

mm—Closing Down the Old Home Church

We're invited to *Celebrate the Life and Ministry*— the closing down
of our old home church—*University Christian in Seattle...*
like being invited to a funeral...
to face the reality of what is and appreciate what was.

That church was just a place to go to Sunday School...
80 years-ago memories of upstairs Junior Department Rooms
and later other rooms for Junior High department...
and even some people in those places.

I only went into that big Sanctuary once in my childhood...
Palm Sunday carrying palms...hundreds of us...
and seeing that large front stained glass figure of Jesus...
arm upraised.

Was it a "*Hello...Welcome*" gesture?
or was it a "*Good bye*" gesture
as he prepared to sail off into Heaven or someplace?
I still remember and wonder.

There was that hot tub baptistery where I was baptized
like thousands of others over the years
by a preacher named Perry Gresham...
below that stained glass window.

My life-changing memory in that building...
was meeting Jean when she asked me to a dance
(I said "*no*"... didn't go...couldn't dance...
last time I ever told her no).

We were married in that place over 66 years ago...
ordained there 62 years ago...
childhood dedications there for all our three...
preached there several times.

Memorial services for my grandfather and aunt...
for my mom and dad...
for Jean's dad...and others.

Mentored there under John Paul Pack
and Hayden Stewart...
hired as Youth Minister
before I even went to Seminary.

Two brothers and a cousin were among 100's who
first met life partners in the church Campbell Club...
a third brother was also married there...
the figure in the window still had that hand up-raised.

Did I mention that Jean once played a piano prelude for Church
along with the organist (Mr. Greener)?
or that Gene Colias presented me and others
with the Honored Minister's Pin?

What about that window? "*Hello*" or "*Goodbye*"...
were fewer people saying "*hello*" and more saying "*goodbye*?"
or has the "church" been leaving the building behind for years?
weren't we supposed to move outward and onward?

I always thought the stained glass Jesus was overdressed and too regal...
not at all like the humble guy I read about in the Bible...
I don't think he is saying either "*Hello*" or "*Goodbye*."
what I hear now is.... "*GO...I AM WITH YOU ALWAYS!*"

On Saturday I'll take a last look at that memory-filled building
and give the big guy in the window one last wave.

For the Moment...Art Morgan 7/17/18