappointed or overwhelmed with grief. God promises to be with us. Joseph's story helps us remember that. Joseph chooses to be changed by his plot twists. (His brothers sold him and he was sent off to Egypt.) This week we focus on Genesis 39: 1-6. The sermon is titled, "The Plot Thickens." I hope to see you Sunday. Let's grow, together.

Coming Up

Thursday, February 7th Good Grief Potluck @ Bob Clelland's

Sunday, February 10: **Scout Sunday**

Potato Bar: after worship in the gym.

All the donations will support camping activities.

Monday, February 11 Board of Trustees @ 6:15

Saturday, February 16 UMW Brunch @ 9:30

Sunday, February 17 Church Council following worship.

All ministry team chairpersons serve as voting council members.

Everyone is welcome to attend. Please send ministry reports and agenda items to Bill Patterson, Chairperson.

Special note:

We collected a BIG assortment of soups and crackers and miraculously the first half of the alphabet tied with the last half. Thank you all for the participation. The scouts will be loading our donations to be taken to ICare.

Also...the Shawnee Heights Mobile Food Pantry will be Tuesday, February 26th.

Contact the church office if you are willing to help Mission Team with this monthly event. Food is available from 5-7. Guests will check-in inside at our Gathering Area. The food will be in the HOL/SHUMC Bus. You need not be available for the entire 2 hour time. Email shumc@cox.net or call 785-379-5492 to help with this new ministry.

Blessings and joy,
Barb