October 18th 2026

WHEN MONDAY COMES

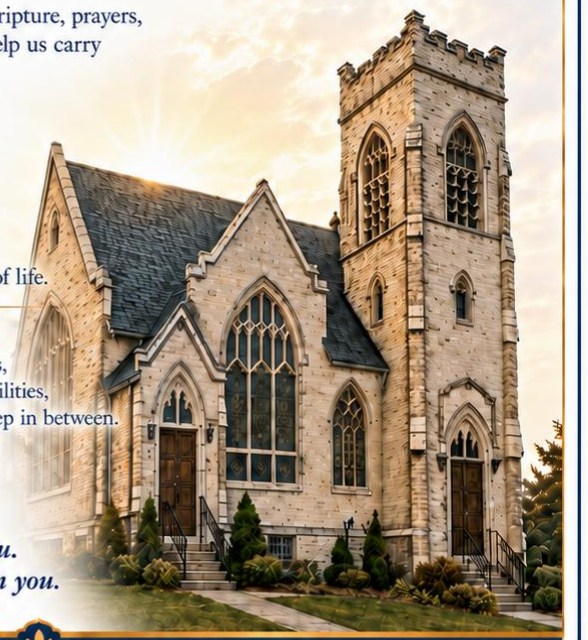
Faith for the Week Ahead

Please take this home and use it during the week.

Sunday worship is not meant to stay in the sanctuary.

Each week, When Monday Comes offers Scripture, prayers, reflections, and simple encouragement to help us carry faith into everyday life.

- Read it with your morning coffee.
- Use a prayer before bed.
- Think about the weekly question.
- Share a thought with someone else.
- Let God speak in the ordinary places of life.



Faith is not only for Sunday morning.
Faith is for Monday decisions, Tuesday worries, Wednesday conversations, Thursday responsibilities, Friday weariness, Saturday hopes, and every step in between.

So please take this home, keep it nearby, and when Monday comes, remember:

God is still with you.
Christ is still calling you.
The Spirit is still working in you.

United Presbyterian Church of Whitinsville

CONNECT WITH US

51 Cottage Street • Whitinsville, MA 01588
Sunday Worship at 10:30 a.m. • https://whitinpres.org

Another View

The Voice Behind the Curtain

Isaiah 45:1–7

When I went into the hospital for hip replacement surgery, I had a few requests. I wanted the operation to go well, the pain to be manageable, and, if possible, a private room.

Apparently, my wish list wasn't part of the hospital's admission paperwork.

My surgery took longer than expected, and by the time I finally arrived in my room, I discovered I had a roommate.

I wasn't particularly happy about that arrangement. I was tired, uncomfortable, and not especially interested in making new friends. I wanted some peace and quiet, a little privacy, and the opportunity to recover without having to deal with anyone else's problems.

A curtain separated our beds. My roommate had undergone shoulder replacement surgery, and for the first several hours, we were simply two voices on opposite sides of that curtain.

Because my surgery had run late, I had missed the deadline for ordering dinner. While discussing this unfortunate development with my nurse, a voice came from behind the curtain.

"Sorry to overhear your conversation, but I've already ordered dinner, and I'd be happy to share some of it with you if you're hungry."

I wasn't particularly hungry, but I appreciated the offer.

Naturally, being the gracious and considerate person I am (a description Becca might dispute), I informed him that since my bed was closer to the door, I could simply steal his dessert when the dinner tray arrived.

And that's how our friendship began.

My sister had driven Becca and me to the hospital, and she needed to return to take Becca home shortly after I got to my room. Before Becca left, the man on the other side of the curtain assured her he would make sure I was okay.

Imagine that. A complete stranger, recovering from his own surgery, promising to look after someone he hadn't even known a few hours earlier.

And he kept that promise.

The first 24 hours following my surgery were probably the most difficult. I couldn't take pain medication, and even the simplest movements were challenging.

My roommate, despite having his left shoulder immobilized in a brace, was considerably more mobile than I was.

