

Dear Friends:



What a wonderful vacation! I had lunch in the Boyne City Elementary School with two granddaughters, visited family up north and down south, saw the movie *Courageous* (which I highly recommend to every father), and celebrated Christmas with my parents, sister and brother. (Mom can't go to Tucson for the winter until we have Christmas, even if we do so before Halloween!) And I spent the entire week with Dave. Nothing worthy of a postcard, but a week full of good memories.

But one experience I hadn't planned came on October 23 when Dave and I worshipped at Eden United Methodist Church, my childhood church. I think I smiled non-stop as I was greeted by former Sunday school and Vacation Bible school teachers, and got them all caught up on my "new" appointment here.

As we entered worship, however, I found myself impressed as a teenage girl did the opening greeting, announcements, invocation and prayer concerns. Almost 40 years ago, I had been that teenager at the same lectern, reading the scripture on a Sunday morning at the invitation of our Sunday school superintendent, Bruce Filson.

I remember that day, feeling tongue-tied and nervous. I avoided all eye contact with my brother. I wondered how my mouth could be so dry and my hands so wet. But as soon as service was over, two of the older women of the church came up to me. I don't remember either ever teaching me in Sunday school or being involved directly with me. But with great enthusiasm, they complimented my participation in worship. And I remember as they walked away, I overheard them say to one another, "Isn't it wonderful to have young people involved in the worship service?"



This month, we will begin confirmation classes for students in the 7<sup>th</sup> grade and higher. (Tammy has more information about these classes on Page 15). As I visited my home church and watched the young woman there, it reminded me as we prepare for this year's confirmation class to remember that we are not ministering to the church of tomorrow — our youth are the church of TODAY.

As we watch each of these young persons involved in our church, let us be diligent in encouraging God's calling in each one to lay or ordained ministry. And in this season of Thanksgiving, may we especially be thankful for their ministry to us.

In God's love,  
Pastor Kathy