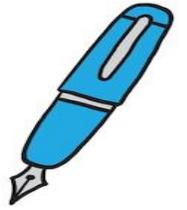




Parkway Courier



Volume 53, No. 7

July 2018

Why a 'Books Speaking Faith' sermon series? by Pastor Kathy Itzin

I've noticed over the years that many churches have sermon series, especially during the summer.

I thought it would be interesting to share the core message of books that have said something important to us. The more I considered the idea, the more I thought it would be interesting to hear what books and messages have significantly impacted the lives of others as well. We all have a message to share!

We have a wide variety of people who volunteered to speak, and the books that they chose to speak about! We actually had too many speakers for July, so I am extending the series for the first couple weeks of August. We have a great variety: from Life of Pi and The Power of Now (by Char and Jodie), we also will enjoy Kevin's thoughts on The Little Prince, Ann speaking about The Giving Tree, and Emily sharing Twinkle Loon. We will still have scripture readings that share the theme of the books. I will also be here leading the services, and I am looking forward to hearing the experiences of our members, and how their lives have been impacted with these messages!

What's Special About This Issue of the Courier! by Charlene Merz

Usually we have a combined issue of the Courier for June and July since we are officially on summer break and there isn't a lot to report. This summer I thought it might be fun to hear stories and poems from our congregation and friends. I know that a few of our members are published authors and many more have written poems and fictional stories that haven't been published, but are in some sort of book form. There is a lot of 'hidden' and 'underlying' writing talent at Parkway and some are shy or don't like to brag about their talents, so I've given them an opportunity to get their work 'published'. If you weren't able to get something you've written in this issue, please feel free to send it to the Courier email (Parkwayucc@gmail.com) and I will put it in any upcoming Courier issues. Many thanks to everyone who submitted stories and poems! Enjoy!

P.S. There are few regular items in this issue--just to keep people updated on what's happening.

"Start writing no matter what. The water does not flow until the faucet is turned on."

-Louis L'Amour

July Scriptures

July 1 Kathy Poem: "Giving Communion"

Mark 14: 22-25 (Jesus shares bread and wine and his life and body)

John 13: 1-15 (Jesus puts on an apron and washes his friend's feet)

July 8 Char Merz Life of Pi

Genesis 7: 17 - 8: 4 (The flood continued on the earth for 40 days, killing everything, except Noah and the animals in the ark)

Mark 4: 35-41 (Jesus is sleeping in the back of the boat when an awful storm comes up, terrifying the disciples)

July 15 Jodie Walters The Power of Now

1 Kings 19: 11-12 (The Lord was not in the wind, or the earthquake, or the fire, but in the quiet, still silence)

Matthew 6: 34 (Do not worry about tomorrow, be present to today)

July 22 Kevin Korell The Little Prince

Matthew 18: 1-5 (Who is greatest in the Kingdom of God? Jesus called a child over to him, and said, "Whoever becomes humble like a little child ...whoever welcomes a child in my name, welcomes me.")

John 4: 1-42 (Samaritan woman at the well, and Jesus offering her "living water" and worshipping God "in Spirit and Truth")

July 29 Picninc With Robbinsdale UCC

Everyone brings a side dish to share.

*It's such a happiness when
good people get together.*

Jane Austen

Out to Lunch Bunch

The Out to Lunch Bunch will meet at Kay and Jim Leerssen's house, 7517 Edgewood Ave. N. , Brooklyn Park, 55428, on July 12 at **NOON**. Kay and Jim will provide the lunch. Please bring a dessert to share. Please RSVP to them at 763-561-2018 by July 9.

July Coffee Hour: Church Planning Team

July Drivers

Flowers

1 Char Merz	1 Open
8 Dave Hendel	8 Open
15 Char Merz	15 Open
22 Dave hendel	22 In memory of Phil Momont from Victor/ia Morrison
29 Char Merz	29Open

E-mail address: parkwayucc@gmail.com

Rev. Kathy's e-mail: parkwayuccpastor@gmail.com

The Bat Story

By Dianne Star

My family was good friends with another family at our church. In fact, the kids called the other parents Aunt and Uncle. One year, we vacationed together in the “large” cabin at a resort in Tomahawk, Wisconsin.

On our second night, there was a commotion out in the enclosed porch where Uncle Ron and Aunt Mim were sleeping. It woke up my parents and us older kids. There was a bat in the porch. It was flying and diving all over the place. Uncle Ron and Aunt Mim got into the living room of the cabin. We all stood there for some time just watching the bat flying around.

