

PUT IT IN PERSPECTIVE

What kind of role does faith play in your life?



ASHLEE ALLEY

I am sure it comes as no surprise that faith plays a pretty significant role in my life. I am the campus minister, after all. I was raised in a Christian family and was involved in church for my whole life, but it was actually when I enrolled as a student at Southwestern, I truly began to learn what it meant to be a person of faith. I knew a great deal about making “Christian” choices, and even a lot about the bible. I had a good many experiences relating to my faith,

but when I came to college and realized my faith was *my* faith, not that of my parents, I truly learned what it meant to be a believer and follower of Christ.

I remember the first Sunday that I was here in Winfield—I had worked (and played) hard at Freshman Work Day the day prior and I was tired. I set my alarm to go to church with some new friends, but when that alarm went off, I wasn’t sure I wanted to roll out of bed. But I did. Even during those first days of college, I was aware that my time in college could be an opportunity to explore what I thought and not just accept the beliefs of my parents or my church.

The choices I made many years ago led me to become involved in campus ministry, a local church, and engage in personal spiritual practices. I came here to receive a great education and major in biology (which I did), but while I was here, I dis-

covered God was calling me to step out in faith and serve in full-time ministry. No one was more shocked than I was to hear that call, especially when it would bring me back here to serve as campus minister.

My faith was shaped as I learned to study the bible, worship with others in chapel, explore ideas that were unfamiliar and truly examine what I believed about things.

I’ve learned important “faith” lessons. I’ve learned my doubts have taught me more about faith than anything else, the process of becoming a faithful person means one will encounter both pain and joy, and I will not always know what step to take next. But learning to become a person of faith means I can have confidence that God is giving me grace to take another step of faith today and again tomorrow.

Rev. Ashlee Alley is the director of campus ministry.



STACY TOWNSLEY

I am, in general, an optimistic person, and my faith is a key source of inspiration for my positive outlook on life and understanding of the times we’re living in.

To be of service to humanity is a primary tenet of the Bahá’í Faith, and I try to view my work and family life through this lens.

Stacy Townsley is the registrar.

Ordinary trust gives faith lift

ERIN MORRIS

It happens in every language. Words get twisted and changed by popular culture, and before long nobody really understands what anyone else is truly saying.

The word ‘faith’ is a perfect example. Phrases like “keep the faith” or “walk by faith” are thrown around in our society with reckless abandon, and I seriously doubt that anyone understands what those phrases really mean. The problem is that people don’t even know the definition of ‘faith’ itself.

So what is faith? Dictionary.com defines it as “confidence or trust in a person or thing.” That seemed a little too vague to me, so I looked up both ‘confidence’ and ‘trust’ and was able to put together a more specific definition. Faith is being certain that you can rely on the character, ability, strength, or truth of someone or something.

Now that we know what it is, we come to that ever-popular question asked by religious groups and political parties everywhere. “What are you putting your faith in?”

Many answers result from the posing of this question, some of which are valid. Many will say that they put their faith in God or in themselves or in humanity. Some will even be able to back up their statements. And then you get the person that says that he or she has faith in absolutely nothing.

Liar, liar. Unless you distrust and doubt everything and everyone around you, you have faith of some kind. Let me prove it to you.

The sun comes up each morning, yes? Do you expect it to come up again tomorrow? Would you be surprised if it didn’t? Ah ha! So you are certain that the world will continue turning on its axis at 1070 miles per hour so that your day remains approximately 24 hours long.

That, my friend, is faith. Okay, so how about this? You’re at a restaurant. You’ve just finished a great, or maybe not so great, meal and your server hands you a little book with your check inside. So you whip out a little piece of plastic and slide it in the book. Soon the server returns, taking the book, and promising to return with your receipt.

Where did your credit card go? The server took it to the back to

complete the transaction. How do you know he or she isn’t writing down some rather important numbers? Do you ever consider that possibility? Why not?

Hmm. Perhaps you have a bit more faith than you thought. In fact, now that you’re thinking about it, maybe you have a lot of faith you didn’t realize you had. And maybe, just maybe, you’re realizing that you have faith in a lot of people and things that haven’t earned it.

For instance, I was studying in the library the other day, and made a trip upstairs. While I was gone, my backpack, laptop, ipod, and Cranberry Splash Sierra Mist were left completely unattended.

Now, I’m a freshman, and I don’t know even half of the students on campus. Yet, I left my valuables just sitting there in plain sight, almost begging to be messed with or taken. Not only that, but among the people I do know, a couple of them would think spitting in my drink and leaving would be hilarious.

Why do I have faith in the trustworthiness of the daily patrons of Deets Library? I don’t have a clue. And I bet I’m not the only one.

Think about how many times you have set down a personal possession, expecting it to be there when you come back. That’s quite a bit of faith.

Last, but definitely not least, are friends. You put a lot of faith in the people you regularly associate with. You expect that they will keep your secrets and laugh when you do. They are the people who know you’re not okay even though you say you’re fine. They are the people you rely on, the people you have faith in.

These are just a few examples, and truth be told, I could go on all day. The fact of the matter is, we actually have faith in much more than we realize. I challenge you to start thinking about it.

