

May 22, 2022
John 14:23-29

Grace and peace to you from God our Father, and from our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

I have no formal written sermon this morning. I will reflect a bit on the 2022 Southeastern Iowa Synod Assembly held this past Friday and Saturday under the theme, "Go Tell the World" based on Matthew 28:18-20. Jesus' great commission to the disciples to go and tell the good news to all nations. Go and baptize in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Go and teach and make disciples. Jesus ends with the promise, "I am with you always to the end of the age."

We share that story. God's story. That we are invited into. The gospel of John tells us a story about Jesus. This morning's passage is a beautiful story. Jesus assures us He and God make their home in us. This is their will. Their desire. Jesus also extends peace to his disciples. We are vessels of that peace.

Where have you experienced this peace? How do you experience? What does it feel like? We need to tell this story.

Part of my story and experience of Christ's peace that surpasses all understanding is when I was discerning my call to seminary. It was at times scary, daunting, full of uncertainty, even doubt. My heart was troubled often. John 14:1 opens with Jesus telling the disciples, "Do not let your hearts be troubled." Sounds simple, but our hearts do get troubled. Even Jesus was troubled at the death of his friend Lazarus as he wept.

Yet, Jesus assures the disciples that although he will seem absent as he departs to be with his Father, he will not be. He will be with them. The Spirit will descend upon them. I experienced this presence, this peace, one day as I was talking to a coworker I trusted. He could sense my angst. All at once, he said, "Can I pray for you." That may have been the first time someone ever offered to pray with me. It wasn't a long prayer. He fumbled through the words a couple times. I really don't recall the prayer itself, but what I do recall and can almost feel still to this day is the peace that suddenly overcame me. The love through that prayer. The assurance I wasn't alone. The peace of God that surpasses all understanding, which made its home in this colleague, reached into my heart.

Don't ever doubt the resurrected Christ make his home in you. Don't ever underestimate the power of a simple prayer with another. Even, "Dear Lord, may the peace of Christ dwell in (insert name)." We have a God who knows no limits, no boundaries, loves all people, and as we have seen in the disciples, can take us with all our faults, limitations, sinful nature, fears, failures, etc. and use us to be vessels of peace and proclaim the good news to all the world. The Holy Spirit can take our simple prayer and make a difference in the life of the one we prayed for.

Be instruments of peace dear people of God! Amen.