Finally, Uncle Ron and his sons, Steve and Dave, decided they would get rid of the bat. Armed with two tennis rackets and one fishing net, they entered the porch. What transpired was a great comedy sketch. Swing at the bat; it flies by the racket. Stick up the fishing net; the bat flies around it. The boys were even diving to the floor trying to hit that bat. Sometimes they would stand very still and let the bat fly around, and then start swinging the rackets and fishing net again.

Unsuccessful, they came back into the living room to regroup. The new plan was that Dave would go out the front door and walk around to the porch door. Uncle Ron and Steve would go back in the porch and chase the bat towards the porch door which Dave would open, and the bat would fly out the door.

Good plan? The two started at the far end from the door and started coaxing the bat toward the door. The bat appeared to head for the door. Dave opened the door. The bat appeared to be going out the door, which was when Dave swung his tennis racket. All our lights go out! Looking around, one half of the resort was also dark. Dave had hit the electrical lines and not the bat.

The guys went up the hill to the owners’ house and the husband returned with them. He fixed the electrical problem. The lights came back on and there was the bat in the porch hanging from the cabin name sign. The owner asked for the fishing net. He walked in and in two swift movements, the bat dropped into the fishing net.

Life

By Jenny Seymour Huschka

Sometimes life is painful
And eyes fill with tears.
Sadness will come and go
Many times throughout the years.
But then something happens
That brings so much joy.
The tears disappear
And fewer things annoy.
Thank you to those
Who bring love into my life.
I couldn't do it without you,
Eliminating the strife.





Hijab Sunday

By Phil Jennings



So you want to dress like a Near Easterner. Congratulations. First off you're going to run into terminological difficulties. What looks to you like a robe or caftan will be called by many different names, and often the same name is spelled in a variety of ways.

Some garments may not have transitioned to the Internet, so if you want a gallibaya, you may have to settle for a jubba.



You may suppose that all these robes are much alike, from Morocco to India. A trained eye would see at once which part of Palestine a Palestinian comes from, so it's not true that one style covers all. Frankly, some of these assemblages will be beyond you, and you'll end up looking awkward.

My body finds trousers awkward, so I'm on the prowl for summer comfort. Egyptian and Arab clothes are evolved for summer comfort.

Possibly the best general term for robe in the Near East is thobe, aka thawb, aka every other possible spelling. You might wear this with a sarong underneath. Add a sash-belt if you like, and a kufi to save your bald head from sunburn. If you're female, tradition may require a hijab plus a public outer covering. Both compromise comfort for the sake of modesty.



The keffiyeh (variously spelled) is an alternate form of headgear, kept in place by an agal. This is the checkered cloth seen in Jordan and neighboring countries. Before you get a keffiyeh, make sure the color and pattern don't make claims that you don't understand. Some clothing choices come dangerously close to cultural appropriation. Unless you've made a pilgrimage to Mecca, avoid anything labeled as a hajj garment.

An abaya is a cloak, and a bisht or aba is a short sleeved jacket, perhaps with stripes.

Clad in all these, you might saunter out into the streets of Minneapolis and learn how much courage it takes to defy our normal clothing standards. Some of our neighbors exercise this courage every day, women more than men. How can we make life less demanding for them? Some gesture of support? Our own "hijab Sunday?" Perhaps we should touch base and learn.

*Writing a novel is like driving at night.
You can only see as far as your headlights,
but you can make the whole trip that way.
-E L. Doctorow*

Parkway Courier

Charlene Merz, Editor

The deadline for the August Courier is July 18.

Please bring your articles to the church office or email them to Parkwayucc@gmail.com

All articles are appreciated!

God and Baal Play Euchre in the Garden of Eden

By Greg Merz

Baal looked around while God shuffled the cards. They sat at a wooden table beside a clear, still pond at the foot of a waterfall, in the shade of a canopy of deep green, surrounded by flowers -- red, orange, yellow, purple, and blue. There was a faint buzzing in the distance. Occasionally a bird would call. Baal took a deep breath. The smell was amazing.

“Nice place you got here, Jay.”

God grimaced. For reasons that Baal could not claim to understand, even though he had a perfectly good name – Jehovah – God insisted on being called God. Just God. Baal guessed that it was an affectation borne of some deep-seated insecurity. Baal could not resist yanking God’s chain over it. That God was decidedly not a good sport made Baal enjoy the yanking all the more.

“Thanks. Made it myself.”

It was Baal’s turn to grimace. God was such a show-off.

They’d been getting together to play euchre almost every Tuesday afternoon for longer than Baal could remember, but this was the first time that God had invited Baal to his garden.