He helped me get into bed, retrieved things I dropped, and even offered to get my urinal from the bathroom.

Now, I don't know about you, but when a man you've just met offers to retrieve your urinal, I think you've moved well beyond casual acquaintances.

We talked about all kinds of things. We discovered we had much in common. We laughed, compared our surgical experiences, and helped pass what otherwise might have been a very long and uncomfortable night.

I've spent much of my life being the person who helps others in difficult situations. Suddenly, I was the person who needed help with the simplest things.

And I discovered something important: **Sometimes accepting help with gratitude can be harder than offering it.**

But there was another lesson taking place on the opposite side of that curtain.

My roommate was recovering from major surgery himself. His arm was in a brace, and there were plenty of things he couldn't do. Yet he was still finding ways to help someone else.

We sometimes become so focused on what we can no longer do that we forget how much we still have to offer.

The person I hadn't wanted in my room had become one of the people who made my recovery easier.

And that brings me to a rather unexpected character in the Old Testament.

His name was Cyrus.

In Isaiah 45, God identifies Cyrus, the king of Persia, as someone He will use to accomplish His purposes for the people of Israel.

Now, Cyrus wasn't an Israelite. He wasn't a Jewish prophet or religious leader. In fact, God tells Cyrus that He has called him by name even though Cyrus does not know Him.

Yet this unlikely ruler would play an important role in opening the way for God's people to return from exile.

Imagine that. God working through someone His people might never have expected.

We often have our own ideas about how God should work in our lives. We expect help to come from certain people, in certain places, and in certain ways.

And when things don't happen as we expect, we sometimes become disappointed, frustrated, or even resentful.

I certainly wasn't looking for a new friend when I entered that hospital room. In fact, I would have preferred not to have a roommate at all.

I mentioned that I would be praying for our recovery, but we never really discussed religion. I don't know what my roommate believed about God, and that didn't bother me.

He saw another person having a difficult time and decided to help.

He didn't need to know whether we shared the same beliefs or agreed about everything. He simply recognized that another human being needed some kindness.

And perhaps that's part of the lesson Isaiah offers us.

We shouldn't be so quick to decide who God can use, where goodness might appear, or what an unexpected situation might bring into our lives.

Before my roommate was discharged, I told him how much his kindness had meant to me. I wanted him to know that he had made those difficult first 24 hours considerably easier.

We exchanged telephone numbers and agreed that once we've both recovered, we'll meet at the Muffin House. I've promised to buy him any muffin he wants. Considering everything he did for me, that seems like a pretty reasonable investment.

I've also met his wife, and we're planning for all four of us to get together for dinner.

Not bad for two strangers who first met as voices behind a hospital curtain.

I went into that hospital hoping I wouldn't have to share a room. I came home grateful that I had.

And I've been thinking about that curtain ever since.

How many curtains do we have in our own lives?

Some are made of fear, others of prejudice, pride, different beliefs, or simply our desire not to be bothered. Sometimes we put them up ourselves. Sometimes circumstances put them there for us.

But how often do those curtains keep us from recognizing people who might become unexpected blessings in our lives?

And perhaps there's an even more important question.

When we're the person on the other side of the curtain, are we willing to speak up?

When someone crosses our path who needs a little help, encouragement, or companionship, do we reach out, or do we remain comfortably silent?

My roommate didn't have to see my face, know my background, or share my beliefs before offering to help. He heard someone who might be hungry, and he offered what he had.

And remember, he wasn't in particularly good shape himself. His own recovery hadn't even begun in earnest, yet that didn't prevent him from making a difference in someone else's life.

Perhaps that's where our challenge begins.

This week, find one curtain in your life and do something about it.

Maybe it means starting a conversation with someone you've been avoiding. Calling a person who's been alone. Offering assistance to someone struggling with an ordinary task. Or simply giving someone the opportunity to become part of your life when you'd rather be left alone.

And if you're the one who needs help, perhaps it means being willing to accept the kindness someone is offering.

