

July Laity Minute

I am a very lucky person. You see, I happen to live with a computer genius. Anytime I have a problem with my computer, iPad, phone, or any electronic device, my in-house HelpDesk is only a text or loud yell away. My poor husband, Andy, has heard that frantic “something-is-wrong-with-my-laptop” voice echoing down the stairs many times. One of my linen closets was surrendered and serves as the “data center” of our house. If you open the closet door, you will see quite a setup. And no, I don’t even think about touching any of it. Due to his educational background and over 20 years-experience in the computer field, I am the beneficiary of his knowledge.

We have been lucky at Centenary to benefit from this knowledge, as well. As you may have noticed, especially if you have worshiped online, we have an exceptional video/audio capability. From what I understand, our system is as good if not better than most. But, all of this wasn’t haphazard or random. All of this took planning. Lots and lots of planning. I watched Andy build the church system from scratch. I can’t begin to tell you all the details, but I can tell you, from a novice eye, it took hours and hours of research, planning, execution, and lots of wires, cables, and other things I have no idea what they were.

Generally, every Sunday, things tend to go as planned. The computer does what it is supposed to. The sounds board lights up like a rock concert, and the audio is just right. The camera streams 1080p which is extremely high quality. (Don’t ask me what that means. You are more than welcome to ask him, though. But, be prepared for computer talk and your eyes may glaze over like mine do.) All of this streams to Facebook in a structured manner.

But, even though Andy plans and pushes all the right keys to make it all work seamlessly, every once in a while, there’s a blip. Sometimes the system likes to get sassy. It will throw him a curveball and challenges him to fix the issue, which I have heard him say is like “finding a needle in a haystack” at times. The little blip has happened at inopportune times, such as a Sunday morning. Most of the time, the problem is fixed quickly, and we are back in business.

Isn’t that what life is about? We can plan all we want, but occasionally that blip occurs. We can write the code for the computer, but sometimes it won’t cooperate, and we have to keep working at it until we get it right. We can rely on experience to get us through personal blips, as well. We can even reason our way through challenges. We can look back to the way we have always done it traditionally to help us solve a problem. Thankfully, we, as Methodists and Christians, have another tool at our disposal. And it has nothing to do with cables, wires, or sounds boards. It is Scripture.

Experience, reason, tradition, and Scripture are the elements which comprise the Wesley Quadrilateral. There is plenty about it online, but in essence, it is the belief that the core of the Christian faith was revealed in Scripture, illuminated by tradition, vivified in personal experience, and confirmed by reason. However, Scripture is the primary source of the four. (You can learn more at <https://www.umc.org/en/content/glossary-wesleyan-quadrilateral-the>).

The Wesleyan Quad is a perfect code for us to follow when life throws us blips. No computer genius knowledge required. The only thing it requires is faith. So, the next time you have a blip, think about the Wesleyan Quad. That's a HelpDesk which never closes.

Peace.

Kelly