

SERVING

Rev. Gotham's sermon this week was on serving. I have always felt incomplete if I didn't have a "job" in the church. When I joined the church at 15, I would sing in the choir which some Sunday's was my sister-in-law and I. I have since been told that I should not sing in church because I can't carry a tune in a basket. I now sing quietly so as not to disturb others. The only ones that want me to sing are my granddaughters Lauren and Britt. They not only want me to sing but will encourage (demand) me to sing. My son can't hear me, so I am safe with him. My husband, who had a wonderful voice always encouraged me to sing and was great about my voice and we would frequently sing loudly in the car especially to those old songs we both knew. We especially liked Johnny Cash. One time the choir director kept asking me to join the choir since my husband was in the choir. She spread the choir out through the sanctuary one Sunday and she stood next to me, so I belted out a song. She never asked me again. I decided early that singing wasn't for me as service but I loved children and so I taught 4- and 5-year-olds in Sunday School. I started out in the nursery but liked the interaction with the 4- and 5-year-olds. I tried Junior High one year, but this one precocious boy wanted "Song of Solomon" and requested every week that we read that. I decided I liked 4- and 5-year-olds. I began to serve in different ways committees, quilting, prayer shawls, ushering, communion, greeting, prayer ministry, there are many opportunities to serve. Many years ago, I took the test to learn where I might want to serve. Leadership committees were the answer (I was already doing this and found it to be my "niche." Recently I retook the test and found my interests and areas had completely changed. The last time I took the test I was much younger and over the years my talents, interests, abilities have changed. I was surprised that I had changed and that what once was my interest was now different. If you took the test a long time ago you also might want to take it again just to see how you have changed and what your interests are now. If you want to serve in some capacity, give me a call and I will help you get connected. My number is in the book.

When I was 18, I was chatting with the Pastor at that time in Madison Heights, Earl Downing. He told me of my responsibility to the church to support it not only with my tithe but with my service. This was important to me because I was leaving home and going to go to Ford Hospital for 3 years of Nurses Training. I didn't know how I would fulfill my pledge to serve as a member of the church. I would have no income for 2 years other than babysitting for the physicians who were residents and that was sparse until I could workdays off for pay and so could not donate. In the beginning we had 40 hours of classes a week and this left little time for other things. The church would notify me if a member of the church was hospitalized at Ford Hospital, and I would go see them and let them know I was there and would be praying for them. I have found in church there are no "small jobs." Every job no matter how little time it takes affects the church. What we do for our church is what makes us the church. Jobs can take time each day or minutes each week or perhaps minutes each month. The important thing is that we raise up our church with each thing we do for it, whether it is praying for others, or serving coffee, whether it is ushering or greeting, whether it is serving on a committee or singing in the choir. Lifting up your church is the best thing you can do for it and not only will your church be better for it but so will you.

Ephesians 2:10: For we are God's workmanship created in Christ Jesus to do good works.

Lord, we thank you for this day, may we find ways to serve you in gratitude for the gift. Be with our families, bless them and keep them safe. Be with those who are sick, and those who are grieving. Give them healing and comfort. Be with our Pastor, bless him and be with him in all he does. Be with our staff and leaders, guide and protect them. Be with our church, may it be your church in all things. Be with the hungry and the homeless, may we serve them in your name. Bless us to your service in all things. In Jesus name we pray. Amen

Grace Epperson