Does this sound familiar?
In addition to the many photos that I keep on my phone, I also have printed photo albums from when I was a child, as well as some that include family photos of the generations before me. As I look through these old photos, I sometimes wonder how these roots shaped me. (note some general family history/dynamics or questions)

Paul’s letter to Timothy starts out with the roots of faith in Paul’s life – the faith that he shares with his ancestors. We share our faith in God with our ancestors and with each other. Paul goes on to share his impression of Timothy’s grandmother Lois and mother Eunice. Paul often names and praises church leaders in his letters. In today’s passage, it is Lois and Eunice. They are the roots that keep Timothy grounded in his faith.

Who are the people who passed on their faith to us? The people who keep us rooted in God’s grace and love through Christ? (ask some people in the congregation for examples of spiritual mentors)

God did not give us a spirit of cowardice, but rather a spirit of power and of love and of self-discipline.

We are rooted in a heritage of people going back 2,000 years who follow, as Paul says, our “Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.”

We are rooted in a faith that is practiced around the world, even by those who are at risk of persecution for sharing their faith.

Don’t you love Paul’s response to Timothy’s anxiety over the Roman oppression of what the government sees as a new religion? “God did not give us a spirit of cowardice,” Paul says, “but rather a spirit of power and of love and of self-discipline.”

We have this good treasure, this strong rooted faith, “the power of God, who saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works but according to God’s own purpose and grace,” writes Paul.

I celebrate the life of (name someone in your life and the affect s/he had on your faith).
These are the roots of our family tree as children of God.

Today, we will experience Holy Communion, intentionally remembering that this table extends into worship spaces throughout the world. We join with our sisters and brothers through a sacrament, this “holy mystery,” that is rooted in our connections as the body of Christ.

In recognition of World Communion Sunday, our special offering today will provide scholars across the globe with access to education and training opportunities. Together, we will create opportunities for students to live into the purpose and grace to which God has called them.

How might we offer a spirit of power and love to God’s beloved children who have studied hard and who, with mentoring and financial support, could achieve so much more?

How will we be Lois and Eunice to those younger than ourselves? In what ways will we pass along our faith? How will we move with them into a future that is filled, not with a spirit of cowardice, but rather a spirit of power, love and self-discipline?

As we approach the table of grace on this World Communion Sunday, I invite you to allow the Holy Spirit to take root in your heart. I encourage you to remember the generations that have come before and to rekindle the gift of God that is within you.
1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, for the sake of the promise of life that is in Christ Jesus,

2 To Timothy, my beloved child:

Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

Thanksgiving and Encouragement

3 I am grateful to God—whom I worship with a clear conscience, as my ancestors did—when I remember you constantly in my prayers night and day. 4 Recalling your tears, I long to see you so that I may be filled with joy. 5 I am reminded of your sincere faith, a faith that lived first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice and now, I am sure, lives in you. 6 For this reason I remind you to rekindle the gift of God that is within you through the laying on of my hands; 7 for God did not give us a spirit of cowardice, but rather a spirit of power and of love and of self-discipline.

8 Do not be ashamed, then, of the testimony about our Lord or of me his prisoner, but join with me in suffering for the gospel, relying on the power of God, 9 who saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works but according to his own purpose and grace. This grace was given to us in Christ Jesus before the ages began, 10 but it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. 11 For this gospel I was appointed a herald and an apostle and a teacher,[a] 12 and for this reason I suffer as I do. But I am not ashamed, for I know the one in whom I have put my trust, and I am sure that he is able to guard until that day what I have entrusted to him.[b] 13 Hold to the standard of sound teaching that you have heard from me, in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. 14 Guard the good treasure entrusted to you, with the help of the Holy Spirit living in us.