

# The CrossRoads Connection



A Youth and Young Adult Ministry of  
St. Andrew United Methodist Church

## Isn't it Amazing...

Isn't it amazing how things work out? Now, I'm not suggesting that everything always works out the way we want, but I am firmly convinced that everything does work out.

Take me, for instance. Right now, even as you read this article, I should be standing knee-deep in a Michigan trout stream, wondering what I'm going to do with the next 5 weeks of my Sabbatical. Right now, I should be really missing my family, have a million (plus) pictures taken, tramped a thousand miles of streams, caught at least SOME fish (surely) and maybe even have some notebooks of scribbled notes to sort through someday.

Isn't it amazing how things work out?

When these events were planned, the one thing I wasn't planning on having was a quadruple by-pass surgery! How inconvenient! I mean, that messed up my plans in

chipping in

a big way. Cathy and I had put a bazillion hours into planning for my sabbatical. I don't think it took this much planning to pull off D Day! Finances to shift around, housing to get arranged for, a plan for fishing which rivers, where and when and that doesn't even bring into account all the planning for who would do what in my absence, here at the church. Lots of plans! All down the drain.

But, things work out, don't they?

Sure, I had to have the surgery and go through weeks of recovery and more weeks of rehab, and my sabbatical had to be rescheduled (thanks to Pastor Tim and the Staff/Parish Relations Team), and all the plans had to be cancelled and a new plan arrived at. But, things are working out.

I was able to cancel everything except a 2 week period in September that we were planning to

spend in Idaho and Montana. But, that worked out as well. We're still going, here in a couple of weeks, and just taking it as vacation. We'll spend a few days in Idaho with Cathy's folks, and Heather, Trent and the girls will join us in Big Sky, Montana for a few days. It's all working out.

In the beginning of the recovery, I don't mind telling you that it was pretty depressing. I could do very little for myself – and I'm terrible at letting others do things for me. I was limited physically in everything from food to the amount of time I could sit up. I had the worst reactions possible to the anesthesia, which left me with some pretty nasty side effects. I lost about 30% of my vision (and I LOVE to read); I was hyper-sensitive to smells, sounds and touch; and on top of everything, it was obvious that I would not be able to go on sabbatical. I was very low. Poor me!



Pat Sleeth is pastor to the CrossRoads community.

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Our MISSION: We seek to encourage youth and young adults to develop a genuine faith in Jesus Christ, encourage them to grow as lifelong disciples, and to equip them to minister to others for the sake of the world.

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But, it worked out. Very soon in the process of cancelling things, we found out that we could not cancel our arrangements for our western trip. We could choose to not go, but we'd have to pay for it anyway. My wife said, "Let's just take a couple of weeks vacation and use the time as we planned." My doctor said I should be fine to do that, so I used this trip as motivation for getting past the surgery.

Every time I wanted to give up on the rehab, I simply visualized me standing in the middle of Montana's Yellowstone River with the mountains in the background – and I got back on track. Any time I wanted to go off my diet, I just reminded myself how much better I'd feel and how much more energy I'd have to put in those miles on the streams if I'd stick to it – and I did.

Whenever I'd get depressed because things weren't going fast enough, I'd just remind myself of my doctor's words of what WOULD have happened if I hadn't come in for the tests. His words to Cathy were, "You'd just come home one day and find him dead in the lawn from a heart attack from mowing the lawn." And, that would get me back on track.

Things work, not always the way we plan and sometimes the opposite of the way we plan. What I really wanted to talk about wasn't really my vacation or my sabbatical; it was what we do when our plans fall apart. I'm no expert in the area of change management, but I've recently had to learn a few things. It seems to me that what I do with change is my decision. I can take it how I choose, and I can do with it what I

please – it's up to me.

When things fall apart, I can choose to complain that life gave me lemons, or I can make lemonade. I can make myself and those that love me crazy with my complaining, or I can tell myself that this is an opportunity to succeed in another way – and see how it works out. And, it will always work out, one way or another.

I've had to learn that there are some things I can control and some things I can't. I can control my diet and exercise; I can't control my genetic predisposition for heart disease – I've got it. Sometimes, when my life is nuts, about the only thing I have any control over is my attitude. I have no one to blame but myself when my attitude stinks!

The one thing in all our lives that remains unchanged is change itself. However long we might live, we will have to find ways to deal with change, and whether we do so in a healthy or unhealthy manner is up to us – so why not choose healthy? When your plans fall apart, take some time to line up your resources, check out your options and make the best decision you can – it'll work out – you just wait and see.

And, of course, early on in my

**Remember,  
you can always  
access the CR  
calendar on the  
Web at  
thecrossroads-  
umc.org**



rehab when I was feeling particularly miserable about what was going on in my little world, I had to decide who was in charge. If it was me, I was in big trouble. If God was in charge, things would work out. See, I know can trust Him, based on being in relationship with Him for many, many years now. And, I know He's given me the mind and the resources to work through, to make (and remake) plans and to deal with change, as necessary – even when it gets tough. I chose to let God be in charge, and decided that I'd try to follow instead of lead.

