

CREATIVE IDEAS

The front cover was taken on Saturday May 3 when a big storm hit Bobcaygeon. A beautiful rainbow filled the sky. This symbol always reminds me of God's promise and his presence surrounding us.

Being out of commission for many weeks and not having the ambition nor the motivation to come up with ideas for this issue, I am grateful for the suggestions people of this congregation gave.

Brian Eberts offered a brilliant idea on how to get to know the people of this congregation. It is a little mystery teaser about someone that the congregation does not know about.

Always reserved in the background, Rick McLaren timidly gave an interview about his philosophies on religion.

The more I learn about the people in this congregation the more I see many creative ideas.

I want to close this column in memory of Jerry Crawford for all the work he has done in the past for Knox Talks. Thanks and we will all miss you.

Positive criticism is always welcome. Any concerns in regarding layout, design and copy, send comments to thelifestylegroup@i-zoom.net

MINISTER'S MESSAGE

Rev. Paul Johnston



Many years ago, I visited a United Methodist congregation outside of Charleston, South Carolina. An older woman came up to me and asked if I was visiting. Yes, I was, I answered.

"I could tell," she replied, "you're sitting in my seat."

Many of you have had a similar conversation, and it often hasn't had a pleasant ending. But this one did. She went on to say she was glad I was visiting and I was welcome to use the seat as long as I wanted to. She sat down next to me and we had a very pleasant conversation. And I felt I had found a church home in a new community.

People often ask about what's involved in being a "magnetic church." There's been lots of studying and praying and planning and dreaming going on with it. But the basic idea is pretty simple. It's about learning to be a congregation like that woman from South Carolina. It's about learning how to do what we can to help people feel welcome in the church.

Jesus said he would be drawing people to himself. The Bible uses the wonderful imagery about people drawn to Jesus becoming the household of faith, a family living in God's grace.

The church can be the physical presence of that family. It can be a place where people feel welcome to come and hear about the grace of Jesus Christ. We can fulfil that destiny when we learn to extend hospitality to people in the name of Jesus, when we share in worship and prayer and service together. In that sharing people can hear the call of the Spirit and feel the grace of God.

There are lots of things that can go into that, but ultimately it becomes real when one person shares with another. Possibly something as simple as an invitation to come sit together as we worship God together.