

Mora/Ogilvie UMC
July 18, 2021

Prelude

Welcome

Annual Conference Update

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***Call to Worship**

Leader: We join in fellowship in the name of the resurrected Christ.

People: Hear our words as we speak boldly of the love of Jesus.

Leader: We share our gifts through action and generosity.

People: Hear our words as we let the grace of God flow through us.

Leader: We witness to our community when we serve in mission.

People: Hear our words as we learn to live out the ministry of Christ. Amen.

***Opening Prayer**

God of community and hope, spark our passion. Lead us as we seek to praise, worship, and serve your holy name in spaces near and far. With your guidance, help us to see that through the sharing of our gifts, we are strengthening and building community. We give thanks to you this morning for feeding our hearts and spirits. Amen.

***Hymn** UMH # 92 For the Beauty of the Earth (verses 1,4,5 &6)

Scripture John 6:1-13 Feeding the Five Thousand

6 After this Jesus went to the other side of the Sea of Galilee, also called the Sea of Tiberias.

2 A large crowd kept following him, because they saw the signs that he was doing for the sick.

3 Jesus went up the mountain and sat down there with his disciples.

4 Now the Passover, the festival of the Jews, was near.

5 When he looked up and saw a large crowd coming toward him, Jesus said to Philip, **“Where are we to buy bread for these people to eat?”**

6 He said this to test him, for he himself knew what he was going to do.

7 Philip answered him, “Six months’ wages would not buy enough bread for each of them to get a little.”

8 One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother, said to him,

9 “There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish. But what are they among so many people?”

10 Jesus said, **“Make the people sit down.”** Now there was a great deal of grass in the place; so they sat down, about five thousand in all.

11 Then Jesus took the loaves, and when he had given thanks, he distributed them to those who were seated; so also the fish, as much as they wanted.

12 When they were satisfied, he told his disciples, **“Gather up the fragments left over, so that nothing may be lost.”**

13 So they gathered them up, and from the fragments of the five barley loaves, left by those who had eaten, they filled twelve baskets.

This is the word of God for the people of God

Thanks be to God

Meditation

Prayer

Focus Statement: We witness to the love of God when we share our goods and gifts with the community.

Think about a community, organization, or team that you have been a part of, other than the church. Tell a story about how being part of that community shaped your identity or sense of self in a positive way.

Our children attended an elementary school in Bloomington. Once they were off in college, I decided I needed some balance in my life. I needed to get a kid-fix to balance out the adult world I was in, so I went to the same elementary school David and Ellen had attended and volunteered my services.

The volunteer coordinator at the school was a friend I knew from previous school activities. Her kids were close in age to our kids and had also attended this elementary school. I filled out the volunteer forms and waited. Eventually I was contacted by the school and offered “non-kid” type of volunteer work. You know things like office assistant, answering the phone, library assistant and making copies.

Answering the phone or making copies was not at all what I needed. I was looking for adult kid balance and me working with a telephone or a copy machine was not going to get me what I needed.

I went back to my friend and explained my needs and she said there was a volunteer position in a kindergarten classroom – BINGO - that is exactly what I wanted. Working with six-year-olds was the perfect balance for working with the adults in my office.

It turns out the kindergarten class I was assigned to was in the same room that both our kids had had when they were in kindergarten. Same room, same room number but different teacher. The teacher David and Ellen had was long since retired.

My classroom gig was originally to be once a month and over time increased to every other week and sometimes weekly. My schedule was Friday afternoons and was a great way to end the week. My first few weeks I was as nervous as I was on my first few Sundays in the pulpit – well maybe not that nervous – but I was nervous. It didn’t take long, and I was in love with the kids, with the teacher and with the assignment.

This experience took me back to what was important. Oh I knew lots of important stuff for being an adult, but this kindergarten stuff was different and even more important. What I learned as a kindergarten volunteer was an important relearning for me.

So I decided to make a list of what I relearned, but I discovered that I didn’t have to reinvent this list because it had already been done. All I Really Need To Know I Learned In Kindergarten was written by Erin Blackburn November 21, 2016 and shared at St. Ambrose University.

Blackburn’s first sentence says “The first lessons we learned are the most important ones” the following is written by Ms. Blackburn.

As we grow up, life seems to become more and more complicated. Problems in our life and the world around us seem to grow at rapid paces, and it's hard to get a grip on control of things. We lose sight of the things that really matter, and forget the important life lessons we learned when we were younger.

Digging through my closet tonight, I stumbled upon a poster I received when I graduated kindergarten about 15 years ago. What was on this poster though really took me by surprise. It's filled with very important lessons that everyone needs to remember and practice. Here is what the poster read:

ALL I REALLY NEED TO KNOW I LEARNED IN KINDERGARTEN

All I really need to know about how to live and what to do and how to be, I learned in kindergarten. Wisdom was not at the top of the graduate school mountain, but there in my classroom at school. These are the things that I learned.

