



First United Methodist

Become a part of God's family at First UMC

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*Vision: Hamilton First: a growing extended family sharing Christ's love
in the heart of the city (A United Methodist Congregation)*

Mission: To Know Christ and Make Him Known in the World

May 27, 2010

Dear Friends:

This week we celebrate Memorial Day. It is a time when we remember those who have died. I would like to share with you something I learned from doing a funeral this month.

When I came to First, I told them that I do good funerals and enjoy it. Both are true. I do not like that someone has died. I cherish each one of you. However, when the inevitable happens and someone dies, I want to make sure that they have a funeral worthy of their life. It has to be personal and faithful.

As you know Grace Engle died this month. As I was preparing her funeral, I received a gift. The family, at Grace's 80th birthday, had given her a gift. They had put together about six pages of stories of her life, included about her parents, her childhood, her marriage (did you know that she and John eloped?) and her family. It was a treasure trove of information that I could use in the funeral. Grace Engle's funeral was about a woman of faith who had lived the life that reflected her faith as she loved her family.

What I had was a gift, not just to Grace on her 80th birthday, but also to her children, grandchildren and great-grand children. It is a way for them to get beyond her name and relationship to the person behind those two.

I know that Memorial Day is often about those who died. Here is what I would like to suggest. This year, spend some of the time on your memorial day giving your family information about your life. Did you have scarlet fever when you were a child? What was most important to you about your parents (even if it was negative, as the real can really help people understand their lives)? How did you meet the person that you married? How did you get married? If you did not get married, what was the "love" of your life? Maybe it was teaching, or medicine.

I think you are getting the point. While you are at it, write a couple of paragraphs about why you have been a part of the church, what it has done for you in your life. Make sure you include any significant events in your life from the church. Here is one from my life: when I was 8 days old, I went to church for the first time.

I wish you a blessed Memorial Day. When you remember those who have been significant in your life, but have died, blow them a kiss. Tell them how much you love them. Then help future generations know something about them by writing a short story about your life. If you need help putting it into form, I know a couple of people who could help you in this congregation.

Have a good walk with God this week.

Grace and Peace

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Peggy".

Rev. Peggy