



July 26, 2018

Greetings friends,

I had a *mortality moment* the other day when I realized three of my dear friends turned 60 this month (and I'm just a couple months away myself). We're no longer 'middle-aged'. We haven't, in fact, been middle-aged for a while now. Not if one goes by the current average life-expectancy figures for American women, which stands at 80.51 years. Drat!

Last year, when I turned 59, I joked that this year is the last of my "youth". Um...I might have been slightly optimistic in that assessment. Kurt Carlson informed us at Council the other night that he couldn't pass as a youth any more. What the what?! How did this happen to us? So shocking.

Sadly, I do remember as a true, unenlightened pre-teen youth, that 30 was 'old' and 40 was 'over the hill' and at 50 one was teetering on the precipice of 'one foot in the hereafter' old. Apparently I couldn't even imagine 60! Uff-da.

As I've matured and, perhaps, gotten a tad wiser, I've often been told that life doesn't really begin until one is 40. That contrary to popular cultural opinion, the best years of one's life are not, in fact, your high school days. And thank goodness for that, because I didn't know diddly as a teen-ager. As relatively carefree and fun as those years may have been, they were not, in fact, 'the best years', by far.

Several years ago, back when I was coaching high school cheerleaders, I foolishly mentioned that I thankfully didn't have many wrinkles yet. I don't know why we were discussing this and why on earth I made such a statement to silly teen-aged girls (see my comment in the last paragraph). But say it I did and was immediately dismayed when one of them blurted out, "Sure you don't," laughing hysterically. Perhaps I should have gotten a clue then, in my mid-40's. Next to youth, I wasn't really youthful.

Three years ago, if asked, I may have asserted that the years Mark and I spent raising Max, (our 30's and 40's) were the best years. Especially the fifteen years, 364 days before he turned 16. Those were fun, fulfilling, (it turns out, middle-aged) happy years.

And then came Cora. I have to say, she helps make these current years amazing! Cora doesn't have a clue yet, that Mark and I are well on our way to what some have called the 'Golden Years'. She just thinks G'ma and G'pa are fun playmates. God bless toddler grandchildren and their innocent acceptance.

So, since it has been established that I'm no longer a youth and I'm 'way past middle-aged, I think the kindest label for my current 50's-60's era is the 'Ya-Ya Years' (short for You're As Young As You Feel). The only fly in the ointment is that some days I feel like a spring chicken and other days, road kill.

Ahhh, life. Gotta love it.

Have a blessed week!

This Week at Grace – Pastor Jonathan's message this week, "Won't You Be My Neighbor?: Members of the Household of God" is inspired by Ephesians 3:14-21. *Jarod Hart will share his talents on the organ and Becky Barclay makes her debut as liturgist! Greeters this week are Chuck & Ruby Matheason. Those serving as ushers include Rick & Grace Welke, Doug Doolittle and Terry Gustason.* Worship begins at 9:15, with *Java with Jesus* (a time of fellowship – BYOB) beginning at 8:45 in the narthex. Please join us!

TO THOSE WHO SERVE AS USHERS – Pastor Jonathan would like you to carry the offering plates all the way up to the altar and to place them there. He will meet you at the altar to lead us in prayer before you head back to the narthex. Just a reminder that the ushers are responsible for putting attendance numbers up on the board located above the south end steps and for collecting all the attendance sheets for day and delivering them to the office. Also, remember in the summer months, ushers need to light the altar candles before the service and to extinguish them following. Thank you!

Roland-Story School Supplies class lists are in the narthex – please pick up one or two to fill and have back at the church by THIS Sunday, July 29th. Thank you for helping our local kids get off to a good and happy start to their school year!

FACE TIME WITH OUR NEW PASTOR! No, we're not talking about the Facebook app. Pastor Jonathan invites folks to come meet him and have a get-to-know-you chat in his office or he is willing to go out and meet folks in their homes.

Email: Jonathan.cooney07@gmail.com

Phone: (816) 616-0466

As we prepare for the office transformation over the next couple weeks we will be placing give-away items on the tables in Fellowship Hall. Included in this treasure trove are some beautiful hand-crocheted small blankets by Virginia Swenson. She is offering these to anyone who would like one. Please help yourself!

LOST AND FOUND – We have three gift cards that found outside and turned into Pastor Jonathan last Sunday. If you dropped them, please claim in the church office.

If you're wondering how you might help those who are suffering in Marshalltown, please check out the two attachments included in this mailing.

As you pray this week, please remember these friends and hold each up in special prayer:
Karen (Mrs. Kent) Keech; Julie Jacobson; Marlene Doolittle; Denny Michel; Lois Johnson; Jean Reeder; Duane O'Tool; Jackie Royer (Sharla's friend); Norman Patti; Cooper Leeman, Taylor family

News You Can Use

Sunday, July 29

8:45 AM Java with Jesus (Bring Your Own Breakfast Beverage and join us for fellowship in the narthex)

9:15 AM Worship

Monday, July 30

5:30 PM Communications

Saturday, August 4

2:00-4:00 PM Bridal Shower for Annie Larson in Fellowship Hall*

Sunday, August 5

8:45 AM Java with Jesus (Bring Your Own Breakfast Beverage and join us for fellowship in the narthex)

9:15 AM Worship

**Faithfully,
Cathy**

*An invitation to the shower has been posted on the south church news bulletin board in the narthex hallway – all are invited. If you plan to attend, please RSVP to 515-231-6044.