



Raquette Lake Chapel Sunday Blast July 26, 2020

Note on this Sunday's Chapel worship: Mr. Steve Vance will be our guest worship leader, along with Penny Jay who will provide organ music! We all look forward to Mr. Vance's return to The Chapel! The readings below will not be a part of his service.

Sunday Readings (8th Sunday After Pentecost-“Proper 12” Year A)

Genesis 29:15-28: After meeting God in a vision, Jacob has travelled on to Haran, seeking a wife of his own clan. He met Rachel at the well. Leaving the sheep with Jacob, she ran to tell her father, Laban, who welcomed him into his home as a member of his extended family.

Psalm 105:1-11, 45b: Psalm 105 itself is a historical psalm. If we read it in its entirety we see the five primary stages of Israel's journey. The two main purposes of recounting history are (1) to proclaim God's wonderful works to those who seek God and (2) to be a remembrance for Israel of those wonderful works.

Romans 8:26-39: Paul wrote of the new way of being that we attain in baptism, freed of compounding sin leading to the finality of death – and begin living in and with the Spirit, thanks to God's gift of love. Living a truly godly life lies ahead; we have not yet achieved it. We need help from the Holy Spirit.

Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52: Jesus has told his disciples several parables about the kingdom of heaven. Now he tells two short ones about the growth of the kingdom, and two about different approaches to membership in it. (see “Not a sermon...”)

Not a sermon...(just some thoughts)

Today's selection from Matthew reminds me: “There's so much said in the Gospel stories, but I wonder what was not said?” You'll notice the verses left out of last week's readings are this week's Gospel reading. Last week we saw the great detail Jesus went to in telling the parable of the “wheat and weeds” to the crowds, and then went “into the house” to explain it to his disciples.

Jesus did not immediately leave the crowds before he told them two more parables, “The Parable of the Mustard Seed” and “The Parable of the Yeast.” Matthew's Gospels allows only two sentences to tell us readers what was said. I wonder about what was said that was not recorded. Was it not important? I doubt that very much! How might we fill in the blanks?

I've heard Jesus's ministry described as: “Every time we read about Jesus, he was either just coming from a meal, eating a meal, or going to a meal!” Obviously, there's something important about gathering together, sharing a meal, and, yes, talking. In Jesus's day, meals with the more well-off were a spectacle. They lasted for hours. Villagers would gather outside the house just to watch and listen, and we can be assured that when Jesus told a parable he used more than one or two sentences! And, undoubtedly there was much discussion.

Maybe the best way we can honor Jesus's two short parables is to gather one day over a meal and spend some good time together talking about what they mean to us. May it be so. Amen.

Prayers for Ann and Cynthia living with a cancer diagnosis; Chris undergoing cancer treatment; the safety and good health of residents and visitors to Raquette Lake; our leaders to make wise decisions about COVID-19.

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