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Troy, was a true physicist. God's natural laws - the confinement of time, the direction of gravity, the limits of space, are true for each of us as we live on this earth.

Some of us move through life barely knowing God's laws are a component of our existence - we drop a toy from our high chair and giggle as mother picks it up for the 20th time never realizing the awesome potential of gravity.

Some of us move through life acknowledging the law's presence and use them to deflect our own short comings - we blame them and wish for more hours in a day to complete tasks vaguely realize we, ourselves, have over-obligated time.

Some of us, indeed very few of us, move through life wanting to not only understand God's laws but to use them to challenge the limits of our own existence. Some are not satisfied to move
through life without knowing why, how, or what-if, to each of God's laws. Some are not satisfied to move through life without curiosity.

Troy was not satisfied to move through life without working to see the effect of his movement on the world in which he lived - a true physicist.

I have known Troy since he was a tine baby, when his family worshipped and served at East Naples United Methodist Church - when Troy was just developing his physicist traits. It would not be until his middle and high school tenure and First Church that I would come to be fortunate enough to witness and assist our great scientist.

Troy enjoyed movement to challenge God's law of time. Much like the Energizer Bunny, Troy kept going and going - seeming to require little sleep. During times when others respected the unspoken law of hours for sleep, between midnight and 5:00am, during lock-ins, Troy would play the trap-set, or gather friends for back stair races. And at home, Troy might walk down to the community pool- to study the effect of moonlight on chlorinated water?

Troy enjoyed movement to challenge God's law of gravity. He often studied the time-drop effect of spit wads or open-faced Oreo cookies plantings on the ceiling. But Troy took greatest pride in his drum stick experiment - some took days to drop!

Troy really enjoyed movement to challenge God's laws of space specifically the amount of oxygen-providing space required to support and feed a flame.

My first youth group night at First Church had the City of Naples Fire crew visit not once, but twice. As the emergency system kicked on and seizure-producing lights flashed around the campus, you could hear the name Troy faintly whispered throughout the fellowship hall where families had gathered to dine. As the softly-spoken recorded lady's voice prompted everyone to vacate the building due to fire, I ran for the youth room.

Like many of you, I have very fond memories of Troy and fire. I encouraged Troy's love of fire by asking him to be part of the worship team. One of our traditions was

to begin worship offering a prayer and then lighting candles - dozens of candles. Troy was perfect for the task. No one could offer such sweet and perfect prayers. No one could deny the joy on Troy's face illuminated by the candles' glow.

The fire? Not from our candles! The boys started popcorn in the microwave and went out to play football. The microwave timer was broken, and the popcorn burned. Not wanting to eat burned popcorn, and not understanding the brokenness, hey started a second bag - again, going out to play ball. Last I checked, the same microwave is still in the youth room.

Over the years, I eagerly anticipated the gift of watching Troy experience the awe and wonder of moving through God's laws. Like watching a child take it's first steps, Troy was an opportunity to not take things for granted and to not experience the norm.

On our trip to Puerto Rico, Troy took on the challenge to chase and mount a wild horse. God's law of gravity taught him some painful lessons along the way. Then,

with his beautiful smile, he triumphantly rode around the field atop the tired, and then defeated, horse.

On his confirmation retreat, Troy did not want a buddy in his canoe. Even though the water current was strong and he was
counseled the trip would be difficult without the help of another to paddle, Troy wanted to move through the challenge of gravity his way. The river swept him quickly down stream putting him almost a mile ahead of the others. Then, with his beautiful smile, he displayed the true essence of his experiment - single handed, he paddled back to the dock ahead of every other canoe, each holding two and even three youth, to finish first.

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Along the way, truly great scientists inspire others to see the awe and wonder in God's laws. On a youth mission trip to New York City, we volunteered to serve lunch at a local homeless shelter. We were time-challenged to move our large group (23) through subway schedules and traffic lights. We were space-challenged to hike long city block sidewalks crowed with people. We were gravity-challenged as New York City is not as flat as Naples.

Arriving at the shelter, the group caught their breath - that gravity thing, and instructed to set -up the food from the kitchen, serve on the food line, bus tables, and serve drinks.

But for Troy, the challenge - different city, different building, and different activity was not enough. For our scientist, he wanted to know why they where homeless. He wanted to know why they chose to eat there. He wanted to know how they survived. Before I could share our assignment, Troy had found the bathroom (an opportunity to explore

the building), found an apron (an opportunity to grab some food in the kitchen) and grabbed a coffee decanter. He spent the two hours sitting down next to one homeless person after another homeless person pouring coffee grabbing the opportunity to hear their story.

That evening, during our devotion and sharing time, youth spoke of the challenge to move through God's law of space: the trek to the shelter, and the condition of the facility. Youth spoke of the challenge to move through gravity, as the old building floor, stairs, and toilet was not very level. They described the challenged to move through God's laws.

However, it was our physicist, Troy, who reversed things. Instead, he described his movements through God's laws. With his beautiful smile, he spoke of each homeless person, by name, recounting their experience into the homeless system, their struggles to exists, and - more importantly, their joy at simply being able to experience life, something Troy shared, too.

Troy's challenge, during his life and for us each day, is not to see God's laws as something to be challenged to simply move through - but rather, the challenge to use movement through the laws to simply see wonder and awe - and to smile.

In the words of Garrison Keelor, *"Nothing you do for children is ever wasted"*

To Troy's friends, young and old, thank you for living and laughing along side him

To Troy's grandparents and relatives, thank you for guiding and praying for him

To Troy's brother and sisters, thank you unconditional

acceptance and understanding of him

To Troy's parents, thank you for Troy; thank you for providing, supporting, encouraging, and loving him endlessly; thank you for giving us this precious physicist

Just as we began each youth worship, we ended each worship with a benediction encircled around a single candle flame - usually held by Troy. (Light Sally's candle).

I invite all to stand, join hands, and share together, with Troy, our youth benediction. Please repeat after me:

Troy,
May the Lord bless you and keep you.
May the Lord make his face to shine upon you.
May the Lord lift up his countenance upon and give you peace.
Amen.