

Dick and I are driving to Independence, Missouri, as I write this. I am beyond grateful to my husband for many reasons, not the least of which is his love of long-distance driving! We were making our way from Payson to Show Low when, learning we had only been in the car a couple hours I exclaimed, “We are never going to get there!” The reality of what an 18+ hour drive would feel like, mentally and physically, had settled in. What was I thinking to have planned this??!!! Did I not know myself at all!!!!??

Throughout the years, I’ve developed different coping mechanisms for slow, boring, “just-kill-me-now-and-get-it-over-with” travel: 1) falling asleep (preferably only when a passenger); 2) have conversations with myself and with God – thinking or speaking whatever comes to mind (best when traveling solo); 3) listening to music – singing & steering-wheel-dancing myself through road fatigue; and 4) stopping to move, stretch, and buy a snack I don’t need or want. The key is to keep myself entertained until I fall into the “zen” of allowing the car to be the mover and doer. I then find peace in knowing I will forever be traveling towards life’s over-arching destination. The same is true for each of us, I believe.

Velma Ruch, in *Summoned to Pilgrimage: The Temple as Focus of a Pilgrim People* (a suggested resource for World Conference), mentions a time several decades ago when church ministers traveled beyond USA and western culture and into Japan. They soon discovered the church needed to journey differently to bear faithful witness of Christ.

*There was plenty of material on how we were different from other churches but none that truly set forth the gospel we had been called to proclaim to the world...in the process we discovered who we really were: not compulsive settlers, not aimless wanderers, but...a people of both place and process, a people centered in Christ but committed to journey.” (pg 407)*

Part of my love for Community of Christ is that we are a worldwide faith community. Our enduring principles unite us, and focus us on the Good News of God’s love. Yet we are also all shaped by different places and different processes. How our mission initiatives are expressed differ area by area, congregation by congregation. World Conference reminds me that we are all journeying as disciples and stewards of the Gospel, and God loves every transforming step made towards Zion – towards the transformation of earth into God’s peaceable kingdom.

Today is day 2 of our road trip to Independence, and Dick is happily the driver while I “entertain” myself by writing this article. The difference between yesterday and today is that I am primarily focused beyond my personal wants, needs, and discomfort. This trip is temporary – there is a beginning and end date. Yet the blessings of time with my husband, sharing with friends old and new throughout the world, will all be lasting. Even if still at times, uncomfortable!

Continued blessings,  
Diana