We don't have to solve every problem. We don't have to agree about everything. And we certainly don't need to wait until our own lives are perfect before we can help somebody else.

Sometimes the smallest gesture can make the greatest difference.

I don't know whether God arranged for two strangers to share that hospital room. But I do know that a little kindness crossed a curtain neither of us had opened, and something wonderful came of it.

So perhaps we should ask ourselves two questions:

Where in my life do I need to pull back a curtain to recognize someone God may be using to bless me? And where might God be calling me to be the voice on the other side, offering kindness to someone who needs it?

After all, sometimes a new friendship, an answered prayer, or an opportunity to make someone's burden a little lighter begins with something as simple as:

"Would you like some of my dinner?"

Faith Between Sundays

Weekly Reflections: October 18–24, 2026

The Kindness on the Other Side

Sometimes God works through people we never expected to meet, in circumstances we never would have chosen.

In Isaiah 45, God calls Cyrus, a foreign ruler who does not even know Him, to play an important role in helping His people. It's a reminder that God's purposes aren't limited by our expectations.

But recognizing unexpected kindness is only half the lesson. We also need to consider whether we're willing to offer it.

This week, we'll look at the curtains that sometimes separate us from one another. Some are created by circumstances. Others are made of pride, fear, assumptions, or simply our desire to be left alone.

Each day offers an opportunity to pull back one of those curtains—or to be the friendly voice reaching through it.

Prayer for the Week

Gracious God, open my eyes to the people You have placed along my path. Help me recognize kindness when it comes from unexpected places, accept help when I need it, and offer what I can to those who are struggling. Remove the barriers that prevent me from seeing others as You see them. Give me the courage to speak when someone needs encouragement and the humility to listen when someone reaches out to me. Amen.

Sunday, October 18 — The Unexpected Person

Scripture: Isaiah 45:4–5

God called Cyrus by name, even though Cyrus did not know Him. Israel's deliverance would involve someone outside the community of people who worshiped God.

We sometimes decide who might help us before we've even met them. We expect kindness from friends, family, and people who share our beliefs. But goodness doesn't always arrive through familiar faces.

Someone we barely know may have something valuable to offer. And sometimes the person we've overlooked becomes the person we remember with the greatest gratitude.

Today's faithful choice: Think of someone whose kindness surprised you. If possible, tell that person how much it meant.

Prayer: Lord, help me recognize goodness wherever I encounter it and never overlook someone because they are different from me. Amen.

Monday, October 19 — The Voice That Speaks Up

Scripture: Hebrews 13:2

Sometimes helping another person begins with simply paying attention.

A stranger hears someone struggling. A neighbor notices an empty porch where someone used to sit every afternoon. A friend recognizes that the words "I'm fine" don't always mean everything is fine.

Hebrews reminds us not to neglect hospitality to strangers. We don't need to know someone's entire story before offering kindness. Sometimes the first step is simply asking whether there's something we can do. And sometimes that small question opens the door to an unexpected friendship.

Today's faithful choice: Reach out to someone you wouldn't ordinarily contact. A friendly greeting, telephone call, or simple offer of assistance may mean more than you realize.

Prayer: Father, help me notice the needs around me and give me the courage to speak up rather than remain comfortably silent. Amen.

Tuesday, October 20 — Start With What You Have

Scripture: Matthew 25:35

Jesus said, "I was hungry and you gave me food." Notice what He didn't say. He didn't require an elaborate plan, a committee meeting, or an expensive program.

Someone was hungry. Someone else offered food.

We sometimes hesitate to help because we think we don't have enough time, money, energy, or ability to make a difference. But kindness doesn't always require something extraordinary. A sandwich, a telephone call, a ride to an appointment, or a few minutes of patient listening can turn someone's difficult day into a better one.

Today's faithful choice: Offer one simple kindness using something you already have—your time, attention, encouragement, or resources.

