

Seeking to Serve

When Jon Baillie first started attending Central on a regular basis in 2009, he came with the thought in the back of his mind, “How can I serve here?” He could see that this church had much to offer, and he was being served by the church, so he wanted to reciprocate. He helped out here and there with various things, always keeping his eyes open for that one thing that would be a good fit for him, something that he could commit to.

Then one day he read the fine print in a prayer newsletter. “I don’t even remember how I started receiving the prayer newsletter. I don’t remember signing up for it,” Jon said. But he noticed down at the bottom of the page a modest sentence, in small type: *We’re looking for help if anyone has time.*

Even though it was not in his reserved nature to initiate a contact like this, God prompted him to respond to this simple plea for help. Jon emailed Paul Covert to find out what kind of help he was looking for; they met, Paul laid out the tasks, and Jon agreed to come on board.

Jon had just graduated with his Masters degree, and had not found a job yet, so he was available during the day when they needed him. But, he was also searching for employment, and a daytime job could put a damper on this serving time. Cathy Cryer and Paul were praying for a job to come his way, but joked, “Do we really want him to find a job?” Of course, they did, even knowing they could lose a valuable servant minister.

God answered their prayer...the one where Jon would get a job...and they did lose him to paid employment in a great job as an engineer at Intel. Paul wasn’t going to give up too easily, and Jon was still a willing servant, so Paul and he came up with an alternative. Now, Jon dedicates his Thursday evenings to serving in the prayer ministry.

Jon is working in a variety of areas, from helping with streamlining tasks, to clerical work, to computer work. One of the computer tasks Jon works on is to input the prayers from the congregation to the website so the Web Prayer Team can pray for them. As he was doing this each week, he began to realize the burdens that so many people are carrying.

“I don’t know any of the people that I put these prayers in for, but it keeps you grounded as a person to know that there are people coming in the doors every week that are dealing with very real issues.” God puts us in positions that we may never have seen as opportunities and Jon says, “It gives me things I can pray for even though I don’t know these people.”

There is definitely joy in the offering, giving of yourself for the Kingdom’s benefit, and Jon has found joy, especially in one particular task. Paul requested that Jon listen to prayer sermons on CD from some reknowned speakers on prayer, and then to write out an outline of the message.

Jon said, "I haven't heard in my life, *too* many messages on praying, oddly enough, regardless of the fact that I've been going to church almost all of my life. I haven't heard a lot of different perspectives on praying."

For Jon, having the opportunity to listen to these teachings on prayer, and take notes, touched his heart and deepened his knowledge of prayer. He thinks he's there to serve, but finds out God has additional plans. "I'm going somewhere to help, and then Paul literally says, 'Sit down, and listen to this and take notes for me' but really, it feels like the (speaker's) message is coming directly to me. It challenged my own views on prayer."

As so often happens, God blesses us in our serving and Jon is experiencing that blessing. He's grateful to Cathy and Paul for all he's learning from them and his experiences in this ministry. "The amazing thing about this is that I was just going to help, just to do what I can, just on a very small scale. But the things I'm learning and understanding, challenging my own prayer life, have been a great thing."