



January 19, 2018

Greetings friends,

What a great week Mark and I've had. We picked up Miss Cora and brought her home on Sunday afternoon and enjoyed her entertaining company until Wednesday afternoon.

At 23 months, Cora is interested in nearly everything and nearly everything must be thoroughly investigated. She is absolutely ecstatic when new wonders are discovered and often can be heard to exclaim, "Wow!" Her constant movement and busyness can wear a grandparent out, but oh, her delight in all that she sees keeps us going.

On Thursday, when it was just us again, Mark and I reflected on Cora's visit as we surveyed the chaos of our kitchen and the family room. We decided that as wearing as it is for us, we wouldn't trade her enthusiasm for everything - for anything. In fact, we'd be better off if we tried seeing the world through her eyes.

We are literally surrounded in wonders and wealth that would have astounded our grandparents and a high percentage of the rest of the world. Each of us has so much that we don't even see our astounding good fortune. My grandpa passed away in 1975. I wonder what he would make of personal computers, smart phones, GPS, etc. If he came back today, I think he might be overwhelmed not only by our big screen TVs, our keyless cars and the number of them each family owns, but also by the overall wealth of Americans in 2018. As a society, we are rich in things beyond what his imagination would have ever conceived. And all too often, we don't even see it.

The flip side of all that fortune of possessions is the loss of our sense of wonder in the simpler things. The amazing beauty of a pretty flower and how the petals flutter when you blow on it...the way sand or soil feel sifting through our fingers...how high a splash of water can go if you slap it really hard...how much more yummy a banana is if you get to peel it for yourself...and how a kiss and a gentle hug can soothe a pinched finger.

It may be trite to say what has been said so many times before, but perhaps in taking time to appreciate simplicity, we will be rejuvenated and given new energy. Perhaps in slowing down and looking for moments that make us exclaim, "Wow", we'll be grateful for the glorious wonder that is life. Perhaps if we look with the eyes of a child, we'll see our abundant blessings.

This Week at Grace –Pastor Fred's message, *Come and See*, is inspired by John 1:43-51. The Chancel Choir will sing, *In My Heart There Rings a Melody*. Kurt Carlson is our liturgist this week with Lorijo Lounsberry and the Hart family serving as greeters. The Harts (Eric, Shelly, Jarrod and Lucas) will also be taking a turn as ushers. Suzi Hess, Kevin & Candi Holm and Kevin & Linda Larson will serve as Wheel Chair Captains at Bethany Life this Sunday. Worship begins at 9:15 with 3rd Sunday Brunch time immediately following. Sunday school will meet at 10:30. Please join us!

This Sunday is Brunch Sunday and Sharla, along with members of Team G will be serving Baked French Toast. We hope you'll plan to attend and be generous in your giving to this free-will offering meal. The proceeds of this meal will go toward helping provide scholarships for our church camp attending kids this summer. **Team G helpers** - Serve: C. Semler; G/D Michel; 1 gal 1% milk: R. Flaspohler; J. Larson; 2 gal. orange juice: V. Whitmore

You're invited to join us on **Sunday, February 11th at 11:45 a.m. for a Valentine Pot-Luck Meal and Games.** We'll hold it at the church in Fellowship Hall. Sign-up sheets will be put on a clipboard and located on the north table just outside the sanctuary in the narthex hallway. The hosts will provide the group games and some "fabulous" prizes. We hope you'll choose to come have a warm, fun time on a cold winter afternoon.

January 21st Wheelchair Captains are: Suzy Hess, Kevin & Candi Holm, Kevin & Linda Larson

Important Conference Dates to keep in mind:

March 17, 2018 - North Central District Conference - Webster City, Faith UMC - 9:30 AM-11:30 AM

May 6, 2018 - Pre Annual Conference Session - Webster City, Asbury UMC - 2:30 PM-5:00 PM

2017 Statistical Reporting - Due February 28, 2018

2017 Fund Balance Report - Due March 1, 2018

2018 Annual Conference - Annual Conference 2018 will be held June 9-11 with Clergy and Laity Sessions on Friday evening, June 8th beginning at 7:00 PM.

As you pray this week, please remember these friends and hold each up in special prayer:
Karen Keech; Tim (Becky Barclay's brother); Natalie Tryon; Denny Michel; Julie Jacobson; Sara Dappen; Norman Patti; Sharon Matson; Pam Hillis; Lois Johnson; Cooper Leeman, Taylors in Africa

News You Can Use

Sunday, January 21

8:15 AM Missions

9:15 AM Worship – choir

10:15 AM Brunch – Baked French Toast, Camp Scholarships

10:30 AM Sunday school and Confirmation

Monday, January 22

5:30 PM Finance

7:00 PM Worship

Wednesday, January 24

7:00 PM Choir

8:00 PM Bells

Thursday, January 25

6:15 PM Re-scheduled conversation with DS Gillespie

Sunday, January 28

9:15 AM Worship – children's bells

10:15 AM Coffee Fellowship

10:30 AM Sunday school

**Faithfully,
Cathy**