



CONNEXION

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September 29, 2017

Jack's Journal

Lately, I know that many of you have witnessed my demeanor of having a grumpy face, being a bit aggravated or curt. Some of you have taken the time to cheer me up and even pray for me as I have attempted to meet the demands of life and ministry. Because of this recent dilemma (most of the time), I was reading an article I wrote about nine years ago to help remember where I was in life and ministry at that time. The article reached my soul, again, and is appropriate for today. Yes, it is a bit longer than usual, but I encourage you to read to the end.

There I was all prepared to work on my final pre-class paper concerning the Dynamics of Spiritual Direction. I was about to spend four hours of reflection and writing concerning the subject and looking forward to not only solidifying some new knowledge in mind but seeing how God was calling me to grow in faith as a Christian. The first segment of the reflection and writing time was a time to settle in about forty-five minutes of concentrated devotion, in prayer, reading scripture, and journaling my discoveries and my prayers.

I chose a small round table for my studies because someone already took up residence at my favorite large table. I dropped my laptop backpack on the chair and proceeded to walk up to the barista at the counter. Yes, I knew most of them behind the counter and they knew me. We exchanged good mornings and one of the baristas called out, "the usual Jack, grande drip with room?" I replied, "Yes, ma'am, I plan to be here for at least four hours studying."

Well, the barista began to explain that God made trees and I should try to save some trees and not use a normal paper/cardboard cup with a plastic lid but rather use a large ceramic cup. Besides, the coffee is ten cents cheaper and you get free refills as long as I am there working. Without hesitation, I accepted the new deal.

I received a large ceramic cup of one of my favorite blends of Starbucks coffee (I know that I am losing some of you right now) filled to the brim and just the right temperature. We again exchanged graces and I walk to my study table. I set the cup down on one side of the table and proceeded to set out my Bible, devotional guide, laptop (for recording my journal), and the other textbooks that I would use in my last paper.

Ah yes, finally an uninterrupted, very inspirational time with God. However, as I was sitting down, I realized that the beautiful morning's sunrise would place a glare on the screen of my laptop. Therefore, I decided to rearrange the items on the table and sit on the opposite side. That is when I realized that the small round table was rocky. The realization came when I observed the coffee in the ceramic cup come over the edge of the cup like a brown waterfall, not once, but several times, as the table rocked back and forth. In an instant, there was a flash flood of strong black coffee all over the table, my chair, down the wall, on the floor, and you guessed it, under and into the vented side of my laptop where some of the connectors are located.

The baristas gave me some terrycloth towels to clean up my mess, wiping off the laptop first; tipping the laptop to the side, and seeing the coffee dribble out was shocking to say the least. So, I then drank some of the coffee, settle down again (I didn't learn yet to change out tables or the style of coffee cup) for the devotional time. Interestingly, and with God's humor, the devotional subject was about patience...ha ha ha!

As I finished reading the selected scriptures and an article from the classics, I proceeded to open my laptop and have it come out of hibernate mode, but nothing happened. I pressed the ON button and I only received three flashing lights and no functional laptop. My heart went into my throat...how could I tell Marlane what I did? With all of this going on in my mind, I decided to take a deep breath, use my journaling book, and handwrite my thoughts and prayers. At that moment, my prayer came down to HELP written in my journal in large uppercase letters about ten times across and down the page.

I signed a quickly scrolled Amen, drank the rest of my coffee, called my son-in-law the computer tech, and asked for advice on what to do. The basic solution was take some of the panels off the laptop bottom and soak up as much of the extra coffee as possible with blotting of paper towels. Then don't turn on the laptop, turn it off, and remove the battery so that it cannot be accidentally powered up. "If you do, you may short out the laptop," he said. Then he added, make sure it's dry before you power up. Oh, and then he said, "Don't worry, you should be okay! I spilled Dr. Pepper into my laptop the other day and it is working just fine and after cleaning and drying it." Thanks for the encouragement, is what I thought, but then I knew if it did not work I was not going to have a very nice day.

