

Brrrrr
January 15, 2009

Schools are closed today. Many events are closed or cancelled today. It is bitter cold.

Just yesterday someone said to me, "You are from North Dakota. You must be used to this."

I simply said, "Well, I have endured this cold before. But I am not sure if you ever really get used to it."

The truth is this bitter cold is tough for most of us. It is hard on mechanical equipment. It is hard on bodies. It is hard on the psyche of a person.

In times of extreme cold, I think of advice my father used to give. Basic things like make sure you are wearing clothes in layers. Make sure you have a warm coat, gloves and a hat. Make sure that you have a survival kit in the car (complete with candy, food, a candle and matches). Make sure that you keep your car in good working order and filled with gas. Drive slow. Take your time. Only leave the house for what is truly important. This basic advice is good to help us through times of extreme cold.

There are moments when in our journey of life, we face extremes as well. They are never easy, particularly when the extreme is filled with the bitter coldness of the reality of challenges that come our way. In Psalm 7, the author starts by saying, "*O Lord my God, in you I take refuge; save me from all my pursuers, and deliver me, or like a lion they will drag me away, with no one to rescue.*"

In a time of bitterness and persecution, the author is turning to God. The author of this psalm is returning to the basics of faith, putting his/her trust in God to protect and deliver in the midst of the challenges of life.

When bitterness comes your way, what do you do? Where do you turn?

My hope is that you will return to the basics, by following the example of the psalmist. In turning to God, in relying on others from the community of faith, we can make it through the challenges and bitterness that we sometimes experience in life.

When it comes to this bitter cold, I am so grateful that by this weekend, it should be breaking. I will look forward to seeing you in the warmth of God's love, as we worship together at Sun Prairie United Methodist Church this weekend.

In the hope Jesus offers us,
Rev. Scott Carlson

The Mission of Sun Prairie United Methodist Church is to invite and welcome people to be committed and compassionate followers of Jesus Christ through worship, through spiritual growth, through fellowship and through service to others.