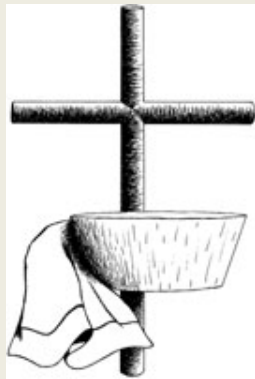


DEACON UPDATE



“THAT’S MY CHURCH!”

April 2013

A few weeks ago the mother of a seven-year-old in the Sunday school class I teach shared this story with me: “Levi was looking over my shoulder when I was checking Facebook last night, when all of a sudden he pointed and said, “That’s my church!” “What do you mean, ‘your church’? That’s a picture of Pastor Joel and Miss Donna.” “Yes! That’s my church!”

While the story made me smile, it’s really a pretty sobering thought. In our faces Levi saw “his church,” people he knows he will see nearly every Sunday and sometimes on days in between, people that call him by name and care about him. He has learned to count on that.

So what does it mean to “be the church” to someone? A very subjective question, to be sure, but when someone is MY church, they are a place of sanctuary, of comfort, a feeling of coming home. The people who are my church offer a way for me to use my gifts so that I can try to be the church for them. My church encourages me to serve, and teaches me how to be served as well. My church calls me by name and cares about me, and I have learned to count on that.

But not everyone you see, *even in your own church building*, has a church. Next time you are in worship, look down the pew. Look across the aisle. Would everyone there affirm that yes, you are their church, or at least part of it? Do you have some kind of relationship with everyone on that bench? Does everyone know your name? Do you know theirs?

As deacons and pastors we try to be the church through our service and support. One of my favorite definitions of support is simply “to be interested in.” And sometimes that’s all it takes to be someone’s church. At the very least, it’s a great place to start.

—OVER—

"...and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it."

-- Matthew 16:18

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Donna Kline". The letters are fluid and connected, with a prominent loop at the end of the word "Kline".

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