

From the Pastor's Desk

From the Pastor: **I'm not a volunteer, I'm serving the Lord...**



Several years ago, in the midst of a text study, a colleague made the statement: “I have to remind myself when it comes to the church, I’m not volunteering. I’m serving the Lord.” Yes! So, when we ask for help, we are not asking for volunteers... we are asking for individuals to serve, and to live out their baptisms. What an interesting insight. It’s one I’ve adopted...so much so that you will rarely, if ever, hear us ask for volunteers. We ask for help (and we so often need help), we ask for workers, or servers, or any number of other descriptors, but not volunteers. When we were baptized, we were called to service, we have work to do every single day. It is our duty and our delight.

Volunteering carries with it a recreational type of understanding. We volunteer to help someone else out. We volunteer to use up our spare time. Being a volunteer is something we choose to do, and we only do part time. If we don’t have any time, or if it isn’t fun, or if there are too many expectations, then we quit, because we are “just” volunteers. Interestingly, nowhere in scripture are Christians called volunteers. We continually choose to serve, to follow; the Christian life is so often not easy, painless, or part time. In fact, when Jesus talks about service, he sometimes associates it with dying... dying to self, dying to our own wishes, wills and wants.

To be a disciple means to be a follower of Jesus.... In other words, we give up our right to be the leader as we seek to follow Jesus in everything we do. **To be a servant of Jesus** means that we become the hands, feet and mouth of the Christian faith. By giving our lives to Christ we express it in serving, and by loving our fellow humans. There is no way that being a servant or disciple will be easy, always painless or part time.

What we are promised, though, is that when we give our heart and life to the service of God, God will direct our days and our deeds. God will bless. God will unlock the gifts we have been given and provide opportunities to use those gifts. And it is in the using of these gifts that we will find more joy and fulfillment than we have ever experienced before. In our walk with the Lord, we find a new sense of confidence and hope, not because we think that living the Christian life is easy, fun or convenient, but because the Spirit lives in us no matter what!! The Spirit calls us forth...

There is a real distinction: We really aren’t volunteers ... we are servants, in ministry with Jesus, for the sake of the world he so loves. Thanks be to God! In service together ...

Pastor Karen