

ENGAGING SPIRITUAL CONVERSATIONS

What's Your Church Like?

Donna phoned the church office to ask for money to buy some gas and to purchase food for her grandson. She was heading back home to a town about an hour away. She wanted to make sure he was okay. We gave her a gift card for a local grocery store.

She told of how an ex-boyfriend stabbed her, how she did drugs for six months and that she pulled prison time for two years.

Her story, although fuzzy at times, fascinated me. Her story as to why she was in need sounded stereotypical and rehearsed. But her story of faith intrigued me.

"I am my own church," she said. "I stand by a tree and know I am by God. God is in everything."

"Sometimes I am confused and wonder what God thinks of me and expects of me." She went on, "I feel lonely." She then negatively critiqued the church in which she was brought up.

I inquired, "Do you know the story of Jesus how He died to forgive us of our sins?"

"I believe in Jesus and He has forgiven me of my sins. I just need help living it."

"From your story," I observed, "you have built a strong case for the church to be part of your life in the future. You say you are your own church, but you called a congregation to ask for help. And we are glad you did. You feel alone and we offer welcome and friendship. You wonder about God and we teach He is better than a person imagines."

“What is this church like?” She wondered.

Our church believes God not only forgives, but He gives the strength to live a Christ-like life.”

At her request I read scripture (Psalm 46) and prayed. She wept.

She said thanks the only way she could, “You are the best pastor I ever met.”