Prayer: Jesus, keep me from overlooking the simple opportunities to care for others. Help me give what I can with a willing heart. Amen.

Wednesday, October 21 — Love That Does Something

Scripture: 1 Thessalonians 1:3

Paul remembers the Thessalonians for their work produced by faith, their labor prompted by love, and their endurance inspired by hope. Those three ideas belong together.

Faith isn't merely something we say we possess. Love isn't only something we feel. And hope isn't simply wishing tomorrow will be better. They become visible in the way we live.

It's wonderful to tell someone we're thinking about them. It's even better when those thoughts lead us to check on them, encourage them, or help with something they've been struggling to accomplish.

Our actions don't have to be large. They simply need to be sincere.

Today's faithful choice: Think of someone you've been meaning to help. Instead of putting it off another week, take one small step today.

Prayer: God, help my faith become visible through my actions and my love become meaningful through the way I treat others. Amen.

Thursday, October 22 — Learning to Receive

Scripture: Galatians 6:2

"Bear one another's burdens." That's an interesting instruction because it works in both directions. Sometimes we're the ones carrying another person's burden. Other times, we're the ones who need someone to help carry ours.

For people accustomed to being independent, accepting help can be uncomfortable. We don't want to inconvenience anyone or admit that something we once handled easily has become difficult.

But allowing someone to help isn't necessarily weakness. It can be an expression of trust, humility, and gratitude. And when we accept someone's kindness, we give that person an opportunity to express love through action.

Today's faithful choice: If you need assistance, allow someone to help without apologizing for needing it. If someone has recently helped you, let them know how much you appreciate them.

Prayer: Lord, teach me both to offer help generously and to receive it graciously. Remind me that none of us was meant to carry every burden alone. Amen.

Friday, October 23 — What We Still Have to Give

Scripture: 1 Peter 4:10

Peter encourages believers to use whatever gifts they have received to serve others.

Notice that he doesn't say we must possess extraordinary abilities.

Sometimes illness, age, injury, or circumstances limit what we can do. Things that once seemed effortless become difficult or even impossible.

But losing an ability doesn't mean losing our capacity to make a difference.

A person who cannot leave home can still offer encouragement. Someone who cannot lift a heavy box can still make a telephone call. A person who needs assistance walking may still have a lifetime of wisdom worth sharing.

Our abilities may change, but opportunities to show kindness remain.

Today's faithful choice: Instead of concentrating on something you can no longer do, identify one thing you can still offer another person. Then find a way to offer it.

Prayer: Father, help me see the gifts and abilities I still possess. Show me how to use them to encourage and serve others. Amen.

Saturday, October 24 — Pull Back the Curtain

Scripture: James 2:14–17

James reminds us that faith without action is incomplete.

We've spent this week thinking about kindness, unexpected friendships, accepting help, and recognizing opportunities to serve.

Now comes the question: What are we going to do about it?

Perhaps there's someone we've avoided because we disagree with them. Someone we've been meaning to visit. A neighbor we haven't bothered to know. Or a person who could use a little encouragement but hasn't asked for it.

Sometimes the curtain separating us from another person is nothing more than our reluctance to make the first move. We don't have to change the world today.

But perhaps we can make one person's world a little better.

Today's faithful choice: Identify one curtain in your life. Make the telephone call, start the conversation, offer the assistance, or accept the invitation. Take one real step toward another person.

Prayer: Lord, don't let the lessons of this week remain only words on a page. Give me the courage to turn compassion into action and faith into kindness. Amen.

A Challenge for the Week

Don't just notice the curtain. Reach through it.

One person. One act of kindness. One curtain pulled back.

What could you do before Monday comes?

A Closing Prayer — Beyond the Curtain

Gracious and loving God,

Forgive us for the times we have been so concerned with our own lives that we have failed to notice someone else's needs.

Open our eyes to the unexpected people You place along our paths. Give us the humility to accept kindness when we need it and the courage to offer it when others are struggling.

