

## Three to Four Hours

June 5, 2008

I started a couple of weekends ago, with the help of a friend who actually knew what he was doing. When we started he asked, "How long do the directions say this is supposed to take?"

I replied, "Three to four hours."

Now I laugh. I am about 20 hours into building a wooden shed in our backyard. I am not done yet. I am getting close, but I am not done. I have the roof to shingle (I have actually started). I have some more trim to put on. Then it needs to be painted. In a couple of weeks, we will be getting electricity to it even.

Debbie and I have been talking about putting up a shed in our back yard since we moved in. We have been both looking forward to this with much anticipation. It will get there, eventually.

I laugh now about those directions. It should take three to four hours to build. Now, I know I am not the handiest person in the world with a hammer, but I can imagine that if you have a team of four to five people, who actually know what they are doing, with all of the right tools, then it might take 3-4 hours. But for a novice like me, they should say that it will take 3-4 weeks to build. But then, I guess that type of honesty might not be as good for sales.

Oh, well. It is getting done. And it is even looking good, too. Even though it is taking much longer to build than I expected.

Sometimes things that are important take longer than expected. The scriptures are filled with stories of people who dealt with important tasks that took longer than expected. I think of Nehemiah, who had been in exile and asked to go back to help rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. He was granted his wish by the King. But his journey to help re-establish Jerusalem and rebuild its walls was met with many obstacles.

However, he kept his eye on God and the purpose for which he believed he was sent. Because of that focus, he made it through some difficult and challenging times.

While my building a shed is certainly not an object of faith, it is a reminder to me to stay with it, to persevere, to remain focused. It is a symbol that sometimes, those things that are important take time.

So I will continue to keep my eyes focused on God and on the purpose to which God calls me. When challenging times come to you, when the tasks seem overwhelming to you, what reminds you to keep focused on God and on the purpose to which God calls you?

May God help us to live lives that are faithful.

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.*