



Grain

“The person who loves their dream of community will destroy community, but the person who loves those around them will create community.” –Dietrich Bonhoeffer

Fields

³⁶While they were talking about this, Jesus himself stood among them and said to them, “Peace be with you.” ³⁷They were startled and terrified, and thought that they were seeing a ghost. ³⁸He said to them, “Why are you frightened, and why do doubts arise in your hearts? ³⁹Look 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.” ⁴⁰And when he had said this, he showed them his hands and his feet. ⁴¹While in their joy they were disbelieving and still wondering, he said to them, “Have you anything here to eat?” ⁴²They gave him a piece of broiled fish, ⁴³and he took it and ate in their presence. ⁴⁴Then he said to them, “These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you—that everything written about me in the law of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms must be fulfilled.” ⁴⁵Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures, ⁴⁶and he said to them, “Thus it is written, that the Messiah is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day, ⁴⁷and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. ⁴⁸You are witnesses of these things. Luke 24:36b-48

Thoughts

I remember when I lost my ideals about living in a religious community. It was when I lived in a religious community. Retreat centers were supposed to help you to deepen your faith. Why were there so many interpersonal issues in a spiritual center? You could also ask, Why doesn't everyone get along in the nonprofit world or the church?

Thank God Jesus wasn't too much of an idealist and that he loved people more than his own insistence on how humanity should be. The disciples, however, had dreams about the Messiah and the powerful world he would usher in. After witnessing his violent death, they were left with a broken teacher and their own fear, guilt, and confusion. In this setting, Jesus appeared several times. A spirit of love was loose in the world and infused new dreams and communities based on repentance and forgiveness.

As we heard in last week's lesson and in Rev. Heide's reflection, Jesus put Thomas' hand in his side. In this Gospel lesson from Luke, Jesus again asked the disciples to physically touch him. Jesus' presence is not in some abstract world or pretend future, but here at breakfast, on the beach, in our new wounds and imperfections, in the scars of war and hunger. How do we get connect with that? Through the grace of repentance and forgiveness. Simple enough. But we give something up when we repent and forgive. With God's help, we release our insistence on a reality that doesn't exist. That also holds true politically, as Dietrich Bonhoeffer had to learn.

Just think. The message of love, a power raised out of brokenness, was one that Jesus asked us to spread around the world. How much that message individually and with a public voice is needed in the 21st century. We begin by asking, What is our reality? That is where Christ is, and our minds are opened. Happy Monday!

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Many blessings upon you,

Pastor Cindy

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