Teach us to slow down, to be patient, and to remember that sometimes the greatest gift we can offer is simply our presence.

Help us recognize the curtains we have placed between ourselves and others and give us the courage to reach through them with love.

May our gratitude become action, our faith become kindness, and our love become a blessing to someone who needs it.

In Jesus' name we pray.

Amen.

From the Pew

When Putting on Socks Becomes an Accomplishment

For most of my life, I never considered putting on my socks much of an accomplishment.

I simply got out of bed, got dressed, and went about my day. I didn't stop to thank God that I could bend over, reach my feet, or pull on a pair of socks.

Then came hip replacement surgery.

Suddenly, getting dressed became something resembling a major engineering project. I had a sock aids (one to put my socks on and one to take them off), a grabber, a walker, and an assortment of other equipment designed to help me accomplish things I'd been doing without assistance for more than seventy years.

Becca assured me that the sock aid was easy to use.

Apparently, her definition of easy and mine are somewhat different.

The first time I tried using it, I actually began thinking about all those socks that mysteriously disappeared in the clothes dryer over the years.

For the first time in my life, I was beginning to appreciate that dryer.

After all, saying, "I don't have a sock on my right foot because the dryer ate it" sounded considerably better than admitting I couldn't figure out how to use a device my wife assured me was practically foolproof.

I've spent much of my life responding to emergencies, operating complicated equipment, and solving problems under pressure. Yet here I was, facing defeat at the hands of a sock and a piece of plastic.

And somewhere between wrestling with that sock aid and reconsidering my relationship with the clothes dryer, I began thinking about something much more important.

How many ordinary blessings do we fail to recognize simply because we've always had them?

We thank God for the big things. Recovering from an illness. Surviving an accident. Having enough money to pay our bills. Receiving good news after a frightening medical test.

But how often do we thank Him for being able to get out of a chair, walk across a room, prepare breakfast, or get dressed without assistance?

Most of us seldom think about these things until something changes.

I have a friend named Mary who uses a wheelchair. She faces challenges every day that I am only beginning to appreciate. Yet Mary continues to find reasons to be grateful to God.

But I need to be careful here.

My situation is temporary. With time, therapy, and healing, I expect to regain much of my independence. Mary doesn't have the luxury of looking at a calendar and knowing that everything will soon return to the way it once was.

A few weeks of recovery don't mean I suddenly understand what her life is like.

Nor should we define Mary's life by what she cannot do. She has abilities, wisdom, experiences, and gifts that have nothing to do with whether she can walk.

What my recovery has given me is a small glimpse of how much effort some ordinary activities can require, and a greater appreciation for the patience and ingenuity of people who have learned different ways of accomplishing them.

But there's another part of this experience that has taught me something about blessings.

Before surgery, I was accustomed to doing things for myself. If something needed fixing, carrying, moving, or figuring out, I generally took care of it.

Now I find myself asking Becca for help with things I once wouldn't have thought twice about.

And that hasn't been easy.

Becca has already been through so much with her own health difficulties. For years, problems with her eyesight prevented her from driving and made many ordinary activities difficult.

Then, remarkably, her new treatment began restoring her ability to see well enough to drive again.

And just about the time she was regaining that independence, I was temporarily losing some of mine.

I don't claim to understand exactly how God works through the timing of such things. But I can certainly be grateful that Becca is able to do things now that were impossible for her only a short time ago.

She has taken on much of what I cannot presently do, while continuing to work and manage her own responsibilities.

And I have discovered that **accepting help from someone you love can sometimes be more difficult than offering it.**

We don't want to become a burden. We don't want to admit that we need assistance. Sometimes our pride gets in the way of simply saying, "Could you give me a hand?"

Yet isn't that part of what love is supposed to be?

Galatians 6:2 tells us to bear one another's burdens. It doesn't say we must always be the person doing the carrying.

Sometimes we're strong enough to help carry someone else's burden. And sometimes we need someone to help carry ours.

That brings me back to something we've been considering in Isaiah 45.

