

A BETTER WAY...

The month of May is one filled with celebration, graduations, weddings, Mother's Day, and family picnics, are just some of the things that bring us together with a sense of joy and love. The 13th chapter of I Corinthians gets quoted a lot in May; "Love is gentle and kind..."

I shared at a Presbytery meeting an occurrence that caught me by surprise. While driving through one of the small towns in SW Wisconsin I passed a sign that posted the speed limit and flashed how fast I was driving. Not wanting to encounter the local police, I made sure I was traveling under the posted limit. As I drew near the sign it flashed the message "Thank you." I was duly impressed by the gesture. Recently when driving through that same community I slowed down hoping to see the same acknowledgement of good behavior. However, in my mind I thought the speed limit was even lower than what was posted. Coming in more than a handful of mph under the limit, the sign flashed a new message, "Fantastic!" Odd as it sounds, it lifted my spirits to get such a response.

It may be projecting to see this automated, unfeeling sign as sharing love, but that is the feeling that stuck with me. The planned encouragement of some sign maker had left its mark with me. I found myself being very mindful when driving in this village because it felt good to get such positive feedback, even from a sign.

We live in a time and a world that seems quick to judge, quick to blame, quick to belittle. The pain that we see around us can leave us feeling defensive or unappreciated, and we can find ourselves perpetuating those same traits of anger, (righteous or otherwise) impatience, and judgementalism. But, in this month especially, we are reminded that God has called us to a better way. A way of love, encouragement, patience, kindness...

Personally, I feel a great deal of kindness from colleagues and members in John Knox Presbytery, but I hope that we are projecting that love to those who aren't a part of our inner circles as well. I encourage us all to keep that example in mind in all our dealings. If an automated sign of steel and laser indicators can make someone feel better and encouraged to respond with modified behavior then perhaps our world needs a little more love. And we are called to show the world that better way. May we all enjoy and share such goodness.