

I am a better speaker than a writer. I have the music cranked up for inspiration as I'm hoping what is in my head transfers to paper. Well, screen. You mean what I know. I was kind of surprised that B didn't know my favorite band. It's Rush – the Canadian prog-rock power trio. I'm listening to them right now – Time Stands Still from the Hold Your Fire album (1987).

It might be a surprise to some that I am indigenous personnel to Carbondale. We had a member at the Fellowship – Joyce Webb – who knew me when I was a wee lad and I'd visit my paternal grandparents that lived next door to her. I always laughed that she would still call me Robby. She'd known me long enough that I wasn't going to correct her.

I was born into and raised at First United Methodist Church in Carbondale. Reverends Ray Porter and Sally Wisner were there when I was young and then Reverends Donald Carlton and Ed Hoke when I was in my teen years. We had a regular spot that everyone knew the Galleglys sat there. Mom was in the choir, dad was a regular usher, Beth and I were both acolytes when younger and both joined the choir later on. I followed the path that some teens do of not attending in my later high school years. I attended SIU and then started working for the IT department. A coworker – Randy Greer – suggested that I check out a martial arts group of which he was a member – the SIU Aikido Club. And that is where I met Karen. I fell for her – literally. Heels over head (we have the picture to prove it). Our efforts to make the club more social evolved into us dating. Things progressed and we married in August of 1998. During our life together, I didn't really feel a need to attend church.

So, how did I arrive at the Fellowship?

B joined our family in 2007. Karen and I are of different faith backgrounds. We wanted B to be able to find his own way in life and not be forced to follow the faith of his father or mother. A friend of ours – Jason Shepherd – had mentioned something about the Fellowship and Karen looked it up online. I felt comfortable with our first visit there. I recognized family friends, former teachers, and community members and felt at ease. Especially with Joyce calling me Robby! CUF seemed to speak directly to our desires: A place where we could go as a family with our different backgrounds, not being made to feel that our beliefs were wrong, and where B could learn and grow. I ended up growing in the Fellowship as well. In the past, I would have never thought of being a "Sunday school" teacher. I found my way back to singing with a choir. And, somehow, I served on the Board of Trustees (this is my second time on the board).

I'm sure some of you are wondering, "Why the Rush song reference at the beginning?" Well, it goes something like this:

*Time stand still-*

*I'm not looking back*

*But I want to look around me now*

*See more of the people*

*And the places that surround me now*

*Freeze this moment*

*A little bit longer*

*Make each sensation*

*A little bit stronger*

While I acknowledge where I was, I love being where I am. As B gets older and grows into the wonderful person he is, I want to be in the present and enjoy every moment. I remember connections I made in the past that slipped away but I am not fixated on them. At CUF, I enjoy seeing the people, feeling the connections and sense of community, and knowing that we are in a good place. And that's why I help at the Fellowship how I can – to ensure this good place keeps going.

I'm bad at wrapping things up so I'll just say that's all the stuff that's bouncing around my noggin. I'm sure B wants me to shut off the music so he can focus on homework.

Love and respect,

Rob Gallegly, Board Member