God's work doesn't always unfold through the people or circumstances we expect.

Sometimes an unexpected blessing comes through a stranger we've never met. Other times, it's discovering something new about the people who have been beside us all along.

I've learned that being blessed doesn't mean having fewer problems than everyone else.

Sometimes being blessed means having someone beside you while you're facing those problems.

But that thought raises another question.

What about the people who don't have someone beside them?

The person recovering from surgery who lives alone? The neighbor who can no longer drive? The older person who struggles with ordinary tasks but is too proud—or too frightened—to ask for assistance?

They are no less loved by God and no less deserving of kindness.

Perhaps our gratitude for the people who help us should encourage us to become that kind of person for somebody else.

And perhaps there's a little exercise we could all consider trying this week.

One morning, while sitting safely, think about how you would put on your socks if you couldn't bend over. How would you accomplish something you've been doing almost automatically for years?

Or consider how you would choose your clothes for the day if you couldn't see them. How would you identify colors, match clothing, or find what you needed?

Here's a harder one.

Imagine not being able to drive for an entire week. How would you get groceries, attend appointments, go to church, or visit a friend? Who would you depend upon, and what would happen if no one were available?

When I taught SCUBA diving, I sometimes had students practice putting on and taking off their equipment while blindfolded, under controlled conditions. Many discovered how much they depended upon their eyesight, even when performing tasks they thought they knew by heart.

Take away just one ability we've always relied upon, and suddenly our familiar routines may require new skills, equipment, planning, and assistance.

I'm not suggesting we deliberately make our lives miserable, attempt anything unsafe, or give up driving for a week just to prove a point.

And I certainly don't believe a few minutes of inconvenience can teach us what it means to live with a permanent disability. People develop remarkable skills and adaptations that a brief exercise cannot begin to reproduce.

The purpose isn't to discover how difficult someone else's life must be. It's to discover how many of our own abilities we've stopped noticing.

But that realization shouldn't leave us simply feeling fortunate.

It should make us more patient with someone who needs extra time, more appreciative of the ingenuity of people who accomplish things differently, and more willing to offer assistance when it's wanted.

And perhaps more importantly, it should encourage us to recognize that every person, regardless of physical ability, has something valuable to contribute.

Our independence may change. Our abilities may change. But our worth in God's eyes doesn't depend on how much we can accomplish without assistance.

Nor does needing help mean we have nothing left to give.

So, here's my challenge for this week.

Take a moment to appreciate an ordinary ability you've never thought much about. Then consider someone whose circumstances are different from yours. What could you do to make their day a little easier, while respecting their independence and dignity?

Maybe it's offering a ride, making a telephone call, being a little more patient, or simply asking, "Is there anything I can do to help?"

And if you're the one who needs help, perhaps your challenge is to accept someone's kindness without feeling that your value has somehow diminished.

Gratitude becomes something much more meaningful when it changes how we treat other people.

As for me, I'm making progress. Each day brings a little more mobility and a little less frustration.

And I suspect the first morning I can bend down and put on my own socks again will feel like a major accomplishment.

This time, I intend to remember to thank God for it.

Although, if that right sock is missing, I'm still blaming the dryer.

Have Something From Your Pew?

Have you ever experienced a moment when faith showed up in an unexpected place? Perhaps a stranger's kindness, a lesson learned the hard way, a question you've been thinking about, or something that simply made you stop and thank God.

We'd love to hear your story!

You don't need to be a writer or have a perfectly polished article. Sometimes the simplest experiences carry the most meaningful lessons. Serious, funny, inspiring, or thought-provoking—your experiences might be exactly what someone else needs to hear.

Remember, *From the Pew* isn't just about one person's journey of faith. It's about all of ours.

So don't be shy. Share a story, ask a question, or tell us what you've been thinking about. Your words may encourage someone in ways you never imagined. Submit all articles to Whitinpres@gmail.com

Wisdom From Bird Dog

The Walker Watch

Since my hip replacement surgery, Bird Dog has had to make a few adjustments to her daily routine.

