

# ***First United Methodist Church***

***310 North Rowley, Mitchell, SD 57301***

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So, who is pulling you forward in life?? No, the question isn't who's pushing you around? Who's pulling you forward? Who is helping to stretch you? Who is helping you grow on this journey of life? This can be an important question to ask ourselves on our journey of faith.

What got me asking this question of myself is recent experiences I've had with my dog Sophie. As many of you know, Sophie is a 6 month-old Golden Retriever. She's a puppy full of energy and full of life. It wasn't that long ago, just a couple of months, when we went for our walks together that I'd have to walk pretty slow so she could keep up. Then I could sort of jog with her, except she'd have to stop all the time to smell something. But now...now when we go for our morning run, she is often leading the way and pulling me along; and sometimes pulling really hard!!

I'm sure we all recognize there are many different "forces" in the world around us. Some forces seek to make us better human beings. Other forces tend to distract us, pulling our attention away, getting us off track from the direction we really want to go. That's why having a positive influence that is seeking to help us grow in a good way, is so important.

I Thessalonians 5:11 says, "Therefore, encourage one another and build up each other, as indeed you are doing." Proverbs 27:17 says "Iron sharpens iron." In other words, I believe the message that both these passages is getting at is that it is good to have someone in our lives who is helping us become a better person...and a better disciple of Jesus. Plus, we should also be investing in another person to help them become a better person and a better follower of Jesus.

I'll admit there are times on my morning run that I want to slack off a bit and go at a slower pace. But my coach...my running buddy...my Golden Retriever reminds that my real goal is to keep this body as healthy as possible and to stay in shape. Thus, slacking off my "pace" isn't what I really want to do. So, Sophie pulls me forward and keeps me going, even trying to get me to run a little faster – "Come on... you can do it, Keith!"

So, seriously...who is pulling you forward in this journey of life? Who is helping you/me become the person you/I want to be? Who is helping you/me to become the disciple you/I want to be? If you have someone that fits that role, give thanks to God for that person...and thank them too! If you don't have someone in that role, maybe your prayer should be, "God, send someone to pull me forward."

Serving Together,  
*Pastor Keith*

Have you done your "Summer Road Trip Reading" for the week? Read Acts 1, 2 and Luke 2. This Sunday I'll continue with our Summer Road Trip sermon series. "Rough Road Ahead" is the sermon title. Don't you just hate it when you're cruising along and all the sudden the road gets rough?! Worship is at 9:30 am on Sunday. We also have our Mid-Week Worship service on Wednesdays at 6:00 pm in the chapel. Come join us. We're located at 310 N. Rowley in Downtown Mitchell.