

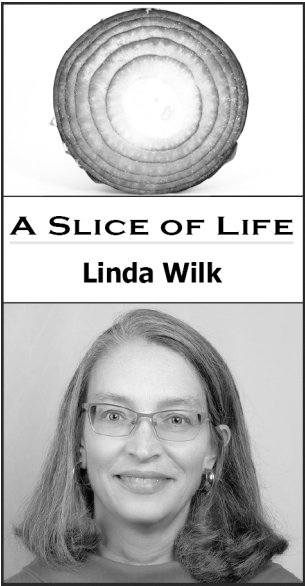
Speaking to a class brought hope to light

A college educator asked me to speak to his class about my work. An easy task and something I enjoy doing. What caught me off guard was when he also asked me if I could bring some hope to the students and went on to ask me if I believed there would be jobs for his students when they graduated.

I immediately responded that of course I did given I currently have three daughters all in college and have every belief that they will find employment in their chosen fields upon graduation.

Now, I am certainly not an expert on the economy, quite the opposite. My profession is working to break the cycle of domestic violence, sexual violence and stalking in our community and society. I for one know the large detrimental impact those crimes have on society each year.

Intimate partner violence is estimated to cost the US economy between \$5.8 billion and \$12.6 billion annually, up to 0.125 percent of the national gross domestic product, according to the National



Coalition Against Domestic Violence.

Despite that staggering statistic, I must remain hopeful that change and growth is inevitable.

I understand these are trying times. I also get that the unemployment rate continues to fluctuate and various companies and restaurants are on the brink of closure. However, if I did not hold out hope, I do not believe I would be a Christian who professes that God is in control and that we must only believe in Him and all will be fine. Now that does not mean that we will not have struggles or that there will not be tough times. We are

just guaranteed that today will be taken care of and that we do not need to worry about tomorrow.

Of our three daughters, our eldest Laura is the closest to entering the working world in her chosen career. She is due to graduate with her master’s in architecture in May from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

During a recent visit to Milwaukee with Laura, we saw how the city remains locked down. The school children are doing classes all virtually, there are not the usual Fall festivals and breweries are not doing tours.

Laura continues to do all her classes virtually and talked about the struggles that creates for socialization and connections as she spends most of her time in her apartment either attending classes or teaching a class.

She commented how a year ago architecture was the sought-after profession and how differently the job outlook currently is for architects, at least in the Milwaukee area.

One of her classmate’s boyfriends has been looking for an architectural job

since June in the area. That comment puzzled her dad, who has seen construction skyrocket, leading to limited building materials many times.

Laura explained that those construction projects have likely been in the architecture design phase for the last two to three years and are just now ready for the building phase. She explained that architecture is a long process.

We remain hopeful for Laura’s future as an architect, knowing that she has not been limiting herself to Milwaukee. In fact, she is only in Milwaukee because of the renowned architecture program the UWM offered in the area of historic preservation and sustainability which is where her interests lie.

And Laura wants nothing to do with the cold climate of Milwaukee, wanting to move to a much warmer climate, and being open to go where the job and God takes her.

I do truly believe that we are in very uncertain times. That God is sending us a stern message that we have strayed too far away from Him. That we have become too dependent

upon our own selves and our own abilities and we need to return to God.

We are in a broken society that is struggling to find its way; however, I also believe we are at a tipping point and that 2021 will bring us back closer to where we need to be. Our values and beliefs are being challenged and this is our opportunity to return to the values that guided the early Christians and

early leaders. I believe that as we do those things the economy will rebuild itself and we will be a strong nation once again.

So, as I spoke to the students about domestic violence, sexual violence and stalking, I also spoke to them about hope and the importance of believing that together we are able to change the future and make it the best place ever for all of us.

MHS Caring Closet seeks donations to help students

The Marion High School Key Club is ready to start their Caring Closet back up for the school year to help students who find themselves in need.

The service-focused student organization will accept donations throughout the school year to keep it running. Donations will be accepted during school / office hours. Marion High School students and staff can drop donations off with Ms. Vermilion, Key Club sponsor, in Room 2-46, or can donate money if they do not want to do the shopping themselves. Anyone outside the school who would like to help should contact Marsha Vermilion, mvermilion@marion.k12.in.us or 765-664-9051.

Key Club is an international, student-led organization that provides its

members with opportunities to provide service, build character, and develop leadership. Its core values also include caring and inclusiveness. At Marion High School, the Key Club takes on projects each year to make a positive impact on their school and their community. Marion Community Schools and Marion High School

are proud of their students’ compassion and activism in support of fellow students and their families.

Here’s a list of suggested items, to give you ideas of what to bring in for the Caring Closet. (Donations are not limited to these items. This list is



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4. B 5. C

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