



Purpose

Purpose – your’s, mine, ours --- and God’s!

God speaks to all of us. I believe he even speaks to my neighbors who are unchurched or those who have been hurt by the church over the years. I believe that God speaks with forgiveness, with sorrow for our hurts, with compassion, and with love. I believe he also speaks with purpose – with healing and love.

As he speaks to us, he leads us on paths which not only help us grow and become closer to him, he also leads us to places that help us speak to others about our faith. We have talents – I have seen a lot of that in this congregation. Some of us feel that those talents are not “churchy”, but God has never given a talent that couldn’t be used by him.

My mother, as many her age back then, was a knitter. Each of the children in the family, boys included, learned to knit in school in Sweden. Each year they were given a skein of wool yarn and knit themselves some socks. I think that’s a great idea. During WWII, she and a number of her friends used their talent to knit warm clothing for men and women in the military. She also knit gifts for everyone in the family at one time or another. As a child, I longed for a “store bought” sweater like everyone else, but I had to wear what my mother made.

At her funeral, the pastor noted that she had “knit” together all the people who were gathered there. Little did he know the variety of people there gathered. Family, of course, but also her “first” children, those she had reared as a governess 70 years before. A retired bishop, a professor at a university, an

organist from France, old friends and neighbors and family members who had come out of the woodwork! We were knit together – by the talent of hand work and sociability!

We have knitters, crochet-ers, painters, and planters, speakers and listeners, laughers and criers, the permanently happy and commonly jubilant all gathered into one – we are knit together by the love of God and we take those attributes we have and go out into the world in God’s name, speaking and acting for him with the gifts and talents he has given us.

What is your purpose in life? The old catechism said, “my chief purpose in life is that I should be saved.” OK. But once saved, we move on and reach out to others with our talents and our life so that others can come to know the joy we have in our relationship with God.

This is what makes me saddest in life, that those who wallow in sentimental “religion” and “spirituality” are missing the joy of fellowship with other Christians and with God. We gather together in love and caring and that love and caring binds us together as a wonderful community of God. There is no better place to come and rejoice that with each other. There is no better place to find forgiveness, love and caring, support and delight than in the presence of other Christians. To miss that is to miss a wonderful gift of God, the gift of community.

TMK

--- Thoughts of the Week
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