

### **From Pastor Dan**

My grandfather, my mother's father, was a pretty straight laced fellow. He had one career; as a chemist at the Anaconda copper smelter in Great Falls, Montana. My recollections had him always in a suit and tie except when he mowed the lawn. Then he took off the tie and the jacket. Seriously, the man pushed a rotary blade mower around his lawn wearing a white shirt, slacks, and dress shoes. Therefore, you wouldn't expect him to be much of a prankster. Yet, he occasionally shared the story involving: him and his buddies from college, Old Faithful Geyser, and a steering wheel from a junked car. As the story went, my grandfather and some of his friends were on a break from studies at the University of Washington in the spring of 1915. They decided to head out to Yellowstone Park. Even back then, Yellowstone was a popular place but the infrastructure was not nearly as restrictive as it is today. In other words, you could walk out very close to Old Faithful, which is exactly what this bunch of college kids did. They walked to a point near the geyser almost opposite the usual viewing area. With them, they carried an old Model T steering wheel and column they had acquired at a junk yard in nearby West Yellowstone. My grandfather, wearing his Boy Scout hat (which looked strikingly similar to a park ranger's hat) walked out as close as he could to the geyser and jammed the steering column into the ground. As Old Faithful began her eruption cycle, my grandfather turned the steering wheel as if he was turning on the water for the spectacular "natural" event. The higher the geyser rose, the more my grandfather turned the wheel. And then, of course, as the geyser's towering column of spray began to ebb, the "park ranger" slowly turned the wheel in the opposite direction. The illusion, which was very effective according to his buddies planted among the crowd, didn't last long. Because as Old Faithful slowly splashed its way down to predictable quiet, the real park rangers got wind of what was going on and chased my grandfather, steering wheel and all, off the premises.

I tell you this not just because it is a good story (and it is), but as a reminder that sometimes we struggle to determine what is really real. Especially in an era of "fake news," reality and truth seem to be ever elusive concepts. So how does a person know what is real and true? You can probably see where this is going. You think this extremely long lead-in about truth and reality now gives me an opportunity to talk about Jesus; to

proclaim that he is the way, and the truth, and the life. Well yeah, I think he is. But let's step back a bit from the edge of pre-conceived conclusions; conclusions which often end up being shallow as well as pre-conceived. Let's stare reality, truth, and life square in the eye and unabashedly declare that relationships are what matter most in our lives. More than fame, fortune, and fun, relationships matter most. Now of course I am referring to honest relationships, not some contrived attempt to keep loneliness at bay; but honest, sincere relationships. They are what life is all about.

Okay, now that we have that established, we can talk about Jesus. Because in my obviously biased opinion (which is supported by unbiased life experience), I believe at the core of any successful relationship is a relationship with God. To me it only makes sense. You did not create yourself; regardless of how innovative, hardworking, and self-confident you may be, you did not create yourself. And however you want to define God, I think one must acquiesce to the inevitability of a creative force in the universe that works apart from you, but at the same time because you are a product of this creative force, also works within the essence of who you are. This creative, loving force works within and without providing you with the promise and opportunity to live your life as it is most fully expressed in relationships with each other based on a relationship with God.

Okay, but what does that relationship with God look like? "Because, after all," you say, "I cannot see or touch God." Well, I think being with God is like being with anyone else. You talk with God and spend time with God; prayer, silent reflection, simple quiet time, worship, singing hymns, sharing in the Lord's supper, studying and talking with others. If that relationship with the creative force in the universe is nurtured, then I am convinced that your relationships with each other will be nurtured as well; it can't be otherwise.

Old Faithful is still faithful after all these years; a bulwark of dependability and reality in a world filled with confusion and outright deception. But reality and truth can still be found and they can exist beyond the confines of Yellowstone Park. Truth and reality can be found in honest relationships which can be most fully lived as they are nurtured and supported by an intentional relationship with God. God's peace be with you,

**Council Members.** Here is a list of Council Members. Please contact them with any concerns or issues you may have. Council meets once a month and welcomes input from the congregation.

