

## Contact Information

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### Encounter Christ...Grow in faith...Love as Christ loved...Tell the Story

#### *Theology of the Everyday*

In formal terms, theology is the study of God...beliefs about God and how God works, and how different religions and denominations systematically try to understand God and God's work. It's heady stuff, and I enjoy it. I probably don't make as much time to do that kind of reading as I used to, but lately I've cracked open a couple of theology books that have been in my "to be read" stack for far too long.

There are no doubt many people who are part of the church who haven't been to seminary who also like to read and study theology...theology nerds aren't just confined to clergy. But most people don't and don't want to think that hard about God. And that's fine.

But in a way, most of us do some form of theology. We think about God. We think about God's work and the meaning of everything and how we fit in to God's story. We wonder, what is God doing in my life? What is God doing in the turmoil of our political scene? What is God doing in the midst of all the turmoil and suffering in the world? That is theology.

I did pretty well in theology in seminary. I took all my classes pass-fail, so don't necessarily have the grades to prove it, but I always got good comments on papers and such. The heady, academic theology is something a person can feel a certain mastery of.

But what is God doing in my life? That's theology at a different level. It can be heady. But it's often more of a heart theology...an experience of God. It's less about understanding and explaining and making connections. It's more about just being, and trusting that God is there in the being.

My own spirituality has always been much more of the heady, intellectual variety and less the experiential.

But these last five months have, if nothing else, shown me that intellectual understanding and explaining doesn't always get you that far. Sam's illness and the increasing frailty and disability of my parents has been wearing to say the least.

And I still really don't know what God is doing in the midst of all that. I could go back and re-read all my books about God and suffering. But it would be an intellectual exercise that I think is unlikely to have much impact on me in the midst of what we are going through.

I am by nature something of a fixer. I like to fix things...make them better...solve problems. And although there are things I can do and need to do for both Sam and my parents, I can't fix any of them. I can't even hurry up Sam's recovery. It is a very helpless and powerless feeling.

But the theology I've learned is the theology of the cross. It's the theology that says where God seems most absent, God really is the most powerfully present...in suffering, even in death. It's the theology that says we need to die to ourselves to find real life...that out of whatever deaths we experience, new life comes.

I suspect what that will mean to me is the death of the fixer...the me that wants to control how things come out.

I don't think that has fully happened yet. But I am finding myself increasingly able to live in the moment. To focus on the next thing to be done instead of trying to get things to come out a certain way. I'm more able to be joyful even when the overall situation just seems hard. I can still debate the merits of the Cubs versus the Red Sox and talk politics with Sam and not be solely focused on his medical issues. We can laugh every now and then. I can listen to the stories my dad tells, even though I've heard them before. I can get outside and garden and run and bike and swim and work toward my triathlon goal.

In the midst of tough times, maybe what mostly happens is an awareness that God is more in the every-day small things than in the heady theological ideas.

Christ's peace,

*Pastor Kris*

### ***Summer worship leadership/sermons***

Pastor Kris will be gone July 15, August 26 and September 30. There will be one other vacation Sunday and possibly a continuing education Sunday yet to be determined, but for sure we need coverage for those three. If you would like to share the message and/or lead worship, please talk to Pastor Kris. She's available ahead of time to give some guidance if that would be helpful to you.

### **May Calendar**

May 6	9:00 am—Worship with Holy Communion 9:45—Sunday school
May 13	9:00 am—Worship—Blessing for parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles Ministry Appreciation
May 20	9:00 am—Worship—Pentecost 9:45—Sunday School
April 28	9:00 am—Worship—Blessing of those food service, cooks, caterers, restaurants

### **May helpers**

Cleaners—Cathy Hartshorn, Tyler and Kelly Sudik

Lectors—McKinley/Hartshorn

Ushers—Aaron Nygren/Harvey Mintzmeyer

Communion Assistant—Charlie Rine

### **Phone Number**

To reach Pastor Kris, please use  
the cell phone number

402-499-4993