For one thing, her regular walking companion has been replaced by a fellow who moves around with a walker and takes considerably longer to get anywhere.

And apparently, she has appointed herself my personal recovery supervisor.

As you can see from the picture, she has established her new duty station directly beside my walker. I'm not sure whether she's guarding it, waiting for me to use it, or simply making sure I don't go anywhere without her permission.

Bird Dog on duty. Recovery may be slow, but nobody gets left behind.

Whatever the reason, she seems perfectly content with her new assignment.

Before surgery, we walked together, played together, and generally kept each other entertained. Now things are a little different.

She still brings me her toys and drops them at my feet, waiting for me to pick them up. Apparently, she hasn't received the medical bulletin explaining that bending over is currently prohibited.

But she's learning.

I now have a little grabber that allows me to pick things up off the floor without bending over. At first, Bird Dog wasn't particularly fond of this strange device and would run away whenever I brought it out.

Now she barely pays attention to it. She's apparently decided that if this ridiculous-looking contraption is what it takes to retrieve her toys, she'll tolerate it.

And I've noticed something else.

When we move down the hallway, Bird Dog no longer races ahead expecting me to keep up. She slows down and waits for me to catch up.

She hasn't stopped wanting to be with me. She's simply adjusted how we spend our time together.

That may seem like a small thing, but when you're recovering from surgery and struggling to do things that were once effortless, those little adjustments mean a great deal.

And I would be remiss if I didn't mention that Bird Dog isn't the only one who has been teaching me this lesson.

My wife, Becca, has been a wonderful example of what it means to slow down and give someone the time they need. While continuing to work and manage her own responsibilities, she's patiently adjusted her routines to help me through my recovery.

After everything she's experienced with her own health, I know those adjustments haven't always been easy. Yet she's been there, giving me the help, encouragement, and time I need.

I am truly blessed to have her beside me.

All of this has made me think about how we treat people whose abilities or circumstances have changed.

We may have a friend recovering from surgery, a spouse dealing with illness, an aging parent who moves more slowly, or someone whose disability requires us to approach ordinary activities differently.

Sometimes being there for them means changing our own routines.

It may mean walking more slowly, waiting a little longer, repeating something we thought they heard, or setting aside our own plans because someone needs our time.

And let's admit it. Those adjustments aren't always convenient. Sometimes we become impatient. We remember how things used to be and wish they could be that way again.

Most of us are pretty good at telling someone recovering from surgery, "Take your time." But are we equally good at actually giving them that time?

There's a considerable difference between the two.

It's easy to offer patience when it costs us nothing. The real test comes when being patient means changing our plans, waiting when we're in a hurry, or accepting that things may never move quite as quickly as they once did.

And that doesn't mean those caring for someone else never become tired or frustrated. They have needs and limitations of their own. Patience can be difficult, especially when the demands seem never-ending.

But to the person who needs that extra time, patience, or understanding, those small sacrifices can mean more than we realize.

First Corinthians 13:4 reminds us that love is patient and kind.

It doesn't say love is patient only when everything is convenient, or kind only when kindness doesn't interfere with our schedule.

Sometimes love means adjusting our pace to match the needs of someone who can no longer move at ours.

There's another lesson Bird Dog has been teaching me.

She doesn't seem to care that I can't do everything we used to do together. She still brings her toys, stays close when I'm resting, and waits for me when I move slowly.

Her affection hasn't disappeared simply because my abilities have temporarily changed.

And isn't that something we need to remember about God's love?

God doesn't measure our worth by how quickly we walk, how independently we live, or how much we accomplish in a day.

Our abilities may change, but our worth in God's eyes does not.

Sometimes the greatest ministry we can offer another person isn't fixing their problems, giving advice, or doing something extraordinary.

Sometimes it's simply being willing to change our routine, slow our pace, and stay beside them.

