

Good News Daily

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Sunday, July 28

Romans 12:9-21 *Give the same consideration to all others alike. Pay no regard to social standing, but meet humble people on their own terms.* (v.16a NJB)

I confess that I'm a great observer of Coffee Hour, especially when there are visitors present. The congregation I belong to has a carefully planned greeting program in place, but once that finishes, very fascinating behavior begins.

People size up the visitors, apparently by the way the visitors are dressed, their manners, and speech. Then people who believe the newcomers to be of similar social standing to themselves begin to introduce the visitors to others of similar social standing. The amazing thing is how often the assumptions behind that greeting behavior are wrong, leading to social awkwardness and rapid departures from Coffee Hour. The visitor is often left standing alone.

Scripture reminds us God doesn't judge by outward appearances. God looks at the heart. I don't think that social standing, wealth, power, or position really have anything to do with the kingdom of God. I believe a heart longing for God and a willingness to serve others is what really matters to God.

It should truly matter at Coffee Hour!

ANGLICAN CYCLE: Pray for the Scottish Episcopal Church, The Most Revd Mark Strange - Primus of the Scottish Episcopal Church & Bishop of Moray, Ross & Caithness

DIOCESAN CYCLE: St. Bartholomew Episcopal Church, Granite City, The Rev. Scott Hoogerhyde, Priest-in-Charge; Nzega Parish, Tanzania, Rev. Thobias Lubika Rural Dean; The Mission of St John the Evangelist, San Juan de Miraflores, Peru, The Rev. Luis Villalobos, Priest in Charge.

2 Samuel 1:17-27; Psalms 24, 29; Matthew 25:31-46

Monday, July 29

Psalms 56 *When I am afraid, I put my trust in you.* (v.3)

I really, really want this verse to be true in my life. Unfortunately, my life experience of being raised in a wildly insane family, coupled with a year in the Marine Corps in Viet Nam, really didn't prepare me to put my trust in God when I'm afraid.

Frankly, when I'm frightened, putting my trust in God is more in the middle of possible responses to the frightening situation at hand. After it passes, I feel remorse that, once again, I blew it and didn't trust God.

Last year, I got tired of berating myself. After prayer and reflection, I decided that when I became afraid, I'd first work at reminding myself of all the times God has supported me and helped me deal with a frightening situation. In each of those circumstances, I yelled for help, and I got it!

Admittedly, this isn't full blown trust, but it's on the way, and it does work to calm my fear.

I've also changed the verse into a prayer, "God, I am afraid, I want to put my trust in you!"

2 Samuel 2:1-11; Psalms 57, 58; Acts 15:36—16:5; Mark 6:14-29

ANGLICAN CYCLE: Nsukka (*Nigeria*) The Rt Revd Aloysius Agbo; Biharamulo (*Tanzania*) The Rt Revd Yusuph Vithalis; Karamoja (*Uganda*) The Rt Revd Joseph Abura

DIOCESAN CYCLE: Wedding anniversary of The Very Rev. Mark E. Evans and Sandy Moore, Lincoln.

Tuesday, July 30

Mark 6:30-46 *He replied, 'Give them something to eat yourselves.'* (v.37a)

In this passage about the first Miracle of the Loaves, the disciples wanted Jesus to solve the problem of no food for the hungry crowd, all by himself, while they stood by and watched in awe.

What he wanted was for them to get involved in solving the problem. Jesus wanted them to be related to the problem of no food, the hungry people, and to himself.

He gave them a stunning answer to wake them up to a new possibility of being part of the solution. They had to find the loaves and fish, get the people organized, serve the food, and clean up the leftovers afterwards.

I believe that laying a problem before Jesus, asking how we can be involved in the solution together with him works powerfully, because it includes us in the Body and work of Christ. Knowing that the Lord is willing to do this with us is miraculous!

2 Samuel 3:6-21; Psalms 61, 62; Acts 16:6-15

ANGLICAN CYCLE: Nyahururu (*Kenya*) The Rt Revd Stephen Kabora; Birmingham (*England*) The Rt Revd David Andrew Urquhart, The Rt Revd Anne Elizabeth Hollinghurst

DIOCESAN CYCLE: Birthday of The Rev. Canon David M. Baumann, Salem.

Wednesday, July 31

Mark 6:47-56 *But at once he spoke to them and said, 'Courage! It's me! Don't be afraid.'* (v.50b)

After Jesus does something miraculous, and again following the Resurrection, he greets his disciples with a statement to not be afraid. I think that's because they had learned from childhood to be frightened about the power of God.

I wonder how many of us, deep down inside, are afraid of God. I was raised to fear God's judgement and punishment. I know lots of Christians who were raised the same way. As a child, it's hard to fear something without fearing the one who could do that something.

I grew up in a punishing household. I was often told, while being beaten, "I'm doing this because I love you." Even as a child, I wondered, if that is true, why does it hurt so much?

As a young adult, after meeting deeply loving Christians and experiencing God's love in many ways, I came to know that God loved me and wouldn't hurt me. God won't hurt you either!

Courage! Don't be afraid!

2 Samuel 3:22-29; Psalm 72; Acts 16:16-24

ANGLICAN CYCLE: Nzara (*South Sudan*) The Rt Revd Samuel Peni Enosa; Blackburn (*England*) The Rt Revd Julian Tudor Henderson, The Revd Dr Jill Duff, The Rt Revd Philip North; Bo (*Sierra Leone*) (*West Africa*) The Rt Revd Emmanuel Tucker

DIOCESAN CYCLE: Wedding anniversary of The Rev. Brant V. and Stephanie Hazlett, Mt. Carmel.

