

Turning Points
May 15, 2008

As we journey through life, we come upon many significant turning points. This weekend we will be celebrating Confirmation with 19 of our youth. That is a significant turning point. This is a time when our youth are confirming their faith in Christ. They are saying that they want to be faithful followers of Jesus Christ and they want to rely on us in the church to help them grow in faith, as they help us grow in faith. It is a celebration and a turning point.

This weekend much of the UW system is also going to be holding graduation ceremonies. Debbie and I are so excited that one of our daughters, Amanda Rudkin is going to be graduating from UW-Stevens Point on Sunday. Amanda has worked hard. She has done well. On Sunday afternoon, we will watch with joy and pride as she accepts the diploma she has earned. For Amanda and for many other graduates, graduation marks a turning point. It is the end of one way of life and an opening to a new way.

When I look back on the significant turning points in my life; confirmation, graduations, Ordinations, Marriage, the birth of children, the death of a child, I see the hand of God walking with me and guiding me through all of those changes. It is with gratitude that I thank God for walking with me and holding me in good times and in the challenges. Knowing that God is with me, leading me, holding on to me, gives me the courage to face whatever may be before me.

What about you? What are the significant turning points in your life? How have you experienced the presence of God as you walked through them? Are you open to the presence of God as you move through them?

One of the passages the confirmation youth have chosen to read is Isaiah 40:27-31. Here are some excerpts from it: *People of Jacob, why do you complain? People of Israel, why do you say, "The Lord does not see what happens to me; the Lord does not care if I am treated fairly?" Surely you know. Surely you have heard. The Lord is the God who lives forever, who created all the world. The Lord does not become tired or need to rest. . . The Lord gives strength to those who are tired and more power to those who are weak. . . But the people who trust in the Lord will become strong again. They will rise up as an eagle in the sky; they will run and not need rest; they will walk and not become tired.*

I find this passage gives me hope, no matter what I may be facing. It reminds me to trust in God. In God's love and grace. Will you join me, and our youth this weekend, in placing our hope and trust in God, once again? May God guide us all through the turning points and challenges of life.

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.