Share everything.

Play fair.

Don't hit people.

Put things back where you found them.

Clean up your own mess.

Don't take things that aren't yours.

Say you're sorry when you hurt somebody.

Wash your hands before you eat.

Flush.

Warm cookies and cold milk are good for you.

Live a balanced life- learn some and think some and draw and paint and sing and dance and work every day some.

Take a nap every afternoon.

When you go out into the world watch out for traffic, hold hands, and stick together.

Be aware of wonder.

Remember the little seed in the Styrofoam cup. The roots go down and the plant goes up and nobody really knows how or why but we are all like that.

Goldfish and hamsters and white mice and even the little seed in the Styrofoam cup - they all die. So do we.

Remember to look around you.

Everything you need to know is in there somewhere."

What I was missing in my adult life was found in this list. Sure I might use different words or expressions but during my years as a kindergarten volunteer I found balance by recapturing my identity.

Being part of this kindergarten community helped me relearn and look at the world as I had when I was a kindergartener. This period of time helped me to find the me that I had kind of lost over the years.

My years as a kindergarten volunteer helped to re-find my identity and by reminded me of what is important – really important. Sharing, playing fair, saying I'm sorry, oh and taking naps – how I love naps.

And it is all still true, no matter how old I get – I know that when I go out into the world, it is still best to hold hands and stick together.

One of the ways we find our sense of identity is by being part of groups. What groups are you a part of, let's share aloud. Call out the names of the groups you are a part of.

The scripture today is the story of Jesus feeding 5000 with five barley loaves and two fish brought by a young boy.

“Philip, where can we buy bread to feed all these people,” I have to wonder, Jesus being Jesus wouldn’t he already know the answer to this question.

Where can we buy bread to feed all these people Lord? They’ve come such a long way. And they’re hungry. They need a place to stay. They’re so many...and they need so much.

Where can we buy bread to feed all these people?

Some of these folks are ones we know...some are relatives. Others we’ve never seen before. They’re people just like us. But still, how can we care for them all?

Some have children. Others are elderly. Many haven’t heard from their families and don’t know if they’re all right. Where will they stay? What will they eat? Where will they go when it’s all over? And How in the world can we show love to so many Lord?

“There’s a young boy here with five barley loaves, by the way I’ve read that barley tasted terrible but that is what they had, barley loaves and two fish. But what good is that with this huge crowd?” 5000 men - not counting the women and children!

What in the world can we do Lord?

Here’s what we have. But it seems so tiny compared to what’s really needed. Can five barley loaves and two fish really make a difference?

Lord, we’re overwhelmed by the great need along with our great desire to help out. We want to help. But who? And every time we do something, we feel like we need to help someone else because we haven’t done enough.

And Jesus directs the disciples to have the people on the hillside to sit down on the grass. He then gives thanks and they hand out the meager amount that they have.

And Jesus fed the multitudes...just as he’ll feed the multitudes today. But he’ll do it through faithful servants willing to pray, give thanks, and share out of their abundance with those who have little to nothing.

Jesus used that boy and what little he had. And he’ll use you too. You see, what you give may seem like a little when you compare it to the many hungry even in our own communities.

But how do you think it looks to that one person you help? It looks like a miracle. And you know, that’s exactly what it is.

The disciples, though doubtful at first, witness the boy’s generosity and the way Jesus transforms that generous, though small gift into something much greater. In asking the disciples to gather up the leftover bread, Jesus both emphasizes the miracle that has taken place and invites them to participate in the community of table fellowship. They become participants in Jesus’ work of serving and feeding.

Through the generosity and the gifts of the community, the crowd is fed. We also model the identity of Jesus by serving the community in mission. When we share our gifts, we strengthen and build community. We also

claim our own identity as people who belong to Jesus' community. This is not a community characterized by insiders and outsiders but, first and foremost by what it has received, the grace of Jesus Christ, and secondarily by the way it witnesses to that grace by serving others. It is important for us to recognize that Jesus understood attending to basic physical needs as an essential piece of evangelism and a tangible sign of God's grace.

God continues to call me to use my resources and gifts to serve in our community. I recently felt called to serve at Vacation Bible school here in Mora. Our church along with Calvary, Grace and St Mary's joined together to provide a weeklong community VBS for kids k-6th grade. I Worked with the 5th/6th graders leading a lesson time and overseeing activities. It was hot, it was fun and I enjoyed every minute.

I also serve on the local food shelf board. I grew up in a family that was served by a community food distribution, and I can give back by serving on a board.

