

June 11, 2024

Last Sunday morning, I was sitting on the couch in the family room of my daughter's house in Des Moines. My daughter and her family had just left in a whirlwind of excitement, half-dressed little boys, and shouts of "we're going to be late!" They had been invited to my son-in-law's grandparents for 7:30 am breakfast and a morning of fun. The house was now quiet, my coffee was hot and yummy, and I was tired from two long days of the Iowa Annual Conference. That morning, I was expected to robe and wear a red stole to join the other pastors of the Iowa United Methodist churches to proceed into the worship of Ordering of Ministry and Retirement, the service where several would be ordained, commissioned, and recognized. The bishop would preach, and everyone involved at the conference would take the Lord's Supper together. Did I say I was tired? I sat there on the comfortable couch with my coffee and thoughts of staying put...no one will even know you had not attended the service, you need rest and alone time...

Then I looked up, my daughter's family has a large flat screen tv across from the couch. The tv was off and on the front of the screen was a small handprint. The sun was shining on it making the little handprint glow. Immediately tears came to my eyes because even in the quiet the essence of my family was still there, and I was filled with awe, gratitude, and love. In that moment, I gave thanks for my family, for my church family, for God's presence in my life. I gave thanks for Mike and the care center that takes such good care of him. And then, I began looking up scripture to offer thanks to God.

Here are some that I found...The Psalmist says, *"Oh give thanks to the Lord for he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever!"* (Psalm 107:1) *"And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful."* (Colossians 3:15) *"Rejoice, always pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you."* (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18) *"Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving; let us make a joyful noise to him with songs of praise!"* (Psalm 95:2)

After a time of prayer, I realized that I needed to worship. So I grabbed my robe and stole, left the house and the comfortable couch, joined worship at the Iowa Annual Conference, rejoiced with my brothers and sisters at the conference, and I was thankful!

Think of a time when you were thankful. What brought you to the recognition of gratefulness? How did you express your thanks? Now spend time in prayer giving thanks to God.

With thanks for you,

Pastor Cindy