

BLESSINGS ALWAYS

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Association Minister Message

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TABLE. “Come here at once and take your place at the *TABLE.*” (Luke 17: 7). It is often difficult to gather family at the same time around the *TABLE* for meals with all the commitments, activities, and obligations family members have. Large extended family gatherings always have someone missing because of other commitments. However, I am impressed with families who commit to get together each year around the same date and almost all are in attendance.

This Sunday is *World Communion Sunday* when Christians celebrate the Lord’s Supper in different settings, reminded that we are a Community of Faith as the Body of Christ. However, not all are welcome to some *TABLES* because of theological differences. If we look at those who gathered around the *TABLE* hosted by Jesus on the night of His betrayal. We often forget that it was Jesus and His disciples (actually more than 12, men and women) at the *TABLE*, and what a surprising group they were: doubters, betrayers, societal outcasts, educated and uneducated, fishermen, tax collector, political agitators, fearful, and not sure who Jesus was. All were gathered around the *TABLE* together for a meal that would become a Holy Meal to be remembered.

The words from Luke 17:7, are actually sarcastic words from Jesus to His followers. The “*apostles*” said to Jesus, “*Increase our faith!*” Jesus responds that if they had faith like a mustard seed, they would be able to do amazing things. Jesus pointed out to them that workers after a day’s work would come home and rather than be invited to sit at *TABLE* would be asked to fix a meal for the privileged. However, Jesus is, again, turning things upside-down. We, who are like the disciples with our flaws, imperfections, and shortcomings, are invited to take our places “*at the TABLE.*” The *TABLE* is a place of acceptance, love, sacrifice, reconciliation, and love where we join with Christ and the entire community of faith to be witnesses to God’s transforming power in our lives. We receive a blessings of forgiveness, hope, and call to be witnesses of God’s Good News in both Word and Deed. “*This is the joyful feast of the people of God. Men and women, youth and children, come from the east and the west, from the north and the south, and gather about Christ’s TABLE.*” BLESSINGS ALWAYS.