Let's look at the story of feeding the 5000 (plus women and children) a bit differently.

How about we look at this model of food distribution differently. I'm going to have Rowan come here in front—with his frankly pretty dismal offering—for all of you to look at.

Imagine that Rowan is offering all that he has to us. He's is willing to give up everything he's got.

I'm going to break up his bread and give thanks to God for it, and then start distributing it to all of you, and then you will...well, I don't know. Let's see what happens after that. Alright? Got it? Don't let me down. So now bow your heads I'm going to pray" as I lift Rowans offering to God.

You likely do not have bits and pieces of food with you to add to the bread and fish so instead Rowan is giving what money he has in his pocket. He is putting this money in this offering plate, and we will pass this plate up and down the rows – no need for ushers because this isn't really an offering. Instead this is all of us adding to the small amount Rowan has provided to be used to buy food at the food pantry. As you feel the plate in your hand think of it as the barley and bread, and as you hold the plate in your hand ask yourself what you can do to feed others.

As we pass the make-believe barley bread and fish from your hands to another hear this alternate version of the feeding of the 5000.

And then, I think, as the bits and pieces of food are handed down the aisle, one person starts to think to himself, "You know, the wife did make me this sandwich and packed me this thermos of coffee, and I probably don't need all of it, so I'll break it in half and pass it down with the barley as it comes handed down the aisle to me."

And then the next guy says, "Well, I do have this banana that I forgot to leave in the car when I came in, and I don't need all of it," so he adds the banana to the basket and passes it down. And then there's the guy who picked up the box of Oreos at the Holiday Station Store that morning on the way to church, he thought it might be breakfast but he really hungry now. And the one who won the turkey at the meat raffle at the Lions meeting last night. And the one who remembers he still has a piece of that fruit cake left over from the office party a couple of years ago that never went bad. And so on, all down the line, until all the loaves and fishes had been passed around and the disciples gathered up the scraps and found twelve baskets full of leftovers and snacks.

Goodness. Now that would be a miracle!

All that we collect will be donated to the food shelf to feed and serve the 5000!

Amen

Hymn UMH # 393

Spirit of the Living God

Pastoral Prayer and The Lord's Prayer

Merciful God we praise you for your unfailing love.

We praise you for feeding our hunger for bread and for "the bread of life."

We praise you for taking our little basket of fish and barley loaves and using it to feed others.

Lord we ask you for your care and healing touch for those who are sick.

We ask for your compassion on those who are suffering in our world.

We ask for you comfort for those who are grieving.

We thank you for your daily tender mercies.

We thank you for your daily love.

We thank you for your daily grace.

We call upon you Lord to empower us as we declare who you are to a world who needs you.

We call upon you Lord to inspire us as we seek to inspire others.

We call upon you Lord to strengthen us in our own weakness.

written by Rev. Abi, and posted on her **Long and Winding Road** blog. <http://vicarofwadley.blogspot.ca/>

We ask all this in your son's name, who taught us to pray together

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses,

As we forgive those who trespass against us.

And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen

***Hymn** TFWS #2126

All Who Hunger

Offering

Ogilvie UMC

Today we ask the question, "How is God calling us to use our resources to build and serve the greater community?"

Ogilvie UM church supports, our community through volunteerism of and leadership in the local food shelf as well as donation, and wherever there is a need this congregation jumps in to provide space and hands on support. We serve with our time and talents, let us now bring our tithes and offerings that we might continue in joining together as a faith community to serve and bless those God has called us to.

Mora UMC

Today we ask the question, "How is God calling us to use our resources to build and serve the greater community?"

Mora UM church supports our community through the donation of foods and supplies to the Kanabec County Food Panty, varies of you volunteer for senior dining meal distribution and many more are regular drivers for meal on wheels delivery.

We serve with our time and talents, let us now bring our tithes and offerings that we might continue in joining together as a faith community to serve and bless those God has called us to.

***Doxology** UMH # 95 Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow

***Prayer of Dedication**

Kind and generous God, we sow these seeds today asking that you would grow and multiply them for us to do greater works in your name. May our neighborhood, our community, our town, and the world around us experience your love and grace through us and through these gifts. In your Son's name we pray. Amen.

***Hymn** UMH # 381 Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us

***Benediction**

May the love of God surround you.

May the love of God uplift you.

May the love of God stand with you through the changes ahead.

May the love of God convince you, in every situation, to love.

Go now to love others, even as Christ loves you.

Kwasi I. Kena Discipleship Resources 2008

Announcements

- Write a little note on your prayer stick and bring it back next week.
- Remember to drop off your prayer stick and take a new one. Pray for the name(s) all week, make a note on the stick that you prayed for those named and return the stick next Sunday.