Thursday, August 1

Acts 16:25-40 *Then they preached the word of the Lord to him and all his household.* (v.32)

Years ago, while I was eating lunch at my favorite diner, a young man excitedly rushed in and announced to those of us sitting at the counter, "I was just walking along, very down and depressed about my life, feeling hopeless. I just blurted out, 'I just wish somebody would care about me!' All of a sudden I was overcome by a feeling of tremendous peace and warmth, like someone was holding me. Wow it was fantastic! I wish I knew where that feeling came from?"

All of us sitting at the counter were Christians. We all paid close attention to our food, saying nothing. The young man left, still excited, but without an answer.

I knew the answer. God reached out to him with an experience of caring, unconditional love. That's all I would have needed to say. Saying that would have

opened the door to share with him more about God's love. Unfortunately, I kept silent.

I wonder how often we are given a real opportunity to witness to God's love and healing power, and remain silent?

2 Samuel 4:1-12; Psalms 70, 71; Mark 7:1-23

ANGLICAN CYCLE: Missionary District of Oeste-Brasil (*Brazil*) Vacant; Boga (*Congo*) The Rt Revd Mugenyi William Bahemuka; Port Elizabeth (*Southern Africa*) The Rt Revd Edward Ronald Daniels

DIOCESAN CYCLE: The Very Rev. Benjamin D. Hankinson, Mt. Vernon, Ordination to the Priesthood; Wedding anniversary of The Rev. John D. and Barbara Richmond, Bartonville.

ST. MATTHEW'S: Allan Horsman's Birthday

Friday, August 2

Mark 7:24-37 *And he said to her, "For saying this you may go home happy; the devil has gone out of your daughter."* (v.29)

Every time I hear this account of Jesus and the encounter with this woman, the first thought that comes to my mind is probably controversial.

When we think about Jesus of Nazareth, we often think that from the very beginning he knew the perfect answer for every response or question he encountered. We seldom think about his vision of the kingdom of God growing and expanding as he went along teaching and healing.

I think that in this encounter, his vision grew and expanded to include not only Jews, but also Gentiles. That growth and expansion laid the groundwork for the universal mission of the Church that Peter and Paul would realize.

The truth is that the more we allow growth and expansion of our vision of the kingdom of God, the more we begin to realize the height, breadth, and depth of God's unconditional love and acceptance, and the more miraculous and cosmic God's love and acceptance becomes for us!

2 Samuel 5:1-12; Psalm 69; Acts 17:1-15

ANGLICAN CYCLE: Offa (*Nigeria*) The Rt Revd Akintunde A Popoola; Bolivia (*South America*) The Rt Revd Raphael Samuel; Karimnagar (*South India*) The Rt Revd Reuben Mark.

DIOCESAN CYCLE: Birthday of Hannah, wife of The Rev. Matthew C. Dallman, Pekin; Wedding anniversary of The Rev. Dr. Ralph N. and Jan McMichael, St. Louis, MO.

Saturday, August 3

Acts 17:16-34 “As I strolled round looking at your sacred monuments, I noticed among other things an altar inscribed: *To An Unknown God. In fact, the unknown God you revere is the one I proclaim to you.*” (v.23b)

When we set about proclaiming the Good News of God in Christ to others, we often start with passages from Scripture, or what the doctrine and experience our chosen faith community teaches. In this passage, Paul uses another approach. It’s actually a simple principle; start with the other’s experience and use that a basis for what you want to proclaim to them.

I know from my own experience this works. I’ve spent almost thirty years working to help other combat veterans heal and become whole from the spiritual trauma combat brings. That spiritual journey begins with sharing our combat experiences and the spiritual trauma they create. We move from that to talking about the healing that God in Christ have brought into my life and the lives of other veterans.

Frankly, these shared conversations don’t sound like something you’d hear in church. Yet, the Good News is proclaimed, heard, and responded to. The more we invite people to share the Good News as equals, the more that Good News will be heard!

2 Samuel 5:22—6:11; Psalms 75, 76; Mark 8:1-10

ANGLICAN CYCLE: Karnataka Central (*South India*) The Rt Revd Prasana Kumar Samuel; Karnataka North, The Rt Revd Ravikumar J. Niranjana; Karnataka South, The Rt Revd Mohan Manoraj

DIOCESAN CYCLE: Birthday of Jane Kamau, wife of The Rev. James K. Muriuki, Cape Girardeau, MO. Birthday of Mary Beth, widow of the Very Rev. Dr. Keith R. Roderick, Stafford, VA.; Wedding anniversary of The Rev. Zachary D. and Leah Brooks, Jacksonville.

ST. MATTHEW’S: Julie & Jim Cooper’s wedding anniversary

by John Fergusson

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Pray for the sick and those in distress: Charlie, Margret L., Allan H., James G.

Pray for the Faithful Departed: Daniel T., Justin P.

Pray for those living in nursing homes and other shut-ins: Dale B., Barb W., and Margaret P.

Pray for: The Diocese of Tabora, Anglican Church of Tanzania, The Rt. Rev. Elias Chakupewa, the clergy and people. The Missionary Diocese of Peru, The Rt. Rev. Alejandro Mesco. Fr. Kari Marcelle, the clergy and people of Holy Trinity St. Vincent. Fr. Dave and all clergy, for whom we light the candle on the west side of the Altar.