

First United Methodist Church

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Now that I'm back from our "getaway" to Colorado, I've had people asking about how our trip was? Probably the second question I'm asked is, "What did you see?" Well, besides a lot of incredible scenery, one of the more important things I remember was what I didn't see...my cell phone.

I'll admit, I'm one of those people that at times get wrapped up in my cell phone. It is a smartphone, so it has my calendar, personal e-mail, address book, weather apps so I know what's going on weather wise, a few games, etc., etc. Recently I read an article that claimed the average American looks at their cell phone 46 times a day. My first reaction was "no way" or... "well, not me!!!!" But later in the day I noticed all the people around me staring at their hand (cellphone in hand), and then I began to count the times I was looking at my cell phone. It was more than I realized or wanted to admit.

So, what was really great about arriving at our destination in Rocky Mountain National Park, just outside Estes Park, Colorado, is that when I looked at my cell phone it said, "No Service" meaning there was no reception or no signal. In other words, my cell phone was not useable. Thus, that electronic device often got left in the camper or the pickup. If I did carry it, it was only for one purpose, to take pictures – yep, camera mode.

Why this was so important for me was that it allowed me to disconnect from part of the electronic world that so often grabs our attention and fills my days. It was nice to realize there weren't going to be any chirps, dings, or buzzes, coming from my phone, telling me that someone was sending me a message, that "the office" was trying to get ahold of me, or that some was trying to get my attention.

One of the important things I saw while away, was truly what I didn't see, my phone. Not seeing or using it helped me disconnect from so many of the distractions in life so that I could see the beauty of the world that surrounds me. Being able to disconnect from electronics helped me to reconnect with God and all the beauty of God's creation. Reconnecting with God and creation made me feel small in the midst of the mountains, but it also allowed me to feel significant, or big, in that God knows me, loves me, and is with me in this crazy journey called life.

There are several "vacation reflections" that I experienced during my time away. I'll write about some of the others in the coming weeks. But for now, my challenge is for all of us to take some time during these summer months to disconnect from the electronics, or the distractions in our lives, so that we can reconnect with God, creation, our families, and even ourselves. (And as I just typed these last words my cell phone buzzed. No...I'm not going to look at it yet!!) ☺

Serving Together,
Pastor Keith

Join us for worship this Sunday. Worship is at 9:30 and I'll be continuing the SPLASH sermon series. Have any SPLASH or water pictures from your summer travels. Remember to include the #downtownsplashin when you post pictures on Facebook or Instagram. You can also e-mail them to me at keith@mitchellfumc.org.