

KIRB STONES

ALONG THE NARROW WAY

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curb-stone (kûrb'stôn') - *noun* - one of the stones or a range of stones forming a curb, as along a sidewalk or roadway. Historically, the curbstones were placed vertically along the edges of the roadbed and the paving material was backfilled against the row of curbstones. The curbstones served ⁽¹⁾to hold the material in the roadbed, ⁽²⁾to prevent the scattering of the material along the edges, and ⁽³⁾to define the road itself from all the adjoining areas.

There is nothing like jumping right in! I have never been one to sit on the edge of the pool and stick a toe in the water. Either I am up to my eyeballs in whatever I have been charged with, or I pass. When I received the appointment to Calvary United Methodist Church this week and was told that I was to begin March 1st, I did two things. I immediately affirmed the decision with a loud, resounding "Yes!" and asked God to go in with me! You see, this is God's work. I am jumping in the water, as I write my first column for The Lamplighter. Yesterday, I met with Bob Rowe and Sandy Wilkins to look at the calendar of events for your church. You are a vibrant and living body of believers.

As many of you know, I have been appointed as a student pastor to Calvary United Methodist Church. For those of you who have already met me, you may have noticed that I am no fresh faced twenty something student. I have felt God's call to the ordained ministry for approximately forty years. My "Not now" approach to God's call has led me and my family through good times and bad, with activity in seven United Methodist Churches in six conferences from here to the Carolinas and Virginia to as far away as Oregon. With all these corporate transfers, through the laughter and the tears, we have consistently served God in numerous capacities.

The "Not now" approach faded into distant memory this past autumn and was replaced by "It's time!" God has revealed Himself to me in so many ways. It's time to put away Bob's plan and play the fourth quarter for my Heavenly Coach. According to God's plan, I will come along side Him and I will come along side you and together we will accomplish His work, within Calvary, in Milford, Delaware, and in the world. God will reveal the many gifts and graces that you individually, as well as a congregation, have been given in order to accomplish great things for His glory. My family and I look forward to joining you.

With the release of the movie about FRED ROY, I thought you might enjoy this first column.

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Today is Thursday, February 27, 2003. This morning there was another snow delay for the area schools. My son, R, and I were at the chessboard prior to his departure to the school bus stop. I had been struggling, since my meeting with Bob and Sandy yesterday, with what to do about this first column in The Lamplighter. As I was positioning my rook to put R in check, the announcement came over the radio.

"Fred Rogers passed away at his home in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, during the night. He was diagnosed with stomach cancer sometime after the holidays. He was seventy-four."

The radio announcer went on to discuss his career, family, and ordination as a minister in 1963. He went on to talk about how Fred Rogers had begun as a puppeteer in 1954 and how his quiet, peaceful style had ministered to children and parents alike for nearly fifty years. I only heard the first part of the announcement. My thirteen-year-old son was listening for more details.

My ears heard a totally different message. With a lump in my throat and eyes watering, I heard, "What if Fred Rogers had said, 'Not now'?" I cannot imagine children growing up without Fred Rogers. I cannot imagine children growing up without the quiet, soothing message coming from the quiet, soothing man in sneakers and cardigan.

Are you saying, "Not now" to God. He has a plan for your life. If you will let Him in, He will reveal your gifts and graces to you. I said, "Not now" for most of my life. I wanted to operate by Bob's rules and Bob's plan. God wants us to follow Him. He will not make us follow Him. He wants us to choose Him. Although, God did not drop a piano on my head, He did get my attention. God had me sit down, be quiet, and listen to Him. Is there too much noise and activity in your life? Are you unable to hear Him? Are you unwilling to hear Him? Please sit down, be quiet, and listen to God. He has an awesome plan for you! It's time! Do this, as with all things, for the glory of God.

"EACH MAN SHOULD GIVE WHAT HE HAS DECIDED IN HIS HEART TO GIVE,
NOT RELUCTANTLY OR UNDER COMPULSION, FOR GOD LOVES A CHEERFUL
GIVER."

2 CORINTHIANS 9:7

As I look forward to joining with you at Calvary United Methodist Church, it truly is a wonderful day in the neighborhood! Thanks, Mr. Rogers! I will miss you.