Baal picked up his cards and fanned them. He rubbed his horn thoughtfully as he considered the cards. Baal had long suspected that God cheated at cards, changing his hand after trump was called. One time he’d caught God playing a second ace of diamonds. Baal was more than a little insulted that God would cheat so flagrantly. It wasn’t the cheating that bothered Baal, it was the lack of respect.

When Baal called God on it, pointing out with a satisfied smirk that a regulation deck of cards had only one ace of diamonds, the tops of God’s ears turned crimson – which, Baal knew, was what happened when God was embarrassed. God muttered something about how two decks must’ve gotten mixed together. Then God said, much more loudly and clearly, that he wouldn’t stand for being called a cheater, snatched up his deck of cards and stomped off, as if he’d been the wronged one. God had a terrible temper. But by the next Tuesday, when it was time to play again, all was forgiven. That was one of the things that Baal liked best about God. God had a terrible temper, but he didn’t hold a grudge.

Baal looked up from his cards. “What were those things over by where I came in? Pink? Hairy on their heads and around their hoo-hahs? Standing up on their hind legs?”

God smiled. “One of them I call Man. The other one, the curvier one, I call Wo Man. Do you like them?”

Baal shrugged.

“Well, I made them.”

“I noticed a resemblance. What do they do?” Baal asked.

“Whatever they want.”

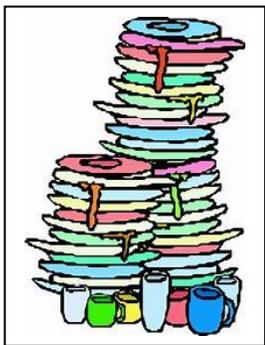
Baal wrinkled his snout, not sure that he’d heard correctly. “Whatever they want?” It was one of the most ridiculous things that Baal had ever heard.

God nodded. “Whatever they want.”

Baal raised an eyebrow. “Are you sure that’s a good idea?”

God shrugged. “We’ll see. I’ve got a bet going with Satan.”





How to Not Do the Dishes

By Kevin Korell

Not doing the dishes is harder than it looks. Most people never learn how to do it gracefully. I'll tell you the story of how I acquired the knack.

I got my first apartment the summer after my Freshman year of college with a couple buddies from the dorms. We answered an ad from a sweet, matronly lady in

her 60s. She seemed vaguely nervous, but handed over the keys with warnings to keep the place clean and don't wreck anything.

We knew it was theoretically possible to clean dishes, but were pretty fuzzy on the details. At first we just piled the dirty dishes where we could: on the stove, on the countertops, in the sink; with big, thick chunks of spaghetti and sauce on every surface. We met our landlady coming out of our apartment after the first week. She was beet red. I think she actually steamed. "I was nearly sick! Sick, I tell you!" Oops. Clean up or get out. So we put the dishes in the oven and wiped things down.

She came back the next day, happy and smiling at our now spotless kitchen, and never set a foot in our apartment again. It was a pretty nifty trick, but not sustainable as a way to not do the dishes. The following weekend, my roommate and his girlfriend had the place to themselves. She began cooking a romantic dinner, only to open the oven to black smoke and burning spaghetti after turning it on to preheat. She was not happy. She didn't stick around. Oops.

Clearly a better system was called for. We then started rinsing the dirty dishes after each meal and putting them in piles on the stove almost to the ceiling. We'd take turns 'stacking the dishes.' You had to somehow wedge in the plates at the bottom of a stack without disturbing the cups of silverware at the top. We took great pride in this.

But when every last dish in the place had been used and dutifully stacked, we had to face the inevitable: Someone had to do the dishes. So we'd bicker and lay low and grumble 'I did it last time' to any who'd listen. The foul smell of despair filled our once happy home, even overpowering the dirty dishes.

As you can see, we were not not doing the dishes very well. Our relationships suffered. Girlfriends stopped calling. Our grades dropped dangerously low. Pizza boxes piled up, and no one went near the kitchen. Something had to be done. Then fate arrived one day in the form of a rented VHS tape of the movie "Stand By Me," based on a Stephen King story.

In the movie, the kids have to decide who has to go buy some food. They all flip coins. The odd man out has to go, say if one has heads and the other two tails. If all flip heads, it's a moon, and you flip again. If everyone flips tails, it's a goocher: bad luck. Serious things are going to happen, and you don't want to be around when they do.

