

October 16, 2016 Service at Lake of the Woods



Open the eyes of my heart, Lord

Psalm 121

I raise my eyes toward the mountains.

Where will my help come from?

2 My help comes from the Lord,
the maker of heaven and earth.

3 God won't let your foot slip.
Your protector won't fall asleep on the job.

4 No! Israel's protector
never sleeps or rests!

5 The Lord is your protector;
the Lord is your shade right beside you.

6 The sun won't strike you during the day;
neither will the moon at night.

7 The Lord will protect you from all evil;
God will protect your very life.

8 The Lord will protect you on your journeys—
whether going or coming—
from now until forever from now.

We are being built into a temple

Jesus on the mainline

Blessed be your name

Expressing Gratitude

Sharing by the Pastors

Kye- Spiritual Journeys and Finding Home at New Covenant

Renée's reflection on today's lectionary passages:
2 Timothy 3:14-17 and Exodus 17:8-13

As I consider what excites me about God's work at New Covenant, I am especially glad that the B for Biblical is the first letter of the BRIDGE acronym describing our values and mission.

Biblical: seeking to understand God's love and pursuit of people throughout time

Relational: learning how to be family together with Jesus

Intergenerational: building relationships across age groups through worship and service

Doing justice: recognizing and challenging sinful systems that divide us

Giving freely: sharing our time, talents and resources

Embracing diversity: seeking to reflect the breadth of God's creation and kingdom

I have been loving our time in Genesis, intrigued by the way it permeates my thoughts and experiences, from the mindful focus of God breathing over the waters and into the first human to my painful conviction about violence toward our brothers. As I pray the lectionary readings each day, I feel the Holy Spirit enlightening my understanding in ways I have not heard before. So that today's scriptures seem to speak right into our experience at New Covenant as we carry on what we was begun in this new stage of the intergenerational transfer of leadership:

2 Timothy 3:14-17 But you must continue with the things you have learned and found convincing. You know who taught you. Since childhood you have known the holy scriptures that help you to be wise in a way that leads to salvation through faith that is in Christ Jesus. Every scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for showing mistakes, for correcting, and for training character, so that the person who belongs to God can be equipped to do everything that is good.

This is our legacy. We know what we have learned and who has taught us in the way that leads to salvation through Jesus the Messiah. And as we search the scriptures, we find new and useful inspiration that equips us for the work ahead. This reassurance by Paul to the young Timothy demonstrates support of this next generation of leadership, inspiring confidence to move forward into the work ahead. As we take to heart the assurance of the usefulness of Hebrew scripture, to which Paul is referring, we turn to the passage in Exodus demonstrating a similar sharing and gradual transfer of leadership from one generation to the next. I encourage you to hear the *Intergenerational* aspects of this passage, not getting distracted by the context of war or the litany of male names :).

Exodus 17:8-13 Amalek came and fought with Israel at Rephidim. Moses said to Joshua, "Choose some men for us and go fight with Amalek. Tomorrow I'll stand on top of the hill with the shepherd's rod of God in my hand." So Joshua did as Moses told him. He fought with Amalek while Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill.

Whenever Moses held up his hand, Israel would start winning the battle. Whenever Moses lowered his hand, Amalek would start winning. But Moses' hands grew tired. So they took a stone and put it under Moses so he could sit down on it. Aaron and Hur held up his hands, one on each side of him so that his hands remained steady until sunset. So Joshua defeated Amalek and his army with the sword.

Moses is starting to turn things over to Joshua, who himself needs to go and choose leaders to work with him. Young people, capable of being in the battle. But Moses is up there with Aaron and Hur, holding up his hands in blessing and prayer. Maybe Moses used to be able to hold his hands up all day. But things have changed. They need to adjust. Get him a stone to sit on. Have Aaron and Hur hold up his arms. I don't remember hearing much about Hur, but his help is critical here. Three of the older generation of leadership, working together, adjusting to fit the new context and their current abilities and energy. Supporting the work down on the field. So that the blessing remains steady and the foe is defeated.

[Unbeknownst to me, another Moses-type leader of our fellowship was meeting with a young Joshua-type, encouraging her with prayers and blessing and meditation on this scripture. Their conversation brought out the additional insight that the battle is against "powerful systemic and historic evil". This was very helpful for translating the idea of war into our context of the *Doing Justice* issues that are ongoing battles.]

So, as Timothy and Joshua were encouraged, heartened, counseled, and blessed into their ministry by Paul and Moses, I am also encouraged for our future at NCF. God is working amongst us and speaking in exciting ways through scriptures that are living and breathing new life into us.

Communion and Offering Prayer and Blessing

Praise God for the body
I want Jesus to walk with me
Shelter
I will trust in you
Shackles

Closing Announcements:

5th Sunday Combined Sunday School on October 30th, beginning with a light breakfast at 8:45 am at the Don Moyer's Boys and Girls Club in Champaign with Sunday School for all ages beginning at 9:00 am.

Habitat Interfaith Build project Friday, October 28. (8-11:30 am or 11:30-3 pm). There are still a couple slots open for in both the morning and afternoon shift. See Renée to sign up.

Just a closer walk with Thee