

First United Methodist Church

310 North Rowley, Mitchell, SD 57301

Rev. Keith Nelson, Lead Pastor

keith@mitchellfumc.org

605.630.6586

It was just a month ago that we were singing “Joy to the World!” Yes, God’s gift to us in Jesus was truly a gift intended to bring or give “joy” to the world...joy to you, me, and all the people of the world. So, the question I want to ask today is, how is your joy meter doing in 2018? Or a simpler way to put it is, “Where have you seen or experienced joy in the world lately?”

I can tell you where I’ve seen joy recently. It was just yesterday (Thursday) morning. Every morning I take Sophie for a walk. It’s good exercise for her and for me. Well, yesterday morning I went to an area where I could let Sophie off her leash, and she just started running and running. Maybe it was pent up energy from the cold days of winter, or just from being confined for the night. But she literally ran in a big circle around me. Then up and down some piles of dirt and gravel. Then she found a mound of snow and stuck her face in it and dug into it. She was just having a blast. Oh...and then she found a stick. Oh my goodness, did she have fun with that stick. Then it was back up the dirt piles...stop for a bit to look around at her doggie domain. And then back down the dirt pile and running.

It was fun simply watching her experience the joy of being a dog. The joy of having fun and experiencing the world around her. She wasn’t worrying about her next meal, how to pay the bills, what others would think of her style of running or the stick she found. She wasn’t worried about anything. She was just experiencing the joy of being alive and the joy of creation all around her.

Now, I’m not saying you need to go find a stick and have some fun with it or go stick your face in a snowbank. Certainly, those are possibilities. Maybe for you joy is found in a sunrise or a sunset. Maybe joy is found in singing. Joy might be something you experience while running. Maybe joy is found in your children, or in a hobby (quilting, woodworking, coloring, scrapbooking, etc.) The possibilities are as many as there are unique individuals in our world. My point is simply that we all take some time to consider and recognize where joy is found in our lives.

In looking for the word “joy” in the Bible, I’m reminded that joy is one of the Fruit of the Spirit mentioned in Galatians, meaning that as we grow in our faith and love of God, hopefully joy becomes more and more present and evident in our lives. Yes, I realize that for some of us reading these words, right now there is struggle, pain, difficulties, maybe even grief. I’m reminded of Psalm 30 that says, “Weeping may linger for the night, but joy comes with the morning.” It’s saying there may be seasons of sorrow and struggle in our lives, but there are always new beginnings. Joy can be found in a new day. My friends, may you each experience joy today!!

Serving Together,
Pastor Keith

This Sunday is the final week in our Cherish Series. I’ll have a moment of blessing for those who have lost someone that they’ve cherished. There will also be a time of blessing for those who continue to grow in their relationships and in the spirit of cherishing. Worship is at 8:30 and 11:00 am on Sunday.

Also, we are going through a computer upgrade in the church office. So, please bear with us as we deal with some changes and learning new systems.