You've heard me say (a dozen times), "If you're struggling right now, hang on! You'll get through it." In each life there will be ups and downs, twists and turns and all the roads will lead you somewhere. So, where are you heading? Which is more important to you, where you are or where you end up? You'll get there. God says so.

Isn't it amazing how things work out?

*Pastor Pat*

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**Aug/ Sept  
Jr High Events**

A calendar of future events to clip and place on your refrigerator

August 30  
10a Sunday School  
6p T.O.M., The Intersection

September 6  
10a Sunday School  
6p No T.O.M.

✂

**See YOU at the CrossRoads**

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# Junior High Update

Genesis 2: 2: *By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing; so on the seventh day he rested from all his work*

Sometimes, great things come to those of us that step back and re-energize. God rested from his work on the seventh day. In realizing that to be a true asset, you need to be rested, Monica, Jeff, and I took a break from our regular “Junior High Youth Group” leadership this summer. Monica went north to visit friends for several months. Jeff and I took a month off at the end of the summer, and none of this would have happened without the volunteer leadership we have in place!

In case you don’t know, Teens On A Mission (T.O.M.) has five leaders:



**Monica Hoover** is a special education teacher in the Crawfordsville area. She graduated from Ball State. Monica is a West Lafayette native but spent several years teaching in the Dominican Republic or as she calls it, the DR. Monica has a natural gift with kids. She spent her summer with friends in Northern Indiana and is back in full swing! Monica is also very active in the young adult group at church.

**Marilyn Foster** joined our team in the fall of last year. She is a medical transcriptionist and you will most likely hear the kids talk about the fact that Marilyn gets up around 4am each morning to go to work. She is originally from Texas, but slowly we are trying to make her a Hoosier! Marilyn has a great ability to relate to the kids with smiles and hugs. In addition to Junior High, Marilyn can be found on Staff/Parish Relations Committee and on the Missions Committee.



**Ted Foster** arrived in the junior high in the fall as well. He works for Verizon as an engineer. Ted grew up in northern Indiana but later moved to Illinois. Ted will tell you that his biggest asset to Junior High is that he is drama proof which is really needed when dealing with this age!! You might also know Ted as “Simply People puppet guy”.

**Jeff Norris** has worked with the maintenance team at Subaru for nearly 20 years. He is originally from the Anderson area but has been here long enough, we consider him a native. Jeff calls himself the food and games guy of youth group. In addition, he will play the strong arm of justice if needed. This, for this group, means he walks across the room and sits next to the kids talking. Jeff usually greets the kids as well.

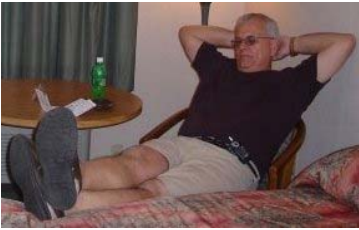


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Then there is me, **Dana Kirkwood**. I'm the mouthy one of the group. I grew up in Terre Haute and Evansville, spending ½ of my childhood in each location. I attended Indiana University and, as my father would point out... continue to NOT use that education. I work at Purdue in the business office as an account clerk overseeing grants for Discovery Park. My role in youth group is to catch all the pieces that aren't already filled by the amazing team above me.

Lastly, **John Baldwin** has spent many evenings sitting in with us and has become a great contributor to the group. While he is not an "official" member of the leadership team, he is quickly becoming an asset to the group!



If you haven't had an opportunity to volunteer somewhere within St. Andrew, these leaders would suggest that you seek out where God is pushing you! You might be surprised where you land!

If you were to ask any of us, we would tell you that leading a junior high youth group was not our idea of "a fun" place to be every Sunday evening... but you know what, God knew it was just what we needed, and now, it's just where we want to be!

Each Sunday at 6pm, you will find this team along with an amazing group of sixth, seventh, and eighth graders watching movies, playing games, eating snacks, and talking about God, Jesus, friendships, love, and our roles in a community of faith. If you happen to know someone in this age group, send them our way.... We would love to have them!

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### O.P.E.N.: Pastor Pat's Email Devotional

Have you been reading the Bible regularly? You know you should, but it's hard to do sometimes. Here's something that might help. It's a devotional that Pastor Pat writes every week and sends out by email. It's also available at the CrossRoads website.

[http://andrew-umc.org/CR/index.php?option=com\\_wrapper&Itemid=39](http://andrew-umc.org/CR/index.php?option=com_wrapper&Itemid=39)

The current plan is to read from cover to cover, and we are now in Job. Go ahead and sign up for email delivery at the URL above. It'll be a good reminder to open the Bible and follow along.