

## Waking up with Purpose

As a child we wake up with purpose. We are anxious to start our day. There is much to do. As we become teenagers, the purpose sometimes fades, and we want to stay in bed. Then we are working adults and getting up is a priority, we have a job to do, a purpose. If you are a parent, you must get up for the children to help them start their day. Then the children grow up and the job is gone, retirement becomes a reality. When I retired for years, I would get out of bed very early to walk. I loved those early morning walks. They were relaxing and even in the snow and cold they were invigorating. But then my knees started bothering me and what had been enjoyable was now painful. So, I slowed down. Then my husband became confused and could not be left alone, so, the walks stopped altogether. He liked to sleep in so I would get up just for the solitude and always seemed to have something to do like laundry, dishes, food prep. There was reading and knitting and quilting for relaxation. But then it seemed as if what had interested me before no longer was a priority, no real reason to get up. When he died, I had trouble sleeping for a long time. The side of the bed that was full was now empty and I would wake up at night to check on him. I am now getting past that, but I stay up late, often until 2 a.m. Then do not sleep well and wake up early then go back to sleep for a while. When I waken, I really do not have a good reason to get out of bed. The only reason some days to get out of bed is breakfast. A couple of weeks ago, I was told that Graduation Sunday was approaching. Now I for several years have done cakes for that Sunday. Because my health is not as good as it was, I had cut back on a lot of activities and cakes was a natural one. No coffee hour for so long meant no cakes. So, I asked Pastor Don if I could do cakes and he agreed. Last week I had purpose, I had to plan, what kind of cakes did I want to do, what sizes, I had to make sure I had the ingredients, I had to go to the store and to the cake supply store, I had to check expiration dates on ingredients I had at home. A friend, in fact two friends offered to pick up and deliver the cakes to the church for me. On Sunday, a friend offered to come and help me the next time I do cakes. I wanted to do a birthday cake for a dear woman I know. I know her well enough to know her favorite cake and that she favors walnuts over pecans. So yesterday I got up with purpose, went to the store, and made sure I had what I needed for German Chocolate cake. I have not done this cake in several years, so it was an adventure and who knew chocolate icing had the ability to travel fifteen feet in the kitchen. The cake is a little lopsided but looks delicious and was made with purpose and love. I believe that God puts purpose in our lives. He sends us opportunities to take new paths, to find a new reason to carry on and as our lives change, he puts new purpose in our lives. He will give you reason to get up in the morning, to spend your days in useful pursuit. So, if you are going through a hard time, remember that God has a plan for you, a purpose to get you up in the morning, a joy that can only come from serving others. We cannot find our way out of the woods unless we find the path and that path can be given to us by a generous and loving lord, our God.

Jeremiah 29:11-13 For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.

Dear Lord, we thank you for this day and the gifts you have given us. May we use them in your name always. Be with our Pastor, bless his ministry, be with him and Laura and our representatives as they travel to Annual Conference. Be with our Bishop and those participating in Annual Conference this week. May there be joy in the gathering, blessings in the words spoken and peace in the worship. Be with our staff and leaders in the church, grant them safety and guidance. May our church truly be the hands and feet of Christ in this world. Be with those facing illness and grief, Lord, ease their burden. In Jesus name we pray.

Amen

Grace Epperson