The next time you allow someone to use your cell phone for a quick call, realize you trust them not to run away with it. The next time you let someone borrow a pen, consider whether or not you trust them not to turn around and stab you with it.

It seems ridiculous, yes, but it’s the truth. So don’t tell me you have faith in nothing. I will not believe you.

Erin Morris is a freshman majoring in communication. You may e-mail her at erin.morris@sockans.edu.

Home-cooked meals highlight holiday



MAGGIE COLLETT

When I go home over breaks, I look forward to certain things, like water pressure. Cole Hall isn’t exactly known for its awesome water pressure. I also enjoy seeing my best friend, and driving the curvy back roads that I grew up on.

But the thing I look forward to the most when I pull into my driveway is home cooked meals. My mom is notorious for being a good cook. She makes cinnamon rolls from scratch, chicken noodle soup, and some killer chicken breasts. When we head over to my grandparent’s house, my uncle barbecues anything from pork steaks to chicken to ribs. The amount of food I consume when I’m home would shock most people.

Thanksgiving is an especially bad time or good if that’s how you want to look at it. My family is known for going above and

beyond the amount of food that is considered normal and healthy on Thanksgiving. We all crowd into my grandparent’s small farmhouse in Marion County and the house is quickly filled with laughter, conversation, and the unmistakably mouthwatering smell of our Thanksgiving meal.

An entire kitchen table and breakfast bar is dedicated to plates upon plates of turkey, stuffing, corn, and the weird cranberry sauce that oozes red juice yet still manages to hold its can shape. Not only do we serve the typical Thanksgiving meal, we also have soups, homemade wontons, and casseroles of all kinds. We all shuffle through filling our plates and then we scatter throughout the house, balancing our Dixie bowls and Solo cups on our laps. Usually there are a few brave souls who venture back through the line a second time for an extra helping of Uncle Rick’s spicy chili or Aunt Diane’s Reuben dip.

When we’ve all had our fill, we clear off the table and proceed to the stage during our Thanksgiving meal that I like to call halftime. A few of the kids get rounded up to wash the dishes and the older women put on a kettle to make tea. There is usually an aunt or two wandering around with a camera snap-

ping pictures of the relatives sleeping with their mouths open. These pictures will later end up on Facebook for all of humanity’s enjoyment. Most of the family shoves into the TV room to watch football and yell at the screen. The teenagers usually go outside to do some shooting or ride four wheelers and the young kids end up following for the sole reason of “Grandpa said so.” Eventually someone will be dragged down to the creek to throw rocks with the five year old.

After a certain amount of time has passed, Grandma Beth will relocate back to the kitchen. This is the signal. The ice cream bucket is taken out of the freezer and the Saran Wrap is removed from the various desserts. Every year the choices are different. They have ranged from Red Velvet cake to chocolate pie to pumpkin pie to gooey butter coffee cake. One year we even had a flaming Banana Foster. And of course, the cranberry sauce is a trooper. It’s still holding its can shape on the plate in the corner.

The entire family has a sixth sense about this time during the meal, and everyone magically reappears in the kitchen. This is no small feat considering the size of the room. Everyone stands around expectantly until a

few people are guilted into serving the rest of the family and the last course begins.

This year, however, Thanksgiving will be a little different. Rather than going to the farm for the holiday, my immediate family will be traveling to Branson, MO. We will be staying in a house through our timeshare and celebrating Thanksgiving apart from the rest of the family. My mom, sister, and I have been planning food for a while now. It’s looking like it’s going to be similar to what we’re used to – enough food to feed the army. My mom will be preparing the turkey. My sister will make her sweet potato casserole and I might contribute some hot wings. After all, it wouldn’t be a typical Collett Thanksgiving without non-traditional food.

As for the can-shaped cranberry sauce, I’m not sure if it will be in attendance.

Although the traditions will be a little different this year, I am looking forward to spending time with my family and consuming massive amounts of food.

A little extra water pressure wouldn’t hurt either.

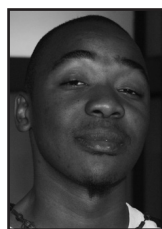
Maggie Collett is a freshman majoring in communication. You may e-mail her at margaret.collett@sockans.edu.

PERSONAL COLUMN

Word on the Hill

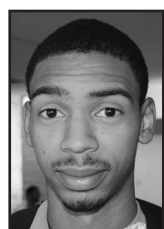
What is your favorite home cooked meal?

By Inger Furholt



“Mozambique tiger prawns.”

Alexandre Macassane
business management
junior



“Salmon and rice.”

Christopher Copeland
psychology
senior



“My family’s old style vodka pasta.”

Alicia Frank
marine biology
senior



“Chicken casserole.”

Judy Marks
nursing
junior



“Meatloaf with greens and macaroni and cheese, cornbread and cheesecake.”

Anjaih Clemons
business administration
senior



“Chicken and dumplings.”

Derek Lopez
athletic training
freshman



“Beans, cornbread and fried potatoes.”

Brad Pilgrim
biochemistry
senior



“Spaghetti and meatballs.”

Michelle Deloney
education
junior

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