

First United Methodist Church

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I am incredibly grateful for the technology and the conveniences that are at my disposal and used regularly in my daily life. Just the other day I was talking with a friend about how when we were kids and had our first cameras, one took pictures rather sparingly. When the film was finally all exposed then it was sent in to be developed and you might wait several weeks to get your pictures back. Of course, now most cell phones are also cameras and your only picture taking limit is the size of the memory card in the phone...plus, you can pretty much instantly see and share your pictures.

I remember when mom got her first microwave oven. It was an Amana RadarRange. If I remember right we all watched as she heated up a mug of water for some tea in just a matter of a minute. WOW!! I remember when a trip to Sioux Falls was a big deal. A trip to Rapid City was a REALLY big deal because it usually meant an overnight stay. Now a trip to Rapid City is common place. We do it all the time. I've gone out and come back home to Mitchell all in the same day.

We are used to getting things fast (fast food, Amazon Prime 3-day delivery, etc.) and we also expect things to be convenient and quick. When I was in seminary in the Chicago area a friend told me her idea of convenience was knowing that she could get up at 2 am and go to the local convenience store and get a loaf of bread and some milk. We do live in an instant culture and we do like things fast. Yet, I've learned that some things just can't be rushed.

In my personal devotion time, just the other day I was reading in Matthew's Gospel, what many of us know as the Beatitudes. "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled. Etc."

What struck me as I read these words...these teachings of Jesus, is that these aren't instant answers, these aren't quick self-help solutions. In fact, for many of these teachings, it takes a lifetime of living out or living into these values for the full effect or reward to be realized. This is why we say that faith is a journey. It takes time, it takes persistence, it takes stumbling and getting back up, it takes moving forward step by step, and it takes continual learning and growing. Thus, part of the beauty of the journey...is the journey!

Our MCCI Weekend is now behind us. THANK YOU to everyone who prayed, participated, helped, organized, prayed some more, etc. It was a wonderful weekend. I feel the final report is accurate, insightful, and right on target. (Copies are available in the church office). The important question we have to ask now is not, "Do I like the prescriptions?" No, the question to ask is, "Are these God's 'next steps' for our Church?"

But something to keep in mind, just like the beatitudes, the prescriptions are not a quick fix. They won't be completed, if we accept them, in a month or two. Yes, there are dates and timelines for us to follow, built into the report. But the real intention of the report and the prescriptions are to help us grow, develop, improve, and to consider how to be the "church" for the day we are in and the days that are coming to us right here in Mitchell. These are interesting and exciting days to be in ministry. But we must keep in mind that transformation is rarely immediate. It takes time. And true transformation is always ongoing! But know this, together we can do this because I believe... This is Our Time!

Serving Together,

Pastor Keith

Join us Sunday at 10:00 am in the sanctuary for our Special Charge Conference. We will be voting on the proposed purchase of the Ackerman Property immediately to the north of our church facility.