Bird Dog doesn't understand hip replacement surgery, physical therapy, or why her walking companion suddenly needs so much equipment.

But she seems to understand something about companionship.

She waits.

She adjusts.

And she stays.

Love isn't always about helping someone move faster. Sometimes it's about being willing to move slower with them.

A Little Wisdom from Bird Dog

"When someone you love can't keep up, don't leave them behind. Sometimes the best thing you can do is slow down and walk beside them."

Something to think about: Is there someone in your life who needs you to slow down, be a little more patient, or change your routine to accommodate theirs? Instead of wishing things were the way they used to be, what could you do to make things a little easier for them today?

Things You Might Have Missed

Little Details in Scripture That Deserve a Second Look

Sometimes the most interesting part of a Bible passage is something we've read a dozen times without noticing. Here are four little details from this week's scriptures worth another look.

1. Jesus Didn't Bring the Coin – Matthew 22:15–22

When asked whether people should pay taxes to Caesar, Jesus didn't produce a coin. He asked His questioners to show Him one—and they did!

The coin bore Caesar's image. But Genesis 1:27 tells us that we bear God's image.

Jesus doesn't explicitly make that comparison, but it raises an interesting question.

Think about it: If we bear God's image, shouldn't that be reflected in how we treat others?

2. Moses Didn't Ask Just for Himself – Exodus 33:12–23

Moses wanted assurance that God would accompany him. But notice verse 15. Moses asks that God's presence go with *us*, not simply with *me*.

He was concerned about the people entrusted to his care.

Think about it: When asking God for help, do we remember those traveling through life's difficulties alongside us?

3. Faith, Love, and Hope Were Doing Something – 1 Thessalonians 1:3

Paul praises the Thessalonians for their work produced by faith, labor prompted by love, and endurance inspired by hope.

He wasn't simply praising what they believed. He recognized how their beliefs influenced their actions.

Think about it: If someone watched our actions but never heard our words, would they recognize our faith?

4. Even the Trees Join the Celebration – Psalm 96:11–12

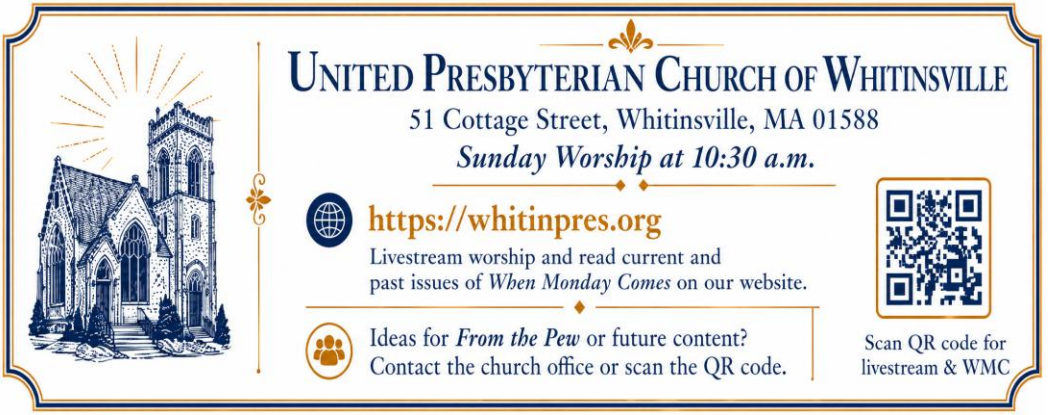
The heavens rejoice, the earth is glad, the sea resounds, and even the trees of the forest sing for joy!

It's beautiful poetry reminding us that God's greatness extends far beyond our sanctuary walls.

Think about it: When was the last time you stopped to appreciate something in God's creation?

Look Again!

Next time you read Scripture, slow down. Notice the little details. Ask questions. Look for something you haven't seen before.

Sometimes we don't need a new Bible passage. We just need a fresh look at one we've already read.

Found something interesting in your Bible reading? Share it with us! Your discovery might appear in a future issue.