

# MIDWEST NICENESS

by the Church Mouse Paula Guth

I recently read one of my favorite columns, *From the Window*, in the *Peshtigo Times*. She talked about *Midwest niceness* describing a few encounters where strangers showed kindness or friendliness to strangers.

Yes, I often experienced *Midwest niceness* in my 65 years living in rural northeastern Wisconsin. My parents and others modeled kindness, respect for older people and reaching out with a helping hand to others. Most people I knew, worked with or met in my daily life were guilty of being *Midwest nice*.

Then, I moved to rural Williamsburg Indiana and discovered *Midwest nice* is prevalent here, too. I will give you a few examples. The personable Hardees drive up guy greets you as an old friend after a couple trips to his window with a big smile, a cheerful greeting and now calls me by name. People in the small-town grocery store I prefer, are *Midwest nice*. The staff members are friendly, helpful, bag your groceries and will even take them out to your car. It must rub off on their customers. Most of them are very patient with the slower or indecisive person blocking their path. They offer to help reach higher or heavier items for other shoppers with a smile. They reposition their shopping carts so you can pass by in a courteous manner.

When we moved here and were looking for a new church for our family, *Midwest Nice* helped us choose. We visited and tried out several churches in the area. First United Methodist was next on the list. We were greeted warmly by several people who recognized new faces. We liked the worship service and the inspiring, friendly atmosphere so we came back for a second week. We were again welcomed with hospitality by several people eager to answer our questions about programs and opportunities to serve or meet others. You never know when being pleasant or helpful to someone will make their day or even help them decide on a new church home. *Midwest nice* lives in Hagerstown Indiana.

Hebrews 13:2 Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unaware.

Paula Guth, the Church Mouse



*The Spirit Gives Life*

**Sympathies** to the families of Susan Hampton, wife to Everett Hampton and mother to their two children, Lisa Garrett and Jonathan Hampton.