

## **GOD IS UP TO SOMETHING AND IT GOT TO BE GOOD!**

**(FOUR DAYS OF JOURNALING AS D.S. ELECT)**

God is certainly up to something big and we are part of it!

Its day four (4) at the parsonage, I sit in the basement, at the district office computer to write this missive. Everything around me is new and foreign and strange. There is one window that allows light to stream into the office. My view of the sky and the trees that surround the building is quite restrictive; however, the light that stream in through the window stimulates a strong sense of hope and purpose for me. I know that it's daylight outside. The sun is rising on the horizon. I look at the trees swaying and I know that the breeze is blowing. It's fresh and clean; hope, possibility looms before me and beckons to me to adventure out and do what I do best: *I pray, I fast, and I love God's word hence I preach his unadulterated word. I love God's people and believe in helping them to be their best and live the best lives they could. I emulate that which is right, noble, good, and honorable. I attempt to replicate those ideals and lead by example. I am transparent and not afraid of my emotions or my frailty as a human and my incessant ability to fail. But then, I get up and embrace the notion that the righteous falls several times and gets back up again. Yes, and with that I do what I do best, I love, and love, and love again.* Connecticut, let's see what God is up to?

It is day three (3) at the parsonage and while unpacking trying to reassemble my orderly life, in my mind's eyes, I hear the voice of my deceased mom saying in her West Indian lingo: "look what God has done to my little son name Alpher! God has taken you from Trinidad and Tobago; he has brought you a mighty long way; to a strange place to find some new people to LOVE." Suddenly, I could remember her valuable lessons: *of walking humble before God; of walking in faith and embracing the impossible and knowing that with God all things are possible. Of never doubting God's purpose for our lives; of living with integrity; of keeping my word even to my own hurt – let my word be my bond; of searching for the best of people and letting them know that if excellence is possible then greatness is not enough; of sharing and caring and fighting for the marginalized and the oppressed. Above all, of loving and esteeming God's word above my necessary food. I can hear her voice saying "if God before you, who can be against you? Love God with all your heart, mind and soul.* It seems like God is up to something!

It is day two (2) at the parsonage; I am tired, anxious, discombobulated and somewhat ambivalent. There are new scents, new sights, new sounds and no sounds. The village of Saint Albans, Queens is somewhat distant although it looms in my mind. As I arise from a make shift bed, my body aches and my mind is racing at light speed. The horrors of moving is taking its toll. I am in Connecticut as the DS. There are about seventy five churches, sixty five pastors and an innumerable company of people called Methodist that loves God, their communities and their churches. There are myriads of issues and concerns that have already started coming my way but which seems light in the face of the success of this district. *There are exceptional pastoral leaders; laity that's excited about ministry. There are churches that are*

*vibrant and beautiful. The saints of Connecticut district have excelled as people of their word; they live up to their commitment as part of our Methodist connection; they are excited about their churches and they love Jesus. I am now privileged to be part of this great work; to partner in a shared vision for our district; to add my voice and mind to the brilliant, creative minds and voices of this district.* Wow! God is really up to something

and to think that I could be part of it.

It is day one (1) at the parsonage; I arrived about thirty minutes before the moving truck rolled up. David Underwood, his wife, and Ray Heald are the advance welcome party. They are members of the Trustee board that over the past few weeks have painstakingly worked to assure the comfort of the parsonage for my family and I. I feel a deep sense of gratitude toward them. Ray and Dave shepherd my wife and I throughout the space to ensure that there were no stones left unturned. Ray helped with some of the furniture when the moving truck arrived. He stayed throughout most of the day providing support and advice. We are so thankful.

Its mid day, about 11:59 p.m., and the one and only Rev. Ken Kieffer arrived (in short pants and a smile – why is he smiling?) He hands “the keys to the district over to the Rev. Dr. Alpher Sylvester, wishes him well, and then rode off into the sunset.” A facsimile of these words were written somewhere before!

Ken would hold onto “the passwords, pins and double secret codes and handshakes that I will need to know in order that this transition will be smooth and complete.” Thank God, he is staying within the district. He says to me that now I am his DS, he will voluntarily allow me to draw from that deep well of experience and knowledge that assured his success. I am honored to follow after this man that I so admire and respect. As a soldier his word is paired with his integrity and honor. I am grateful to Rev. Ken, my bishop and above all my God. In all of this, it seems to me that **God is certainly up to something and it got to be GOOD.** As bishop will say ... *The journey continues!*

