



Rooted in Love

They are like trees planted by streams of water, which yield their fruit in its season.

Psalm 1:3a



A Stewardship Moment

by Phil Davidson

I thought it appropriate to begin with a story that is related to the subject of this statement, at least slightly: A little boy became restless as the pastor's sermon dragged on and on. Finally, he leaned over to this mother and whispered, "Mommy, if we give him the money now, will he let us go?"

Henry Ward Beecher said, "The Church is not a gallery for the exhibition of eminent Christians, but a school for the education of imperfect ones." Indeed, we are imperfect, but we are also forgiven. And, our church family is "Rooted in Love" of God and our neighbors. According to Ezra Taft Benson, "Our desires, be they spiritual or temporal, should be rooted in a love of the Lord."

When reflecting on these statements, I recall the times when the church (this one and others in my past) was of particular importance in my life. My father worked for a major manufacturing company in Indianapolis, where I was born. In the late 1950s, he was offered a managerial position at that company's new facility in DuQuoin, Illinois—a small community in the southern third of the state—and we moved there. I was in fifth grade at the time, and you can imagine the difficult adjustment to a new school and a new town that could have fit in one neighborhood in Indianapolis.

But, a group of people "Rooted in Love" of God and their new neighbors made a difference for my parents and me. We attended a large Presbyterian church in Indianapolis. So, we naturally gravitated to the First Presbyterian Church in DuQuoin. And the rest is history, as they say. I still had some potholes in my road to adjustment, but Pastor W.S. Erwin and the congregants helped pave the way.

And, now, as I am on track to becoming moderator of Second First, I find that this is perhaps the most important time in my church life, because my eyes have been opened. I am now witnessing so many of you who are "Rooted in Love" by your dedication to serving others inside or outside of our church family. This church is a beacon to the community, making a real difference in people's lives.

In this stewardship season, let us ensure that we may continue to make a difference in people's lives by giving of time, talent, and treasure. In particular, as we consider our financial support, it seems appropriate to prayerfully contemplate what we want to happen in the next year and beyond with reference to our building, staff, and programs. May we remain "Rooted in Love" of God and our neighbors.