And that was that. Now, maybe once a week, we'd flip for who had to do the dishes, and who did not. Odd man out put in a good couple hours cleaning the kitchen, and the other two sat around and watched, happier than they had a right to be. But if we ever flipped a goocher, no one could touch the dishes for a few days, lest we bring bad luck down upon us.

There's plenty of other ways to not do the dishes, of course. A popular method is: the person who's grossed out by something has to clean it. If dirty bathrooms make you squirm, then that's your job. But then a true slob never has to do anything. Another strategy: you have to clean if your girlfriend is coming over that weekend. Not a bad system, but easy to weasel out of. Once, when all three of our girlfriends were coming over the same weekend, we cleaned all Friday afternoon, whistling and smiling and having a grand old time, but that was all too rare.

No, the goocher has proven true, and has helped me out of many a scrape in my life. Feel free to pass it along.

Aah Summer!

By Katrina Stamboulieh

My windows are open.
The humid laden breeze slowly makes its way to the corners of my house.
Corners and nooks,
Laden with winter dust.
Music drifts in on the breeze from the neighbor's house.
The screen door in the kitchen creaks as it moves back and forth in the breeze,
Propped open so the dog can sun herself,
On the warm wood of the deck.
Warmth from the honey colored wood caresses my feet as I step outside.
The smell of fading lilacs assails my senses.
Aromas of barbeques.
And my stomach notices.
Tomato plants stretch their scrawny stalks towards the sun,
Cucumber plants invade the veggie patch with stealth.
Shouts of joy from the park by the lake, echo around the neighborhood.
And the dog raises her lazy old head.
The temperature is rising, and the cicadas sing their ancient summer song.
Ice that cracks and clinks as it melts down the glass.
Sweat runs between my breasts,
And my glass sweats with me.
Time for a nap.
The rusty chaise creaks.
Lulled to sleep by lawn mower engines,
And smoky fumes.
Ahh summer!



Loving You

By Jenny Seymour Huschka



Wishing, waiting, hoping...we've all used those words before.
But what do we wish? For whom do we wait? Why are we hoping?
Maybe we should be moving, doing, living...loving.

I spent a lot of time doing all of these things.
Wishing for things I couldn't have, waiting for someone I didn't know, hoping to find a purpose.
And then a person came into my life who showed me how to move, how to do, how to live...how to love.

With you, life is more than wishing or waiting or hoping.
It's full of new things and excitement and adventure.
Thank you for finding me.

A Once in a Lifetime Trip

By Ann Jarvimaki

Neither Jim or I traveled much as children. When Jim's nephew got married in Idaho on August 15, 1987, we decided it would be a great time to give our sons a trip of a life time. Along the way we would make our way through four national parks, including my childhood dream and our nations first national park... Yellowstone.

Traveling with our sons, Andy age 8 and Matt age 5, would present it's own problems, but we were willing to give it a try.

Jim had installed a rebuilt engine and transmission in a recently acquired 1964 Ford Galaxy 500. Jim also had a small inheritance from a beloved aunt, which we used to buy a tent trailer. All the planning and reservations were done, the camper was packed and early Saturday morning, August 8, 1987, we were on our way.

Since we were traveling with small children we knew we would have to make more stops. After a stop at the Mitchell Corn Palace, our first night was in Chamberlain, South Dakota. The camp ground had a swimming pool which the boys and I enjoyed. Later we took a sunset drive with the setting sun to our west and the rising full moon to our east.

Along the way we visited the first national park of our trip, The Badlands of South Dakota. The next two nights were spent in Custer State Park. Taking the Iron Mountain Road to the lighting program at Mount Rushmore, was very inspiring. We even got to sleep where the buffalo roam. A must do in Custer is finding the heard of buffalo; what magnificent animals they are. Another must do is a trip on needles highway, and a stop at Crazy Horse and also the museum.

Another night camping along the way. We have now crossed the Big Horns, the Rocky Mountains and Yellowstone is ahead of us.

August 12, YELLOWSTONE...

Our second National park, our nations frist national park, and my childhood dream, sleeping in Yellowstone.

YELLOWSTONE...., Old Faithful, the painted pods, upper and lower falls, the Grand Canyon of Yellowstone, carved from the Yellowstone river. Our camping site was a dream come true, just beautiful, close by Yellowstone Lake.



I still can't tell you why, but this was the park I always wanted to see. From my childhood I remember as I watched a travel log, wishing someday I would be able to see Yellowstone. I finally did, and I was able to share this, with the most important people in my life, my husband and our two young sons.