President: Randy Knapp – 715-581-5558; rknapp@eojohnson.com  
Vice President: Sue Cooley – 715-675-8566; cooley1512@outlook.com  
Treasurer: Curt Cooley – 715675-8566; usfcool@gmail.com  
Secretary: Tammi Smith – 715-581-3892;tammism79@gmail.com;  
tammism@aspirus.org  
Trustees: Lee Sillars – 715-218-5041; lsillars@aol.com  
Don Voelker – 715-675-7062; midmainefarms@hotmail.com  
Evangelism: Duane Askew – 75-675-4111; daskew@airrun.net  
Fellowship: John Marquardt – 715-675-3300; johnnym54401@gmail.com  
Education: Connie Nowak – 715-675-1577; bcdenowak@gmail.com  
Worship: Jan Mueller – 715-675-9558; dmjm5455.wau@gmail.com

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**Mission Statement:** “We are called to serve God; serve each other; serve the community; serve the wider church.”

**Serve God** through worship, prayer, and the dedication of our lives to His kingdom.  
**Serve Each Other** by mutual care and support to encourage everyone to fulfill their God-given potential. **Serve the Community** by making known the good news about Jesus and the love of God by word and deed. **Serve the Wider Church** through prayer and practical support to help spread the good news about Jesus throughout the world.

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*Worship Schedule*

**9:00 a.m. Sunday Mornings**

**6:30 p.m. Wed. Evenings from May 31 through August 30**

*Please join us as we worship our Lord!*

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**Homebound Parishioners.** The following parishioners are no longer able to consistently attend worship services. I visit them to remind them that they are loved by God and loved by their community of faith, St. John. Sometimes it is helpful to hear those reminders from someone in addition to me.

Ann Kieckhafer  
1347 Crystal Avenue  
Room 236-1  
Naperville, IL 60563

Ellen Kruit  
1821 N. 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Room 215  
Wausau, WI 54401

**“Jesus, Stand Among Us”**

Jesus, stand among us,  
in your risen power;  
Let this time of worship  
be a hallowed hour.  
Breathe the Holy Spirit  
into every heart;  
Bid the fears and sorrows  
from each soul depart.  
Thus with quickened footsteps  
we pursue our way,  
Watching for the dawning  
of eternal day.

-----William Pennefather

**May Birthdays**

5-1 Brenna Ohrmundt  
5-8 Brandon Schindler  
5-9 Gavin Bahr  
5-9 Michael Haroldson  
5-9 Cody Knapp  
5-9 Don Prochnow  
5-13 Tim Ohrmundt  
5-13 Renner Stubbe  
5-14 Kelly Hirn  
5-14 Steve Zahn  
5-16 Jarred Bahr  
5-16 Ben Bolz  
5-17 Larry Berens  
5-20 Ariel Graveen  
5-20 John Ohrmundt  
5-21 Bria Landwehr  
5-23 Todd Mueller  
5-26 Ray Gallenberg  
5-26 Mitch Landrath  
5-28 Leona Wilde  
5-29 Levi Hirn  
5-30 Shane Beilke  
5-30 Tanner Walter  
5-31 Bev Landrath

**May Anniversaries**

5-3 Kurt & Jayne Rowe  
5-9 Al & Lynn Tesch  
5-12 Perry & Shelley Kufahl  
5-15 Randy & Debbie Knapp  
5-16 Pete & Sarah Severson  
5-22 Ryan & Kim Landwehr

**Reminder!** If you are in the hospital and would like Pastor Dan to visit, **PLEASE CALL** and let him know. Because of privacy issues, the hospital will not notify him or the church that you are there.

**Food Pantry.** The food items collected for the food pantry in May will be donated to The Neighbor's Place. Your donations are appreciated. If you are able to help out with delivering these items to the local organizations, please contact the church office.

**Council Meeting Minutes.** Copies of the minutes from the most recently held Council meeting are by the mailboxes. Please feel free to pick up a copy. If more are needed, please contact the church office.

**Announcements.** If you would like to have an announcement included in our weekly bulletin or newsletter, please submit the information in writing and put it in either Pastor Dan's mailbox or the administrative assistant's mailbox located in the narthex. If it is more convenient for you, you can submit your announcements via e-mail to [stjohnwausau@msn.com](mailto:stjohnwausau@msn.com). The deadline for submitting announcements for the Sunday bulletin is the Thursday before by 9:00 a.m. The deadline for the newsletter is indicated on the monthly calendar.