



Valley Voice

Buffalo Run, Fillmore and Valley View
The United Methodist Churches of the Buffalo Run Charge
“One Congregation Serving the Community and Worshiping in Three Locations”
Pastor Duane Bardo *Office Phone: 814-355-2208*
June-July 2010

Fishing Instruction And Guide Service

“I’m going fishing.” Did you know this was a quote from the Bible? It’s true. In the company of several other disciples by the Sea of Galilee, after the resurrection of Christ **“Simon Peter said, I’m going fishing, we’ll come too, they all said. So they went out in the boat but caught nothing all night.”** (John 21:3)

Sound familiar? That sounds like many of my fishing trips; fishing just isn’t much fun when you don’t catch anything. Take it from me; it’s even less fun if you don’t fish! Let me explain. Many years ago when I worked for the boiler company, I often traveled with the owner. One spring he said to me, “Duane, now that fishing season is here you should put you fishing gear in your car. You never know when an opportunity to fish might present itself.”

One morning when I arrived at the office he said, “We’re going to State College. Load your brief case and your fishing gear in the truck.” I got my brief case and told him I hadn’t put my fishing gear in my car yet, and he just said, “OK, we’ll leave in ten minutes.”

After our appointment my boss drove through Bellefonte. We stopped; got a sandwich to go and then we rode up along Spring Creek to Fisherman’s Paradise. We pulled into the parking lot and I asked about what we were



going to do. He said I’m going to fish, and since you didn’t bring your gear, you’re going to watch. Well I sat there for about three hours and watched him catch fish.

It was a beautiful day, but it just wasn’t the same for me as it was for him. Especially when every time he landed a fish he’d laugh and yell for me to look at the size of this one. That evening when I got home I put my fishing gear in the car, and it was there April through October for many years. I guess we could call this the parable of a man who watched others fish.

When Jesus called his first disciples, who were fisherman by trade, he said, **“Follow me and I will make you fishers of men.”** At his ascension he told the disciples our mission was to **“go and make disciples of all nations.”** **Matthew 28:19.** This is known as the great commission and applies to every believer. We are all to be active in disciple making, fishing for men.

The other day I was driving down Spring Creek and I noticed a sign by a house that said “Fishing Instruction and Guide Service.” I thought to myself **that’s it!** That’s what we disciples are to do. Think about it. Most people begin fishing by some variation of this pattern. First they are drawn by the peace and renewing presence of the stream or lake. Then they see the excitement of someone catching a fish. Someone gives them some fishing instruction, and guides them to a good place to fish.

Similarly we became disciples when God drew us by his peaceful and renewing presence. The Psalmist says: **“He leads me beside quite waters.”** Then we saw the joy and excitement of believers worshiping and serving others. As we joined in someone gave us instruction helping us to learn to recognize and enjoy the presence of Jesus in our lives.

“Taste and see that the Lord God is good.”

Then we learn to fish... to go out and tell others about the life transforming experience of the living Lord. Guiding others to the Lord. I think this is a great example for leading people to Jesus. Ask yourself, “Does my life reflect the peace and renewed presence of Jesus?”

Am I filled with joy and excitement for worship and serving others?

Am I continuing to learn and experience Jesus in God’s word and fellowship with my brothers and sisters in Christ?

And maybe the most exciting and often overlooked aspect of discipleship: Am I guiding others to a saving relationship with Jesus?

You know, I faintly remember the first trout I caught. But I vividly remember the first six trout my son caught on Little Laurel Run a mile and a half outside of Picture Rocks in a deep pool under a hemlock tree. And the times I helped my daughter to a special spot for kids only in Crossforks. They both refer to those spots as “six fish” and “kids only.”

You see the greatest experience in fishing isn’t catching the big one. It’s teaching someone to fish. Because for evermore you have someone with which to share the experience.

In another parable Jesus taught about the excitement of guiding someone to repentance and belief in Him when he said **“... I tell you, there is rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.”** (Luke 15:10)

Think of the persons that you have guided into a relationship with Jesus. Think of the persons that the Lord will bring into your path tomorrow, at work, at the store, in your neighborhood. Are you prepared to share how Jesus has blessed you and changed your life? Remember you never know when the opportunity to fish (for disciples) may present itself.

God Bless and good fishing,

Pastor Duane

