June 15, 2017  ***Are we there yet?*** Milepost 89

 Emotional and spiritual wellbeing is a life-long journey on which we increasingly realize that our past experiences and future anxieties do not have to control us. The goal is *mindfulness*: the ability to live fully in the present.

 The very nature of a congregational transition period, seems to work against *mindfulness* because it focuses on understanding the past, establishing future vision—within time constraints: the opposite of mindfulness! But here’s the secret: it really is all about learning to live in the present!

 When we understand where we have been, and are in tune with the Spirit’s call for the future, we can live more fully in the present as a congregation. We are set free from past perspectives and future “what if…” anxieties which prevent us from living fully in the present.

 Perhaps “Are we there yet?” is not a helpful question. Mindfulness would ask, “Are we here? Are we fully present in the now? “

 The milepost numbering system has confused some. It’s simply the number of days we have been in transition. Did you notice that the “odometer” was turned back from 320 to 0 on March 19? That indicated that we took 320 days to arrive at a common direction for the future. Once the new vision was approved on March 19, we have been living into the new vision. It took several more congregational meetings in April to deal with the structure decision, but transitional process has been completed. We are now well into implementing the structural changes, and my work is now moving more into the background. Three Vision and Accountability Team members have been called by the congregation.

 For some, it will be transition until I exit. But you can choose to consider transition completed, and embrace living into the new vision

even now as positions in the new structure are discerned and called this Summer. More about how Shalom is already living into the vision next week. -Gary Martin