

# Journey Enews

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## Full Circle by Bobby Duncan

Connie and I have returned after several weeks traveling. We've enjoyed and been refreshed with our time of Sabbatical. Truly, we have been blessed and felt "off-duty" during this extended time of renewal. After forty six years of full-time ministry at churches in Texas and Kentucky, it was our first-ever opportunity to be away.



Connie and I needed this break in our busy routine. Local church ministry (full-time) is a lot of things. What's the word often heard from servants in their local church family to describe every-day experiences? Exhausting! Serving in ministry is a calling of God. Full-time, local church ministry is both tiring, trying, and rewarding. Serving others is a ministry and mission established by God throughout the Bible.

Every Jesus follower is called to serve others. We are better together. The Church that Jesus established is a family of Christ followers. However, a few are chosen and selected by God to serve in unique leadership roles. Adam was pushed away from Paradise after listening to Satan. Sin made everything much more difficult. Adam struggled as leader of his nuclear family from then on. Noah was chosen to become a builder of an impossible size Ark to save a remnant of people (8 people in his family) and the animal life (2 of every kind) on earth.

Later in the Bible, David, the youngest of his brothers, was empowered to defeat a Giant with a rock and sling. Eventually, baby Jesus, born in Bethlehem, entered our world to become our Rescue and Redeemer.

If you decide to become a full-time servant, making local ministry the mission of your life—this is not a job, but a calling. Connie and I said, "Yes" many years ago.

In reflection, the year was 1975 when a seed was planted. Connie and I were living in El Paso, TX. I was still in the military. I was a new Christian and Jesus follower. I enrolled in a night class at El Paso Christian College. I think we studied something in the New Testament. I had a passion to learn more of the Bible.

I remember asking my professor one night, "How did you decide to become a preacher and later a Bible college professor?" His answer stuck with me. He replied, "If you can do anything else, and be happy, do something else—this is too hard."

After I had tasted more of God's nurturing and developing my heart to serve other people, everywhere, I was hooked. By 1980 I graduated Kentucky Christian College. I was quickly ordained and began my first full-time youth ministry role in Grayson, Ky.

Not until the last few weeks have Connie and I been able to pause for a scheduled rest and renewal. God kept us in great health and filled with joy serving others. Connie and I spent almost two weeks in Florida during our Sabbatical, just she and I together. No family, friends, church duties, or schedules. I told Connie, "Do you realize this is the first time since you and I were married—you were 18 and I was 20. We've been you and I again? No kids, no mission, no friends or family nearby, just us?"

Our full circle moment was God's plan. We're excited to discover what's next. God has His plan for the last part of our mission and ministry, like the first. We trust God for His wisdom in timing for everything.

My take-away from our Sabbatical experience is similar to the 3 words I spoke in the beginning when sharing with others—GOD IS GOOD!