

First United Methodist Church

310 North Rowley, Mitchell, SD 57301

Rev. Keith Nelson, Lead Pastor

keith@mitchellfumc.org

605.630.6586

Lately the temperatures have been a little bit warmer. I like that and so do a lot of you!! In the past couple weeks I've been hearing a lot of, "When is this winter EVER going to end!?" But now that we're into March, we can expect some warmer days and some of our snow to be melting. That's a good thing!! Oh, there's likely to still be some snow storms in our future, but Spring truly is in sight.

However, the downfall of this season of the year is that temperatures rise and snow melts (good thing)...and then the temperatures drops below freezing again later in the day (bad thing)...creating smooth and dangerous ice! And yes, about 10 days ago I was out shoveling some freshly fallen snow and I found a spot with glare ice below the snow, and down I went. Later that same day, Nancy, my wife, was out walking our dog. She too hit a patch of ice, and boom, down she went too.

So, with these falling experiences in mind, you can probably understand why this past week, when there has been this same thawing and freezing trend going on, I have been really careful in where and how I walk. Especially when I see there is ice nearby. At times I've avoided and walked way around ice patches. Or I've picked my way through the icy spots very carefully, finding something to hang on to, to steady myself. Or I've simply walked through the area very slowly, being careful to not lose my balance, etc. So far taking these precautions I haven't fallen again.

As I was thinking about being careful where and how I walk these days, I found myself thinking about Ephesians 5:15. This verse is Paul's admonition to Jesus followers to, "Be careful how you live, not as unwise people but as wise..." In fact, one translation of the Bible phrases that verse, "Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise people, but as wise."(NASB) You see, there were some disciples in that day and in the region of Ephesus that were making some unwise, and even potentially dangerous or harmful decision about how they were living or "walking" in their life of faith.

In this letter Paul goes on to write about how there are some negative, or dangerous, or as he puts it, "evil" influences or forces in the world. Those influences can cause one to slip and fall or to cause problems in one's life, just like ice can cause problems in our lives in this season. So, Paul's words to live or "walk" carefully are right-on-target. He too is saying to us yet today as followers of Jesus, that we might need to avoid these dangerous spots. We might need to find something (or someone) to hang on to in these "slippery" moments. We might need to look carefully and proceed slowly and intentionally in our walk with God, when we know there are places close at hand that have the potential to cause us to stumble or slip and fall.

I'm grateful for Paul's instruction. His words are right on target for all of us in our walk of faith with Jesus. Today, be careful how you walk on the ice, and be especially careful of how you "walk" in the places where influences are present that just might cause you to slip and fall in your "walk of faith." Hang on to a faith friend, hang on to God's Word, hang on to Jesus. You can make it through. We can make it through together!

Serving Together,
Pastor Keith

Join us for worship at any of our three upcoming worship services; Sunday at 8:30 and 11:00, and Wednesday at 6:00 pm. Communion will be offered at all three services.