

Mountains and Valleys

I ran across the quote by Nelson Mandela you see below and was deeply moved—so much so that I used it in my pastoral letter in the front of our new virtual church directory. I think it is very worthy of further consideration, so I'm sharing in our newsletter as well.

Here is what Mandela wrote:



"I have walked that long road to freedom. I have tried not to falter; I have made missteps along the way. But I have discovered the secret that after climbing a great hill, one only finds that there are many more hills to climb. I have taken a moment here to rest, to steal a view of the glorious vista that surrounds me, to look back on the distance I have come. But I can only rest for a moment, for with freedom come responsibilities, and I dare not linger, for my long walk is not ended."

--Nelson Mandela

If you recall anything about Nelson Mandela's life, you will understand his metaphor of a long road to freedom with many hills. He was a prisoner for over 20 years for his antiapartheid efforts in South Africa, but he ultimately became president of that nation. (*See the note * below if you want more detail about apartheid in South Africa.*) As a man who went from prisoner to president, his life journey was indeed full of a few hill tops and long, dark valleys. We would understand if he were bitter and angry, and then used his presidential power to exclude whites from his government. But he didn't. He chose a much different path—a moral and ethical path—than what he and other non-white South Africans had endured for centuries. He formed a coalition government that included whites and blacks. He rejected extremism and worked toward compromise that would serve the needs of all of South Africa, and certainly not his own needs.

In that respect, his life can serve as a moral example as we fight through our own difficult valleys that are made worse by the coronavirus pandemic and partisan gridlock. We want to think of life as a single hill we have to climb, and when we reach the top, all will be well. Mandela reminds us that reaching the summit does give us perspective on the journey up (only if we consciously and morally look at how we got there), and it offers a great view in the moment, but it also humbles us as we see the other hills we have to climb in the distance.

In 2001 during my first tour of duty as a chaplain of a Marine Corps infantry battalion, I had to hike up a mountain in the Sierra Nevada Mountains of California with 70 pounds of gear (could have been more weight had I been issued an M-16-A2, but as a non-combatant, I didn't have to). The climb up was difficult, without a doubt, and the long rest at the top was nice. I remember thinking at that point that the hike back down the mountain to our base camp would be easier. I was wrong. The hike down was more difficult because the weight of all that gear was pushing me down the mountain and wreaking havoc on my 41 year old knees. Gravity, while not my friend going up, was certainly my enemy going down.

After we struggle up whatever metaphorical hill we are on and get to the top, life will bring us back to reality. As much as we wish we could, we can't stay on the hilltop, and it will take all the spiritual strength we have to descend back down into the valley. Like my experience in the Sierra Nevada Mountains, you and I don't have to descend alone. The Marines inspired me to continue despite the pain, and the Navy corpsmen were there to take care of me at the bottom. At Lake Lotawana Community UMC, we have each other—the Body of Christ locally represented—to encourage and help us as we descend into life and then begin the struggle up the next hill. Ultimately, though, God is with us if we are open, and stop long enough to listen, to God's small voice—our conscious or gut feeling—within us for the remainder of this year.

“Though I walk through the darkest valley, I fear no evil; for you are with me; your rod and your staff—they comfort me” (Psalm 23:4, NRSV).

* *Apartheid* (“apartness” in Afrikaans) was based on *baasskap* (white supremacy) which ensured that South Africa was dominated politically, socially, and economically by the nation's minority white population. The implementation of apartheid, often called “separate development” since the 1960s, was made possible through the Population Registration Act of 1950, which classified all South Africans as either Bantu (all Black Africans), Coloured (those of mixed race), or white. A fourth category—Asian (Indian and Pakistani)—was later added. The government of South African president F.W. de Klerk in 1990–91 repealed most of the social legislation that provided the legal basis for apartheid, including the Population Registration Act. Systematic racial segregation, however, remained deeply entrenched in South African society and continued on a de facto basis. A new constitution that enfranchised Blacks and other racial groups was adopted in 1993 and took effect in 1994. All-race national elections, also in 1994, produced a coalition government in South Africa with a Black majority led by Mandela, the country's first Bantu president.





*Happy Birthday to all of our
September birthday babies.*

*David Reed, Kirk Morehead,
Sophie Reed, Mike Morlan, Mark
Ford & Thomas Brown*

*Hope you all have a blessed day
and don't eat too much cake!*



This Saturday!

**September 12th
9:00 AM - Noon**

2020 ELECTRONICS / METALS RECYCLING

**LAKE LOTAWANA COMMUNITY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
28901 NE COLBERN ROAD LAKE LOTAWANA, MO 64086**

**Computers - TVs
Large & Small Appliances
Car/Boat Batteries & MORE**

PLEASE NOTE: Social distancing guidelines will be in effect and the wearing of masks will be required.

We accept almost anything with a cord or battery. As small as a cell phone to as large as a refrigerator- and everything in between!
It does not matter what condition it is in or if it works or not.

- TVs & CRT monitors - Fees to be collected \$5 to \$50 each
- All computer equipment, accessories, and cables
- Medical, dental, and laboratory equipment - no biohazards!
- All telephones, cell phones, PDA's, digital cameras, and related items
- Batteries (except alkaline batteries)
- All appliances - small and large Items with freon - \$10.00 fee each
- AV equipment, speakers, etc.
- Lawn and garden equipment (gas and oil must be drained prior to drop off)

CASH or CHECK to be collected by MIDWEST RECYCLING CENTER:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> CRT Monitors - \$5 each | <input type="checkbox"/> CRT TVs 26" or less - \$30 each |
| <input type="checkbox"/> CRT TVs 27" or greater - \$50 each | <input type="checkbox"/> LED/LCD/Plasma TVs - \$20 each |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Wood Console and True Big Screen/Projection TVs - \$50 each | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Any Freon containing unit - \$10 each | |

**DRIVE-THRU
DROP-OFF**

**See complete list
and fee schedule
at lcumc.org**





My family and I deeply appreciate the kind words, cards and prayers during my mother's long illness and her recent passing.

We are grateful for friends during this time.

Connie Brown

Winnie would like to let everyone know she appreciates all the notes, cards and prayers during her stay in the hospital and her continued recovery. She is back home and feeling better, but still weak and fighting to get stronger.



On Going: Les Case, Wade Davis, Roger Grable, Richard Fuerst, Winnie Fuerst, Harvey Geary, Michael Hatfield, Linda Koleiny, Shane Miley, Nancy Rowe

Strength and Healing: Ken McDaniel, Mike McMillin

Missions: Kenyan G-Marc Project (Chics for Chicks), Hillcrest Transitional Housing, Harvester's Food Bank, Lazarus Ministries, Tarsney Lake Families, Congregation de Mellier, Heart and Soul Children's Learning Center

Please contact the office to update or add prayer requests

September

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
6 Services Online 10:00	7	8	9	10	11	12 Recycling Event 9:00-12:00
13 Services Online 10:00	14	15	16	17	18	19
20 Services Online 10:00	21	22	23	24 PPRC Meeting 7:00	25	26
27 Services Online 10:00	28	29	30			