

First United Methodist Church

310 North Rowley, Mitchell, SD 57301

Rev. Keith Nelson, Lead Pastor

keith@mitchellfumc.org

605.630.6586

May 26, 2017

It's interesting having a puppy in our house. Sophie, our golden retriever pup, may not look so much like a puppy, after all she is almost 5 months old, but developmentally she is still very much a puppy. Recently I saw this lived out in that she had a decision to make.

For whatever reason, Sophie has been unwilling and unable to go down the stairs to the lower level of our home. She goes up and down the stairs to the deck of our home, even the front steps of the house are not a problem. But the stairs to the basement...nope...not gonna do it. Can't do it. In fact, her facial expressions and body language communicates, "it's scary down there! I've never been down there before."

Just the other day I was sitting on the steps to the lower level petting one of our cats. You see, the stairs and the lower level have been the "harbor of peace" for the cats. But then it happened. Sophie saw me petting the cat and suddenly her front paws were on the first step down. She had a quick change of heart and she retreated to the main level. But...she couldn't stand that either, so back she came. Front paws on the first step. Then the front paws were on the second step. Then slowly but surely, with some anguish along the way, Sophie finally made the way down the steps.

She stood there for a moment looking around, realizing there was another part of the house that she'd never been in before. Then she slowly began going from room to room sniffing and checking everything out, until finally she had made it basically around the entire lower level, learning all she could.

It's fun for me to watch our puppy learn and grow. Watching Sophie prompts me to ask myself, and all of us, where am I/we seeking to grow in this season of summer. Too often we treat summer as a time to simply kick back, change our pace, and stop doing the things we would normally do the rest of the year. Even in "church" we seem to simply expect that people are going to stop coming...and we plan for it; fewer worship services, fewer activities, no Sunday School, etc. But actually, if you look at most of nature, this is a season of growth.

I'm not saying we shouldn't take vacations, we shouldn't do things with our families, we shouldn't get outside and enjoy nature and the great outdoors. Actually, we should! (Because winters coming 😊) But what if we decided to use this season of summer to continue learning and growing in order to become a better person and a better follower of Jesus. Sophie is continuing to learn that there are so many "new" things out there to experience, learn, and do. The same is true for us. Sophie has conquered the steps to the lower level. We may regret having let her even try to go down there...but she's learned something new. What's one or two things you are going to learn this summer, in this season of growth? Share your thoughts so we can encourage one another on the journey? #growththissummer

Serving Together,

Pastor Keith

Join us for worship this Sunday!! But remember, **this Sunday starts our One Sunday Service** schedule.

Worship is at 9:30. On this Memorial Day Weekend, we'll be remembering those from our church family who have died in the past year. We will also have our **Wednesday evening service at 6:00 pm.** Come join us!! 310 N. Rowley, Mitchell.