

Thursday - April 4

And if by grace, then it cannot be based on works; if it were, grace would no longer be grace.

Romans 11:6

As I write this devotional on this cold day in January, the United Methodist Church's (UMC) Special Session of the General Conference has yet to be held and the outcome of the vote on the Way Forward has yet to be determined. This vote involves decisions about homosexuality and the UMC.

I am very interested in the outcome of this upcoming special conference. After 16 years of marriage, it was with a painful unraveling of information and events that my ex-husband revealed that he was gay. I wish I could say that I handled this new information with kindness and love, but I did not.

As I was going through the divorce, it was also time for my oldest daughter to go through confirmation classes here at PUMC. At that time, I was not familiar with the United Methodists Church's Book of Discipline, until it became a part of the court documentation for my divorce. My ex-husband objected to my daughter becoming a member of the United Methodist church. It was his belief that the church was not accepting of the LGBTQ community. I think he thought that his daughters would be unaccepting of him if they became members of the church. Again, this was his interpretation. This is why the special session is so important. It is important that the church continues to clarify its position on things like sexuality so that nothing is left for interruption.

While the marriage I had is over, the best thing that came of it was my two daughters. They have shown more grace and compassion to their dad than I have or probably ever will. Their love for their dad is unconditional. I have learned a lot from them. I appreciate their tolerance, acceptance and love of all people.

God's grace is for all people. It cannot be earned by doing good deeds or merits. God's grace has already been freely given to us no matter who we are or what we have done in our lives.

I hope the church has found a path forward after the Special Conference. So that no matter who enters our church doors here at PUMC, that they feel welcome. May we as a church continue to grow in our faith and to share Christ's love with everyone.

Karen

Prayer: God of grace, help us to love others as you love us. Help us to continue to grow stronger in our faith and to love all those around us. Amen.

Song to download today: Build My Life by Pat Barrett