

Friday, August 28, 2020

Dear Members, Friends, and Guests of Desert Hills Lutheran Church,

Today I'm thinking of Lute Olson, of his death, and what he did for UofA sports and the city of Tucson. I told this story in a September 2013 sermon called the 'Dinner Party.' Bishop Herb Chilstrom called me in February of that year and asked if I was going to the Augsburg Alum dinner at Lute Olson's home. Herb, Lute, and I all graduated from then Augsburg College in Minneapolis, now called Augsburg University. I said, "No, I threw the invitation away." Julie overhead and said, "We were invited to Lute Olson's home and you threw away the invitation?" She stared at me. Have you ever stood on the ice on a lake and suddenly hear ice cracking and see water? Have you ever had your life pass before your eyes in a split second? Have you ever confronted a mountain lion in the wild, face to face? "I'll go get it out of the trash," I said.

The ride up to the beautiful home in the Foothills of Tucson was a delight. We had not spent much time with Herb Chilstrom before this. He was gracious and curious about our family and work and Julie's teaching and history. As we approached the door, Herb said, "This will be fun, he is a good Midwestern boy." The door opened and Lute Olson invited us in. I don't remember what I said initially but blathering idiot was a fair estimate. We were introduced to Kelly his wife and others attending the event. There was food and music; we spent time outside, but it was pretty cold. When we came inside the only places to sit were on the sectional couch with Lute and Kelly. So, there we sat and listened. Lute showed us his trophy room filled with trophies, pictures, and memorabilia from his coaching years. As UofA Basketball season ticket holders at the time, we were thrilled.

On the ride home Herb again graciously sought to learn more about us. Now both Bishop Chilstrom and Lute Olson are gone. I'm so glad Bishop Chilstrom called me up to ask for a ride to a party I was not going to first attend. I'm thankful that Julie gave me that look of love. It was a night to remember and what I remember most is how gracious and warm both these men were to both of us. These gentlemen's lives remind us to make the most of our time and use our spiritual gifts to the utmost and remember as people of grace, we always remain gracious.

This weekend I'll be looking at the time that Jesus rebuked Peter and even called him Satan. I'll be looking at discerning God's will and facing our fears. Hope you join us online for worship.

Blessings,

Pastor Martin