

## The Fourth Leg

I started to title this column “The Final Lap,” but I dare not presume on God’s plans. I also thought about “third time’s the charm” about a call process, and “bad penny” about my own ability to pop up again... and again. But “the fourth leg” seems most appropriate.

In some relay races, the fourth leg is the last leg of the race. The baton is handed off with the responsibility to get it successfully across the finish line. God himself knows when and where the finish line is located, and who will lead the charge across. Our duty is to run. Admittedly running is not my expertise. We have coaches in our congregation who can address running with a fine track record. So, I shall rely on Scripture for my guidance.

*“Let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross...”* (Hebrews 12:1-2 ESV).

The coaching here seems clear:

- (1) lighten the load,
- (2) don’t let anything extraneous slow us down, (3) stay in the race, and
- (4) focus on the ultimate victor, Jesus.

In this season, let’s make extra effort to stay laser- focused on what matters. It appears the church has settled a couple of key issues in terms of primary and secondary beliefs that will have impact on the call of the next pastor.

In the meantime, the mission remains first. We will grow in our faith walk and share the gospel with people who need Jesus. Our relationships will be cultivated, and the unity of the church body protected. We want God to be glorified in all we do. So, personal preferences will be retired in favor of the Holy Spirit’s leading.

Together, we can make this lap. And in God’s timing, we will cross the finish line. Let’s keep calm, and carry on.

Thank you for allowing me to return to do this lap with you. Thank you to your excellent staff for their service in the last three months. And thank you to Brian, Bob, Wayne, Dave, and David for ably filling the pulpit. Not many churches are blessed with so many capable preachers!

See you Sunday!  
Eric Reed  
Interim pastor 2.0