Pastor Jay’s Jottings

September 2024

Transitions are hard. Moving from one place to another is challenging. Sometimes we get comfortable with where we are at, and we don’t want to move. But movement is a part of who we are and is crucial to seeing where God wants us to be. I have been reflecting on transitions lately and giving thanks (really giving thanks!) that God has been active in bringing us together to walk in ministry for His people. And I have found myself even more open to God leading my life after reading about the Israelites. Most of us know the story of Moses leading the people out of Egypt. They wanted to know where they were going. Don’t we all? In Exodus 13, The Israelites are on their way out of Egypt. But notice where God takes them…. 17 When Pharaoh let the people go, God did not lead them on the road through the Philistine country, though that was shorter. For God said, “If they face war, they might change their minds and return to Egypt.” 18 So God led the people around by the desert road toward the Red Sea. The Israelites went up out of Egypt ready for battle. God did not lead them by the path that was shorter or easier. He led them the way that prepared them for what was coming. How often do we take the path of least resistance, or want the easy road to travel, and yet, God wants to lead us down the path that prepares us for what lies ahead? It’s a hard thing to follow God. It takes trust in what cannot be seen, and it takes listening to His voice above the world’s voices that want our attention. But I promise you that listening to God’s voice and following Him first, will never fail us. I am a living testimony to listening and hearing His voice. Had I listened to my own voice, I may not have had the joy and honor of being a part of FELC and her ministry. So, I give thanks daily, that listening to the voice of God has changed the direction of my life and the life of so many others around me. I would encourage you to spend some time in silence and solitude and seek the voice of God. It is easy for us to want to be somewhere we are comfortable, and most of the time we seek comfort and predictability over following the voice of God. But God wants good for us and will lead us to the place where we can thrive for His kingdom and proclaim His glory. I give thanks that my family and I are back in Ohio and that we are walking together with a community of faith that seeks God’s kingdom first. There is no greater gift than what God has given us through His son Jesus, and there is no greater call than to serve the greatest gift. Let us serve Jesus together and proclaim His kingdom to a Mansfield community and a world that needs to hear His voice.

God Loves You, and So Do I.

Pastor Jay