August 13, on our way to Boise we drove through the third national park of our trip, The Grand Tetons. We arrived at Jim's sisters' place at 8:30 p.m, and stayed in the basement guest room, with Andy and Matt sleeping on the floor of the family room. The next few days were busy but also relaxing. The wedding was wonderful, our new niece was beautiful, and our nephew was handsome as ever. Delon and Shannon will be celebrating 31 years of marriage this August.

(continued on page 9)

On August 18, after an overnight stay in Missoula Montana., we arrived at the fourth, and our last national park of our trip, Glacier, a wooded campsite. While at Glacier we traveled "The Going to The Sun Road." At every curve, and over every hill there was breathtaking beauty.

Leaving the mountains behind us on August 19th, and taking Highway 2 east, it would take us two days to get back to Minnesota, while also spending a few days on Lake Vermilion, at a friend's place.

August 23, we arrived home at 7:15 p.m., our trip of a lifetime was over. It turned out not to be all that bad traveling with two young boys, maybe a few more stops were needed, but it was a trip of a lifetime.

Everything I saw on that trip was memorable, but there is something about my home state of Minnesota. It has it's own beauty. The one thing I remember, was not finding parks to have a picnic and letting the boys run and play. Don't other states have them? The trip was full of memories and I was able to cross Yellowstone off my bucket list.

But there really is... no place like home.

First, find out what your hero wants, then just follow him!

-Ray Bradbury

The Swimming Hole

By Ro Shanklin

Tennessee summers are sometimes bone dry
And always HOT

Where the boys and girls hurry to their
Favorite meeting spot

Girls on the near bank, boys on the far shore
Where the grown-ups aren't welcome anymore

The time for talking is over, it's new truth or dare
Who will it be boys or girls who first threw caution in the air

Well yet again the boys bravado is
All talk and slipping

Because for the third year in a row
The girls are first to dive in to go skinny dipping!



*Description begins in the wirtter's imagination,
but should finish in the reader's.*

-Stephen King

Guatemala

By Kevin Korell

On the 1st of June, 1994 (24 years to the day!) I found myself riding on top of a school bus through the mountainous middle of Guatemala. I had met a couple blokes from the UK earlier that day, and after discovering that my little vial of laundry soap had leaked all over the inside of my pack, we were on our way to Honduras to see the ruins of Copan. It was hot, it was exciting, and it was my first big trip to a foreign country.

The bus let us off on a dusty road near the border, requiring a walk of a couple miles through banana plantations (with crop dusters overhead) to the Rio Montagua. Across the river lay Honduras and, we had to get to a customs office to get our passports stamped. We were poled across the river in pairs to the little town of Cinchado. The police told us the border guards would be back in a little while. So after some debate, we decided to wait out the heat in this sleepy little town. The kids followed us everywhere, so we entertained them with magic tricks, juggling (solo and in pairs), origami, funny stories, and a water balloon fight with paper balloons (a trick the English guys taught me). We felt a bit like gypsies travelling from town to town and putting on a show for our living.



By evening, no border guards. No hotels or restaurants either, so we were invited to dine with a local family and after dinner joined in the nightly soccer game in a field only just cleared of grazing cows (watch where you step). It seems they don't get many visitors, and we were a real spectacle. I had a picture from back home of deep snow, which was a big hit. The police let us sleep in the station on thin mattresses.

By morning still no border guards, so we headed back to Guatemala and made our way to Copan by more conventional means and a real crossing east of Jocotan. After touring the ruins, the guys headed on while I returned to the Guatemala border as the sun set. I waited a while for a bus, only to learn there were no more until morning. Had to take a taxi to the highway. I met a lady from France named Anushka to see if I could split a ride. She was riding with Gil, and introduced me. Sure, hop in, he said, we're heading to Guatemala City.

Gil was maybe 30, originally from Brazil, and had driven his 1977 Olds Cutlass from Vancouver to Costa Rica and was heading back home. The Olds had bald tires, no exhaust, and a 3" clearance with the four of us inside. He'd picked up lots of hitchhikers on his trip. A large man from Panama named Anselmo was our fourth. He was trying to sneak into the USA by water (a wet-back, he called himself). In the past five days they'd had five flat tires (and no jack) with the spare in use and a flat in the trunk.

We set off into the dusk on a bumpy dirt road. We had to all get out frequently if there were rocks or a dip in the road so we wouldn't bottom out. It was a long, slow ride. After it had grown pitch dark, and in the middle of nowhere, Gil announced we had a flat tire. Fortunately (and this seemed to happen a lot on my trip), a pickup truck soon stopped to help and drove Gil and his bad tire to a town somewhere up ahead.

