

From this Corner

## “Being Still”

Larry Baird

“Be still.” My mother used this command often in the context of worship. It was issued in a hushed tone yet with urgency. I believe I was a teenager before I realized it was not a part of the official Methodist Sunday morning liturgy. I never have been one who has been very good at sitting still. One Sunday this summer I found myself sitting in a pew of one of my churches listening to what was a very good sermon. It was then I heard her. “Be still.” It came in a still small voice. Whether it was mother’s, God’s, or my wife’s voice matters little. It was a timely and relevant message. I confess that even though this was a gifted and passionate preacher I had been sitting there thinking about how I would deliver the Word on the same text and topic. I suppose I was fidgeting. It would have taken little for me to have leapt to my feet to deliver the message just as I have for some three decades. So I confess that I still have trouble sitting still in worship. Whether or not I am preaching or leading worship I still discover myself come Sunday to be full of nervous energy. I know it drives my wife crazy especially now that we get to sit together and worship on the Sabbath. It is time I both cherish and find difficult.

Over the years, and presently, I notice that there are other children who are like me. They drive us to distraction. Their energy abounds and is hard to contain in the few feet between pews. I sometimes wonder if they too will one day escape from the pews and take their God-called places in front leading worship. God works in mysterious ways.

Nonetheless I do understand that it would be good for me to learn the discipline of being still. The Psalmist shares it with us as God’s Word in Psalm 46:10. “Be still, and know that I am God...” I have reflected upon this passage and understand it to be profound and valuable instruction. What it means is that all of us, singularly or corporately, need to

cease our incessant being in control, or wanting to be in control, and give ourselves up to the knowledge that God is the only one in control and is dependable even in our most anxious hours. It is good news for those who needed desperately to “be still.”