



Grain

“Happiness is when what you think, what you say, and what you do are in harmony.”
–Mahatma Gandhi. Submitted by Vernita Kennen, Roseville, MN

Field

²⁴So when the crowd saw that neither Jesus nor his disciples were there, they themselves got into the boats and went to Capernaum looking for Jesus. ²⁵When they found him on the other side of the sea, they said to him, “Rabbi, when did you come here?” ²⁶Jesus answered them, “Very truly, I tell you, you are looking for me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate your fill of the loaves. ²⁷Do not work for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures for eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. For it is on him that God the Father has set his seal...” ³⁵Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty. John 6:24-27 & 35

Thoughts

Where do you seek nourishment? It depends on the type of nourishment. If you have hunger pangs, it can be difficult to think about anything besides finding somewhere to eat. If you want to understand more about a news item twirling around your mind, you may search out your go-to news resources. One ELCA member announced to a group that she had trouble trusting any news about what was happening in Gaza outside of ELCA resources and action alerts. How about when you seek ways to be centered and reminded of God’s love? We have our worship communities, a prayer life, books; you can add to the list.

I’m impressed that the crowd Jesus fed, after first attempting to turn him into a king, didn’t give up seeking him out. What they witnessed in the feeding of the 5,000 had to be beyond their imaginations. Their curiosity was heightened. They moved boldly ahead to find him. But it seemed that they sought out Jesus to learn about what more they could acquire from him materially. Their hunger for food was important to Jesus, but Jesus also wanted them to be nourished with love and faith in their whole being.

So much could have gone wrong with the crowd. What if the people had been impressed with a leader who preached with the motivation to manipulate society rather than direct them to the holy? The crowd could have received messages such as “Believe in me, and you will financially prosper. Those who don’t believe will become poorer. Follow God and you will be nourished with power that will make you true citizens of this land to the exclusion of others.” Those types of messages actually come out of some Christian pulpits around the U.S., leaving concerns for those experiencing poverty and spiritual nourishment from Christ lacking. Those messages also increase the chances of our society condoning the kind of racism and senselessness involved in Sonya Massey’s murder rather than holding the perpetrator accountable.

We sometimes eat food, absorb information, and seek spiritual comfort in manners that leave us hungry. As we seek ways to be nourished and nourish others, let us always return to the real bread of life. Happy Monday!

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Many blessings upon you,

Pastor Cindy