



Grain

“Beloved community is formed not by the eradication of difference but by its affirmation, by each of us claiming the identities and cultural legacies that shape who we are and how we live in the world.” The Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Field

“36 While they were talking about this, Jesus himself stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you." 37 They were startled and terrified, and thought that they were seeing a ghost. 38 He said to them, "Why are you frightened, and why do doubts arise in your hearts? 39 Look at my hands and my feet; see that it is I myself. Touch me and see; for a ghost does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have." 40 And when he had said this, he showed them his hands and his feet. 41 While in their joy they were disbelieving and still wondering, he said to them, "Have you anything here to eat?" 42 They gave him a piece of broiled fish, 43 and he took it and ate in their presence. St. Luke 24:36b-42

Thoughts

On Friday, I returned from a round trip bus ride to Washington, D.C. To commemorate the 50th anniversary of the assassination of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. the National Council of Churches held a silent march followed by a rally. Many of us are thankful to Wisconsin Council of Churches for organizing about 130 people to attend. There are so many dimensions of the event and Dr. King’s legacy to reflect on. How far have we come in breaking down barriers of white supremacy? What inner struggles and advocacy are still needed to change systems of racism, sexism and other isms that afflict society?

While listening to a rich variety of speakers, including Jewish, Muslim, Christian, Native American, Hindu, and Buddhist leaders, I thought of Dr. King’s broad vision of “beloved community.” In the crowd, I was struck by how easily smiles came. I can be a cautious smiler among strangers. What if people don’t reciprocate or I look like I’m wearing a foolish grin? However, the gathering seemed to elicit from many of us smiles without caution or hesitation. A woman in her 70’s told me that the day reignited her hope in real change winning out.

Jesus’ beloved community knows the peace of the resurrection, not a small realm of peace that we only have when all is well, but one that also unfolds in the midst of our grief, doubts, and fears. The peace of Christ connects us to a broader communion of saints whether we experience it every day or not. We sometimes glimpse the resurrection as the disciples did at their beach party abundant with broiled fish and love. The presence of Christ entered the disciples’ imperfect lives perhaps leaving them with erupting smiles and a desire to extend the party. Christ is risen! Happy Monday!

Prayer

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Many blessings upon you,

Pastor Cindy