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**Eleventh Sunday After Pentecost
Proper 13 - 18th Ordinary Time**

We are in week 2 of 5 weeks of the Gospel of John on the subject of bread. Bread is made by God and human hands. The wheat grows because of rain and sunshine; flour mixed with water and yeast and salt in the right order becomes what we share. Water is certainly love, yeast and it's working takes patience, and flour and salt representing compassion and forgiveness is what is the bread that becomes 'the body of Christ'. CBC 1 Ideas program has a great dialogue on bread.

The author of the fourth Gospel chooses a more nuanced word to capture the uniqueness of the bread: the Greek word *menō*, sometimes translated "abide." The word conveys more than a finite durability; there is a trace of eternity here.

The author of the fourth Gospel is quite fond of this word; in fact he uses it more often than any other writer in the New Testament canon. *Menō* is found tucked into all sorts of places, beginning in chapter 1 at Jesus' baptism, when we are told twice that the Spirit remained (*menō*) on him. Most often, the word is used to describe the intimate, enduring, reciprocal, personal relationships of the Spirit and the Father with Jesus. The extended metaphor of the vine and branches in chapter 15 is awash with the word, and there its usage describes the relationship between Jesus and the disciples.

It is intriguing and not coincidental that this word is found describing the action of food. But of course, we know—and

the crowd around him will soon learn—that the bread of which he's been speaking was never really bread, was not the stuff they ate earlier in the chapter. Before we even get to the vine and the branches—another food metaphor—he's already speaking of himself and the intimate relationship he offers. He is the sustenance that nourishes and sustains; his is the presence that sticks. As he goes on to say, "Whoever eats this bread will live forever; and the bread that I give for the life of the world is my flesh" (6:51).

It is no wonder that on the occasion of a funeral we so often sing a variation of this section of the Gospel. Our memories of the loved one are so poignant at those times, and the promise that Jesus extended so long ago to his disciples hangs in the air, fragrant and comforting as the memory of good bread.

Last week if you follow the Common or Roman Lectionary there was a process in place on how to solve a problem. If there is an issue, **start** somewhere; **share** what you have so all will have what they need; and someone, maybe you, has to make the first **move**. Andrew found a boy last week. It only takes one to begin the rippling effect that makes things happen.



"One little act at a time can change the world. Together we can make poverty, injustice, violence, and division the 'fake news' of the future."

-Fiona Bullock, *The Spirituality of Conflict*

"God bless to us our bread
And give bread to all those who are hungry,

And hunger for justice to those who are fed.

God bless to us our bread."
(in 'Sing with the World', *Wild Goose Resource Group*. www.wildgoose.scot)

This blessing for a meal sums up a practical paradox: the world is full of hungry people; the world is full of full people. The hunger of those in need of food, clothing, shelter must be addressed. Many local and global actions are being taken daily to address these needs. Yet there are more and more stories of hunger, poverty and need. At the same time, our world is full of people who are themselves full: of food, wealth, accommodation, leisure time, fulfilling work. The hunger of those without food must be met by sharing of the world's resources. At the same time, we must ignite hunger for justice, for peace, for equality for all amongst those who are fed. This is the deeper hunger, or work to which Jesus points us, the crowd.

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- o What are the deep hungers in the crowds, the community around you?
- o How is your soul fed in times of change, transition or difficulty?
- o What, or who are the prophets living in your street, your community, your network? What are the actions that they are pointing to, actions that will bring about deep structural change?

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This is one of my favorite questions to ask people:
What is something you learned incorrectly as a child but only realized well into your adulthood?

This is a fantastic question! It leads to stories that are very dear and often, quite hilarious. Some people talk about words they mispronounced for decades, only revealed, of course, when they blurted them aloud in a group setting. Others talk about illogical beliefs they

internalized as kids which emerged unexpectedly in their minds years later (or were also voiced aloud!) These come as a total surprise because people hadn't even thought about the topic, let alone questioned their young belief, until that very moment.

This American Life has an entire episode of stories like these. My favorite involves a moment when a college student approached other college students at a campus party and asked the question, "So... are unicorns just really rare, or did they go entirely extinct?" Hysterical. Totally embarrassing. But also so dear. I love it!

Maybe this is 'something' to talk about at hospitality after the church has gathered and worshiped.



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My attention was re-drawn to this of late because of an on-line reflection - thought I'd share.

And it's not just the bad-timing nose-grazing jaw against pursed expectation, nor is it because of Judas (though he slips out of the side door of this discussion) but more that it seems too familiar as we have not been to pre-school with your mother. Perhaps we are not fully of the Europe where the lean-to nature of a kiss can denote

who will be shafted in a vote. Or is it just a fear of being wrong, two in Paris, three in Zagreb and so on?

Right-left instead of left-right could affect the funding for those new roads in Cavan. It's not to do with hygiene; we shake hands happily instead but we've learned because we must, being from the island of largesse, to give that peck of venture in a shared future where the view over one shoulder is as good from this side as the other. Siobhán Campbell
'Why Islanders don't kiss hello', Siobhán Campbell (from *Heat Signature*, Seren. 2017).

Siobhán Campbell is a poet from Dublin whose work is published by the Welsh press Seren. In the poem, from her latest collection, *Heat Signature*, minute differences between greetings across Europe are explored. The awkwardness of kissing, the worry of whether one should kiss twice or three times, and the sense that to kiss is over-familiar. In Ireland, they've long been parochial, and if you're in a village twenty years you're still a blow-in. However the poem has a beautiful turn, recognizing that people don't often kiss there, they, nonetheless, have taken a peck towards a shared future in peace agreements, and worries about whether one is getting it right or not are lost in the practice of greeting, together, a more peaceful Ireland. Siobhán publishes regularly in literary magazines in Ireland, the UK and the US. Her six collections of poetry have

been highly acclaimed and she's the winner of many awards for her work in poetry. She teaches with the Open University.

PRIMARY: Tuesday, remember to vote.

VBS: always and everywhere a great experience. Once more it is enlightening to assist each year so as to see how the kids have grown.

MCREST

No matter who is hosting for a week volunteers are needed. MCREST has been around since the late 80's. This revolving shelter has blessed more lives than you can imagine both the helpers/volunteers and the helped/guests. Always, it is a tough one to get mostly males for the over-night watch. St. John's Lutheran will host beginning August 19.

Friends of MacDonald Library

and the local book club's it offers give great opportunity for new friendships and discussion. Our local New Baltimore library is eager to be of service. Tributes can be made through Friends of the MacDonald library if desired. Something to remember! Libraries are things to use or you will lose it.

-HE THAT IS GOOD FOR MAKING EXCUSES IS SELDOM GOOD FOR ANYTHING ELSE.

-Church Sign

Don't judge my pain if you haven't walked my journey.

-Church Sign

in her poem, "Home," is vividly correct: "No one leaves home unless home is the mouth of a shark...No one puts their children in a boat unless the water is safer than the land...No one leaves home until home is a sweaty voice in your ear saying - 'Leave, run away from me now. I don't know what I've become, but I know that anywhere is safer than here.'"

-Warsan Shire