I immediately drove to the church office to do some salvage and flood cleanup on the laptop. I was harried to say the least...maybe even a bit perturbed, anxious, or as Andy Lester puts it, responding to some perceived threats. Just as the boiling point of the teapot began to whistle, Vickie Jones and Debbie Willis were sent by God to rescue me. They gave me a chance to clean the laptop up, dry it out as best I can, and most importantly help me laugh at the situation and make me smile again. When I started to get negative and look at the awful possibilities they spoke the truth in love and told me not to get negative but look at the positive side.

The laptop is okay for I am using it right now in Kentucky while I am waiting for my last DMIN class to begin tomorrow morning.

Well my friends this episode tells me some things about life. First, it does not matter how well we lay out our plans for sometimes they get derailed. How we react to the derailment is what is important to our spiritual health, and what God is looking for us to do is bring him glory. "Whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it as if unto the Lord Jesus Christ" (Colossians 3:17). Second, life has unexpected turns but at each turn Jesus Christ is there at the corner ready to walk around the turn with us. "For I [Jesus] am with you always" (Matthew 28:20b). Third, for me, I need to listen to my wife for she was telling me all that morning before I went to my library, "You don't need to go to Starbucks again." (Ephesians 5:22ff).

I also wrote this to make you laugh. Sometimes we take life too seriously. You see, if you were in the Starbucks that morning, and knew what had occurred earlier at my home, and then you witnessed the coffee flood, you would be slapping your leg in laughter, and saying, "Told you so."

Let us all laugh in life, for God does give clean laughter as good medicine for our souls. Debbie and Vickie, thanks for helping me laugh. For sure I am glad my computer is healthy again...hehehehe. Make a great week in the Lord and laugh with Him.

Laughing in His grace and peace,

Jack



FUMC's YOUTH

The new school year is in full swing. We've seen consistency in our weekly activities with our youth bringing new friends to come check out what they are excited about. I'm sure you're all aware, but a few weeks ago we even had a youth, Lilly Martin, be baptized and join the church! All of our students, myself included, are working hard but are also enjoying our fellowship each and every week. This past Wednesday, I was unable to be at Refuge on Wednesday night. Even though I was not there in person, our youth group was able to come together, worship, and spend time in community. This was all made possible because of our amazing volunteers. I cannot express enough my thanks for each and every one of them and how excited I am to have such an awesome group working with our youth!

Blessings,

Kyle Powell
Director of Youth Ministries
First United Methodist Church Irving
214-404-7984

Kyle was out of town. This is a video of his message to the Youth on Wednesday night's worship service



Finance Update for General Cost of Ministry

Beginning Balance, August 31, 2017	-\$93,344.00
Contributions & Other Income thru September 27, 2017	\$46,381.00
Expenses thru September 27, 2017	-\$60,118.00
Closing Balance, September 27, 2017	<u>-\$107,081.00</u>
Giving to ministries outside the General Cost of Ministry	<u>\$68,361.00</u>

**Thank you for your offerings and blessings
and support**



This month the **Mission Possible** Kids made 'Think Big Cards' to send to children who have been displaced by a natural disaster. Each card included pencils and crayons for the children.



Nine children and four adults attended **Camp Bible at Bridgeport** last weekend. Camp Bible emphasizes the importance of knowing how to use our bibles and also gives a preview of camp life such as they will experience during summer camp. Thank you to Jessica Anderson, Ronnie Buchanan, Andy Lepe and Lori Ross for going as counselors. Quotes from those attending included "They loved it!!! Can't wait for summer" and "She is tired but excited for next year".



The children dug into their piggy banks for our **Sunday School offering** for the month of September. The children collected a total of \$67.00 which was designated for Hurricane Harvey victims

Please join us at worship on October 8 when we will be celebrating **Children's Sabbath**. Highlights of the day will include a presentation of bibles to our first graders, a performance by our children's choirs, and collection of coins (checks and cash, too) with a Noisy Offering.

Watch for more information coming regarding our annual **Fall Festival** on October 31. The stores are already stocked with Halloween candy so pick some up on your next shopping trip and deposit in our collection box found in the foyer.