(continued on page 11)

Total darkness, but wonderful stargazing. Anselmo and I debated pacifism vs. self-defense. Wouldn't Jesus turn the other cheek? Yes, said Anselmo, but his disciples carried knives, and would not let anyone hurt him. Gil returned shortly with the fixed tire and we all lifted the car by hand to get it onto their jack. Tire on, only to discover another flat! So we piled into the back of the pickup and Gil followed as best he could. In town we woke up a guy at a gas station and he fixed two tires in the rain. Gil travelled with lots of clothing in his trunk, and gave them out generously as gifts to all who had helped.

I decided to let the party move on without me (it was 12:30 am and I was beat). I found a hotel but no one answered my knocks. Someone walked by and took me to the owner's house. We woke him up, but he wanted 50 Quetzals for the night (about \$10, but I was used to paying \$2-3). I said no, and he told me about a cheaper place across town. No one answered there either. So I sat on a park bench until a strange and seemingly drunk man approached and said he could get me a room. We walked to the hotel I had just tried. He turned out to be the owner, and gave me a nice little room for 15 Quetzals.

After a good night's sleep, he practiced his English with me over breakfast, and then it was time to move on. A typical story from an amazing trip.

*A successful book is not made of
what is in it,
but what is left out of it.
-Mark Twain*

By Kevin Korell



A hawk, high on a clear winter's day looks out for me.
Like I look out for you. Like you look out for me.

I want to know, as does he: Are you safe? Are you happy?
Do you feel loved?

I leap into the air, watching as you sit, wondering what I'm doing,
So far away...

When I land you smile, and take my hand.
And I am filled with warmth. You amaze me!
Do I amaze you?

That's what I wonder when I'm drifting in the quiet sky.
Do I fit up against you? Do you wonder the same things too?

I think we were meant to love each other.
And play and fly and soar and dive, hand in hand.

Something That Happened on a Summer Night

By Greg Merz

Pure. Terror. Commonplace words. I thought I knew what they meant.

It was hot on the bus and even hotter when I got off it. The kind of hot that makes you squint. Like a sledgehammer on the top of the head.

I walked up the alley and Graham met me, aboard his tricycle. My shirt was soaked through.

Graham was four or five. I told him that he should go inside to clean up for dinner. He disagreed, vigorously. Graham wanted to ride his trike some more and did not want to come in for some stupid old dinner. Graham had a bad temper when he was a little guy. Still does, in fact, you just have to dig a bit deeper to find it.

I insisted back, vigorously, that he needed to come inside for dinner and then I went inside to make a gin and tonic.

Once dinner was on the table, I discovered that Graham had not come in as I had insisted and was now nowhere to be found. His tricycle sat at the end of the driveway. I went outside to yell, "Graham, Graham." No Graham appeared. I asked some of the neighborhood kids. "Nope, nope." I asked Molly. "Nope, nope."

We searched the house. We searched around the house. We searched anywhere we could think of to search. Nope. We asked the neighborhood kids again. "Nope, nope."

Our Lao neighbors who lived at the next house over and who loved Graham almost as much as we did, sussed out that something was amiss and formed their own search party. So did the neighbors across the street. "Graham, Graham." Nope. The police were called. They said that, almost always, the kid was somewhere in the house. But we'd looked for him in every possible place in the house. Nope, nope. The police came and confirmed for themselves that Graham was not in the house. Graham was gone.

I ran up and down the alleys of North Minneapolis, hollering "Graham, Graham." Nope, nope. Graham needed medicine to control seizures. Charlene said that we could never move because, if he came back someday, we had to be there. Graham was gone.

I don't know why I decided to go back into the garage. We'd already looked there and he definitely wasn't in the garage. I noticed a box that looked Graham-sized and, when I pulled a bunch of cardboard out of the box, there he was, sound asleep under the cardboard, a curled up sweaty mess. I scooped him up and ran outside, tears in my eyes. "Here he is. I've got him."

Later that same night, I was lying on the couch, drowsing in front of the tv. Suddenly I was wide awake. Panicked. Where's Graham? He was sleeping on my arm.



There is this thing called the university, and everybody goes there now. And there are these things called teachers who make students read this book with good ideas or that book with good ideas until that's where we get our ideas. We don't think them, we read them in books. I like Utopian talk. Speculation about what our planet should be, anger about what our planet is. I think writers are the most important members of society, not just potentially, but actually. Good writers must have and stand by their own ideas.

