

MM Blue Sheet 1 January 2015

Morgan's Moment...

How many tenants
would you expect to see
at their land-lord's memorial event?
I thought it an honor and testimonial
when one a fourth of Austin Coe's
tenants appeared at his service.
Austin's post-church career
turned pastoral skills and practice
into owning and managing rentals.
It's a tough-love kind of business
blending property maintenance
with people skills.
Sort of like church ministry
only paying is not optional
and excommunication is eviction.
Austin never retired
from land-lording or ministry...
tenants were a constituency.
His conscientious caring style...
brought parishioners and tenants
to share moments of appreciation.
He was a Christian land-lord
who patterned his life
after a Jewish carpenter.
—Art Morgan

BOOK CORNER

We've been on the road for about three weeks now and are not yet home as I write. The most used books on our trip have been the AAA travel books for Oregon, Northern and Southern California. The next most used books have been a couple of motel guides. That's telling it like it is.

We also use a road map, now wearing at the folds. We don't use it much while driving because Jean has a new iPhone that takes us anywhere we want to go. It is really great in places like Los Angeles where it may take a half dozen freeway changes to arrive across the city.

MOMENTS ALONG THE WAY—A Story of One Stop

Sometimes our trips seem like missionary journeys.

We intend to travel and enjoy a few friends and relatives along the way.

We started this trip on Christmas Day after our morning family Christmas. The tree was down and out in the yard by noon, and so were we. I won't tell all of our stops, but there were a few before we arrived in Palm Springs where we experienced the Ducks Rose Bowl victory.

After three days in the Los Angeles area we finally emerged into warm sunshine. We had scheduled ourselves into a short luncheon visit at the home of Austin and Mary Jo Coe.

Their home enjoys an expansive view of the Pacific high on the hills above Ventura where Austin was pastor of First Christian Church and then owner and manager of a number of rental properties.

We drove up the winding streets to their home, parked and were greeted at the door by Mary Jo and their daughter, Brenda. Hugs all around. After a few minutes I asked, casually,

"Where's Austin? Working under a sink at one of his rentals I suppose." Silence.....

Brenda spoke out of the silence..."You haven't heard...Dad died in October."

No, we hadn't heard. They felt remiss at not notifying us. I felt uncomfortable for not being more sensitive.

We revisited our hugs, with different feelings.

I spent the next few minutes with Brenda, hearing the whole story of Austin's dying days and hours, and of the funeral. A grief revisited by her, a new grief not quite processed by myself. Not without tears.

Jean had her time with Mary Jo and then we all joined for lunch. Another daughter, Nancy, came later. It was what I call a "moment."

We spent time with 33 people on this trip and came home with special memories from each visit. There are some good stories I would love to tell.

To be allowed presence in people's lives is very special. Some call it a travel report. It feels like a missionary journey.

MOMENT MINISTRIES, CORVALLIS OR

— Art Morgan