

Friday Church Epistle

March 12, 2021

Happy Friday to you! Darci here again.

The Bible has some amazing readings. Our scriptures assigned each week in the lectionary tend to have a link. The link this week involves a snake and God's mercy.

The passage from Numbers talks about the people grumbling against God because they did not like the little bread flakes God provided for food. Soon after that, they meet up with poisonous snakes and realize their former state was not so bad. The people cried out acknowledging their sin and the LORD showed mercy. The LORD told Moses to create an image of a snake and put it high on a pole and people looking at it would live.

This little snake episode did not make it into the movie "The Ten Commandments", but sure sounds worthy of a movie script.

Psalms 107 retells the event with verses 17-22.

Some of the redeemed were fools because of their sinful ways.

They suffered because of their wickedness.

They had absolutely no appetite for food;

they had arrived at death's gates.

So they cried out to the LORD in their distress,

and God saved them from their desperate circumstances.

God gave the order and healed them;

he rescued them from their pit.

Let them thank the LORD for his faithful love

and his wondrous works for all people.

Let them offer thanksgiving sacrifices

and declare what God has done in songs of joy!

The passage from John for this week begins by referencing this event.

John 3:14-15

Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the wilderness, so must the Human One be lifted up so that everyone who believes in him will have eternal life.

Taken together these verses speak to our human foolishness and God's mercy. They remind me that God's goodness is best met with thanksgiving not complaining. I love that final verse of the psalm which asks us to "declare what God has done in songs of joy!"

This time of COVID still feels like a wilderness time to me. I am becoming as impatient as those people complaining to Moses. Sometimes I find myself focusing on the things I am missing instead of the things I have. I feel like I am surviving instead of thriving and want to complain. These scriptures make me pause.

Surviving is a good thing!

I am reminded to be grateful for the gifts God is giving me in each new day. I may not feel comfortable to go out to eat in a restaurant yet, but my refrigerator is filled with food. I may not be able to spend time with others, but technology lets me visit virtually.

There is so much to be thankful for even within the wilderness. God's love can reach us wherever we are. God's word can save even foolish people like me.

Today I am striving to walk with gratitude and will listen to the Psalmist and sing songs of praise. I hope you will join me.

Dear God, thank you for your patience with me when I long for more and am not grateful for what I have. Help me to recognize the good in my life and find joy where I am at right now. Tomorrow will come in its own time. I will not wish away today. I am grateful for the gift of your Son and the life He gives. I praise you as one who has been redeemed. Amen