-Kurt Vonnegut

Summer Adventures

By Molly Merz

I've never lived close to my grandparents. They didn't live in another country or anything. Airplanes weren't required for visits. They just didn't live close enough to spontaneously pop on over for lunch. Seeing them meant packing up the car, stockpiling the best snacks and making sure I had enough batteries for my Discman AND my Gameboy. As a family, trips to grandparents' houses were reserved for holidays and family reunions. But once a year, for a week in the summer, my brother and I got to go without our parents.

Back then, I didn't know if my parents sent us because they thought a change in scenery for a couple weeks would be good for us or because by midsummer they just needed a break from the chaos that is kids on summer vacation. Now that I'm all grown up with kids of my own, I can pretty confidently say it was the latter. At the time, though, it didn't matter why we went. We looked forward to it every summer.

My mom's parents, Grandma and Grandpa Fowler, live in Rushford, MN. It's a tiny town that basically consists of a high school, a grocery store, a bowling alley, a gas station, a couple of churches and a bar. It's a safe little town that you could walk from one end of to the other in about half an hour flat. Rushford was such a stark difference from the city we were used to, and Graham and I loved it. My grandma would let us head out on adventures all on our own as long as we were back in time for supper. Sometimes, Grandma would pack up the fishing gear and come with us. She always knew the best spots to go and would even bait my hook for me when I was too scared to stab the worms myself.

A hotspot in Rushford every summer was the community swimming pool. One year, I convinced my grandma and grandpa to let me head over to the pool alone. Grandma let me ride her bike – a huge mountain bike that was about four times too big for me. Standing still, my toes just barely grazed the ground, so once I got moving, there wasn't exactly a graceful way to stop. But I felt so proud riding around town by myself, so I made the giant bike work...until it didn't. One afternoon I was riding home from the pool – so happy and carefree – and apparently quite distracted because I slammed right into the back of a parked car. Ashamed, I limped the bike back to Grandmas and refused to get back on it the rest of the week. Now my Grandpa Fowler is a very gruff man but I've always been his favorite (don't tell my brothers!) and the next time I visited there was a little yellow bike with whitewall tires and a banana seat that he bought just for me.



Evenings at the Fowlers, were spent playing Nintendo and watching movies while Grandpa read and Grandma sewed. Grandma would make us popcorn and ice cream floats and fill us up with all sorts of snacks with the shared understanding that what happens at Grandma's, stays at Grandma's. I think my mother has since adopted that policy with my kids.

My dad's dad and stepmom, Grampa Ron and Gramma Sue, live on a farm in Southern Iowa. We always knew which house was theirs when we were pulling up by the flag and 'MERZ' rock in the front yard. It was so quiet at the farm. Just like in Rushford, my brother and I were allowed to adventure out on our own, as long as we stayed in the yard and out of the corn. We'd play on the swing in the backyard for hours, pretend we were explorers in the barn, run around the front yard and wave at truckers driving by and draw pictures for Gramma on the slab of concrete out back. Upon request, Gramma would mix us up the best bubble solution ever and we'd spend the afternoon trying to make the biggest bubbles with our bubble wands. (Continued on page 14)

Once, on an especially hot day, we even got to have a water fight which ended with my brother spraying Gramma with the hose in the house through the kitchen window.

Every summer, Grampa would let us drive around on his riding lawn mower. Graham was never heavy enough to ride it by himself, so he had to sit on someone's lap just to get it to move. When I was deemed old enough (I think I was 14ish) Grampa took me on the dirt road behind the farm and let me drive his old pickup truck. I was so nervous I think I only went about 15MPH and drove with both feet but it was so exciting and I bragged to all my friends about it as soon as I got home.

Gramma and Grampa always had special things planned for us to do. Every summer there was a different craft project to work on. One year we made stepping stones that still line the front of the house. There would be a day that we travelled to an outlet mall and Gramma let us pick out an outfit for school. We were very careful with our selections and I would always pick that outfit for the first day of school. After dinner in the evenings, we would have some ice cream and sit in front of the TV to watch the news. Gramma had a special closet with all sorts of cool games and toys so Graham and I would always have something to keep us entertained. Sometimes my Aunt Brooke would come over and take us outside to catch lightning bugs after dark.



Halfway through the week, we would meet my dad's mom, Grandma Sharon, to spend the rest of our time at her apartment in Washington, IA. Washington is also a small town full of awesome adventure possibilities. Grandma Sharon lived a few blocks from a park, so we would often walk down there in the mornings to start our day. My brother and I would make up our own games and challenge each other to races around the playground. After we went back to Grandma's and had lunch she would drive us over to the big park. It was made of wood and was so big you could play 'the ground is lava' tag for hours and hours. Right next to the park was Washington's Aquatic Center – a huge pool complete with diving boards and slides. Grandma would bring us there and let us play all day, totally content sitting in the shade and reading.

