



Wednesday Prayer

10th Sunday after Pentecost – Bread of Life

Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.”

John 6:35

One thing I learned going through this pandemic time in the U.S. is that we take much for granted, and when it's not available, it suddenly becomes very precious. Prior, we would have laughed at the idea of hoarding toilet paper and cleaning supplies, but the practice became common during the first several months of the pandemic. My daughter brought me a package of Clorox wipes last summer and we laughed about how she never would have done that pre-coronavirus.

The same is true of other aspects of our lives. I was fortunate to grow up in a family with loving parents who brought us to church every week, prayed with us, and modeled hard work and responsible spending habits. I thought it was just “normal”, boring even. I very much took it for granted until I grew up, went to college, and met others who were not as fortunate, and saw how much more difficult and painful their lives were. I began to realize that what I saw as mundane or boring, what I took for granted, was actually very precious.

Some people who come to our congregations fall into this latter category. The trauma of poverty or neglect or abuse may cause them to exhibit behaviors we don't understand because they've had to lie or steal just to survive. We see the behavior and tend to keep them at arm's length instead of embracing them in God's love. They can easily fall prey to those who offer false hope of shelter, food and love in order to ensnare them in sex trafficking.

Jesus said, “I am the bread of life.” When one considers the vast array of culinary delights that are readily available to most of us, bread seems pretty boring. As we go through our everyday lives, we can easily forget how precious the gospel message is, and that some people have never heard it. The morsel of bread that comes to us in the living Christ is anything but boring, and should never be taken for granted or underestimated in its power to change lives. It is a banquet to those who are starving for love and justice and hope. In the Epistle lesson for this Sunday, Paul reminded the people of Ephesus that Jesus equips each of us in different ways to do the work of ministry. Use the gifts you've received, even if you feel that they're boring or ordinary, to reach out with prayer, education and advocacy to share the precious gift of God's word with those who are vulnerable to or held in the grip of injustice.

Jesus, bread of life, we pray that the strength that we receive from you daily in your word of forgiveness and love, flows through us to those who need it the most. Amen.

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