MEMORIALS AND HONORARIUMS

September 2017

IN HONOR OF:

First Responders to Hurricane Harvey from Jan Mayo.
Candace Overland (*Ernestine's granddaughter*) and **Israel** (*Ernestine's Son*) to **Hurricane Relief** from Ernestine Overland

IN MEMORY OF:

B.J. Ballard to **General Budget** from Pam & Allan Knott
Jim Brown to the **General Budget** from Pam & Allan Knott
Les Talbert to **Chapel Renewal Fund** from Cynthia Stone
Les Talbert to **Operating Budget** from Challengers Sunday School class
Tommy Conrad to **General Budget** from Kenny Robbins and Carol Rhymes
Tommy Conrad to **Chapel Renewal Fund** from Jimmy & Christine Burkett, David Wood and JoAnn Maykus & family
Tommy Conrad to **Memorial Fund** from Linda Murden and Francis K Harris

Music Notes

What a blessing we have enjoyed in the last two and half years under the leadership of Leanne Seabright! Her planning has helped me tremendously as we have begun this fall season of music activities.

Not new news, but music ministry continues. We are fortunate to have Yeonok Park as she sets the tone for worship in her opening voluntaries, accompanies the choirs, and improvises during communion and all in an expansive range of styles. The Chancel Choir continues to rehearse on Wednesday nights at 7 pm to "Praise His Holy Name!" in Sunday worship. The Praise Band reminds us that our "Cornerstone" is Jesus, upon whom "Our Hope Is Built". The Angel Choir shows us how to "Praise the Lord with the Sound of Trumpet." During our Children's Sabbath worship on October 8th, the Cherub and Angel Choirs will join the Chancel Choir's anthem. Refuge ROCKS and Refuge Rings are preparing to sing and ring in worship on October 15. On October 22, the Alleluia Ringers will play hand bells and chimes. Children's Chimes are preparing for their first time to chime this fall.

Our new news -- Our interim music director, Ken Cooper, will be in worship on October 15 but has already begun meeting with the Alleluia Ringers, Refuge ROCKS and Refuge Rings groups on Sunday afternoon rehearsals. Some of you will remember his positive attitude, his musicianship and capable leadership from a few years ago when he served as interim music director. We are in good hands!

Please come join any part of the music ministry here at FUMC - you are welcome! Experience accepted, but not required!

Cherub Choir - ages 3-5 - rehearse Wednesdays 6-6:45 pm Angel Choir - grades 1-5 - rehearse Wednesdays 6-6:45 pm Refuge ROCKS - grades 6-12 - rehearse Sundays 5-6 pm Chancel Choir - adult - rehearse Wednesdays 7-8:30 pm ~~~~~ Children's Chimes - grades 3-5 - rehearse Wednesdays 5:30-6 pm Refuge Rings - grades 6-12 - rehearse Sundays 6-6:30 pm Alleluia Ringers - adult - rehearse Sundays 4-5 pm

Thanks to the Chancel Choir and Praise Band for your faithfulness and to the congregation for your support and kind words,

Sue Wilson

Hello FUMC family,

I have decided to crochet baby blankets for the Irving ISD TAPPS (*Teen-Age Pregnant and Parent Students*) program. If anyone would like to donate yarn to this cause please let me know. There is a box outside the office.

Thank you
Tiffany Chambless

On Line Giving Now Available via QR Scan

1. Download QR Code App
2. Point Camera
3. You're Done



Giving just got easier

Openings for Altar Flowers on Sunday:

October: 8th – 1 arrangement
15th – 1 arrangement

November: 12th – 1 arrangement

December: 3rd – 2 arrangements
10th – 1 arrangement
31st – 2 arrangements



Flower chart is across from the south entrance

CHILDREN'S SABBATH October 8, 2017

Children's choir will be singing.

First Graders will receive their bibles.



Children will be collecting a noisy offering which will be used to offset expenses such as Vacation Bible School materials and summer church camp.

Please save your coins to bring on that day. (Checks and cash are always welcome too.)