

Weekly Devotional July 2, 2020

“We know that all things work together for the good of those who love God: those who are called according to his purpose.” Romans 8: 28

Jenna, the boys, and I are finally getting settled. We have nearly got everything unpacked and are feeling very at home in the parsonage. I’ve been able to get my office put together here at Wesley (for the most part) and settling into the new routines and unexpected challenges that have been arising over the last few days, which are typical in any pastoral transition.

One of the things I like to do is write a weekly devotional for the churches I serve. You will be receiving a weekly devotional each week (a few exceptions of course) on either Wednesday or Thursday. I plan to archive them on our website as well as post them each week on the Wesley UMC Facebook page.

I hope you enjoy reading these devotionals. While they will not always tie into the sermon topic or current events, I believe they allow you to get to know me better, my theology, world view, and overall general thoughts on ministry and this pastorate.

I always start with a scripture I have been praying over and that God has placed on my heart. In the case of this week’s scripture, I have been meditating on this scripture during the stresses and challenges of the last few weeks.

Moving churches is hard. Moving churches during a Global Pandemic is a nearly herculean feat.

Moving our bodies to Pueblo from La Junta was easy but moving our stuff was really challenging. Sorting and donating. Packing and unpacking. I lost about 5 pounds in the last month from being so busy packing and unpacking; I averaged about 25,000 steps a day and barely ate anything! The good news is that Jenna and I are slowing down and letting our bodies rest and heal up a bit.

I am excited to be here in Pueblo and pastoring at Wesley UMC.

I realize that change is hard. Pastor Emilie had been the pastor here for a significant amount of time. It should come as no surprise to any of you that she and I are different people with different preaching styles and pastoring styles. I invite you to keep an open mind as we learn how to do this together. I pray that you give me grace as I extend you grace.

I remember when I hit my growth spurts as a kid. I finally started to get taller, but man was it uncomfortable. I had aches and pains as my muscles and bones stretched and grew. Growing a church is no different. Change is hard, even small incremental changes.

La Junta UMC, in a town of only 5000 people (apart from OJC) became the largest church east of Pueblo within three years of my being appointed there. I believe that the best days of Wesley UMC are still ahead, and we will do amazing ministry together. Believe me when I say that I am genuinely excited to see where we can grow! I can’t say that it won’t be without some discomfort and challenges but I promise that I will never ask you to do anything I am not willing to do myself (I will always walk alongside you!).

The author of Roman’s reminds us that “that all things work together for the good of those who love God”. Everything is going to be just as God has ordained and will work out just the way God intends! That is so refreshing to understand and believe!

I am excited to meet you all and hear all about what you love about Wesley and what makes you the proudest!

Blessings,

Rev. Lou Ward