Washington also had a small movie theater that typically played movies that had already been out for quite some time. That didn't dampen our excitement at all, though, when Grandma would bring us there as an after dinner treat. We would sit close to the screen and munch on popcorn, happy as can be. Other nights, we would pick a game out of the game cupboard and post up in the living room to watch one of two movies – either Warriors of Virtue or Wild America. I can't remember if those were truly the only options or if we just liked those two best. Either way, we watched them every time with as much enthusiasm as the first time we watched them.



Washington, Iowa
Movie Theater

By the end of our time with our grandparents, we missed our parents but we were never really ready to go home. In the car, we would tell our parents all about the fun we had and ask when the next visit was going to be. The relationships I have with all of my grandparents is something I wouldn't trade for anything. All of the love and support they have shown me over the years and accepting me for me has truly helped me grow into the person I am today. I wouldn't be where I am today without them. I cherish every memory I have and every moment we spend together. Those summers will always have a special place in my heart.

In order to write about life, first you must live it.
-Ernest Hemingway

Please Remember in Your Prayers

Gerry Hartley
Rose Marie Lund – (Durand's daughter)
Jim & Kay Leerssen
Marlene Mars
Harriet Thompson
Parkway Church
Eunice Shore
Brett Sprague
Laura Mylan - (Friend of Janet Zahn)
Jan Schwarz
Sheryl Griefe - (Friend of Dick and Nancy)
Bob Freeman - (Cancer surgery)
Bob Dooley - (Lu Senescall's son-in-law)
Lisa Flynn - (Carol Anderson's niece)
Chris Murphy - (Nephew of Tom and Kathy Malaske)
Maxine Rogers - (Lonnie Rose's sister)
Veralyn and Dennis Bash - (sister and brother-in-law of Lester Boerger)
Paul and Donita Boerger - (Lester Boerger's parents)
Erin Gaines - (Frank Gaine's daughter-in-law)
Sandy Thompson - (Bob and Evie Thompson's daughter-in-law)

Alan Johnston - (Alice Johnston's son)
Judy Oelkers - (Pat durand's cousin)
Frank Gaines
Lu Butler
A.J. Houle - (Dick and Nancy Larson's son-in-law)
Terry Nolan
Jean Rossmar - (David Goettsch's sister)
James Karst
Tom Ley
Paula and her family - (Bonnie McClain's friend)
Ron Merz - (Greg Merz's father)
Armin Bulchuck
Bill Morrison

HAPPY/THANKFUL OFFERINGS

We are offering this gift because we are happy and/or thankful for:

June 3, 2018

For all the hard working
yard sale volunteers.
-Emily Braun

I can't thank my Parkway
Family enough! Love you
all! Especially Jenny & Kevin
who lift me daily!
-Tom Ley

Ann Jarvimaki for being
such a great music
librarian.
-Bonnie

That I am Retired. Yippee!
-Bonnie

Jealous of Bonnie's retirement.
-Kathy

June 10, 2018

28 years of employment
on grant money. Looking
forward to my Plan B.
-Dianne Star



9	Tom Stotlzfus	18	Austin Stoneburg
10	Cindy Haughey	20	Kathy Itzin
12	Kayla Bryan	20	Jane Williams
14	Mary Koon	28	Katrina Stamboulieh
		30	Murilyn Gates

Parkway Courier

An Open and Affirming Church

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Worship Service: Sunday, 10 a.m.

Office Hours: 9 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Monday – Thursday

Rev. Kathy Itzin, Senior Minister

Charlene Merz, Administrative Assistant

Bonnie McClain, Director of Music

Daniel Ritter, Organist

Carolyn Hendel, Bell Choir Director

Molly Merz, Custodian

Published by and for members and friends of

PARKWAY UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Picnics, Picnics, Picnics!



We will be joining Robbinsdale UCC for the annual Robbinsdale/Parkway UCC Service and Picnic on Sunday, July 29. Come to Sanborn Park for the 10:00 service, followed by the picnic. Bring a side dish or dessert to share! Musicians and singers are welcome and encouraged to come! We'll practice early in the park. Volunteers will also be needed to help load/unload chairs, etc. from Robbinsdale. Details will be printed in the Sunday bulletin in July. We will provide rides for any member who needs one. Please let us know by Wednesday of the week of the picnic.

