**WYOMING WANDERINGS**

20 July 2015

To My Friends Along The Way in Wyoming,

Grace and Peace to you in the name of Christ Jesus. On whatever road you may find yourself today, I hope it is as pleasant as it is now in Cheyenne. Summers in Wyoming (or at least the parts I have known) are truly glorious and should be enjoyed to their fullest. So, please, get out of your offices and churches and raise your face to the sun and enjoy this summer God has given us.

My time upon the road (both physical and metaphorical) as your District Superintendent has only just begun, but already I look forward to the journey with you. This weekend I was able to visit the Methodists in Basin and Hyattville. I look forward to showing up at your doorstep in the weeks and months ahead. I expect it will take me about a year to visit all of the churches personally. But in this technologically connected era, I am only a text, email, phone-call, Skype, or FaceTime away, if you need me.

About that, we have been in the process of setting up my District Office at Grace Church in Cheyenne (Jenita’s office remains in the Conference Office) and I want to pass on to you my up-to-date contact information:

Rev. Jeff Rainwater

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This summer, we want to welcome pastors who are new to serving our Wyoming churches: Laura Rainwater (Grace-Cheyenne), Jim Welch (Chugwater/Wheatland), AJ Bush (Gillette), Pete Phillips (Laramie), Mark Thurman (Newcastle), and Thomas Beam (Sundance). “Veterans” on the Wyoming Way, you may want to take a moment to call or write one or all of our new pastors. I bet you can remember what it was like in your first year of serving as pastor in the wide open spaces of Wyoming.

This summer, all the active pastors will receive from the District Office our clergy circuit assignments for this year. These are important groups for keeping us connected with, supported by and accountable to each other. Also this summer (likely in August), we will be sending out church conference schedules and assignments. I hope to lead between 15 and 20 myself and will be asking help from other elders.

My devotional reading today brought me to a well-known story of the road — The Parable of the Good Samaritan in Luke 10. Douglas John Hall, commenting on this passage, noted the centrality of *kindness* to the entire parable. Kindness was the one point the lawyer understood at the end. Then Hall quotes Kurt Vonnegut from *A Man Without A Country.* It’s Vonnegut’s words I want to leave you with today.

“Welcome to Earth, young man,” Vonnegut said. “It’s hot in the summer and cold in the winter. It’s round and wet and crowded. At the outside, Joe, you’ve got about a hundred years here. There’s only one rule that I know of: Goddamn it, Joe, **you’ve got to be *kind*.**” —Kurt Vonnegut, *A Man without a Country* (New York: Seven Stories Press), 107

Whatever road you find yourself on, be kind. Blessings to you my fellow travelers.

Yours in Christ,

Jeff