



Mid-Week Ponderings for May 27, 2020

God came to my house and asked for charity. And I fell on my knees and cried, "Beloved, what may I give?" "Just love," God said, "just love."

~ Francis of Assisi, 1182-1226

Good Day, Beloved!

This is the last Mid-Week Ponderings. I have heard from some of you that you would prefer that I drop the Monday Musings rather than the Mid-Week Ponderings. However, just because Monday Musings arrives in your inbox on Monday, does not mean you have to read it that day. There is rarely anything time sensitive in those writings. If there is something time sensitive, I would send it in a separate email. For those of you receiving these writings via snail mail — it doesn't arrive to you until the middle of the week anyway! So, I am sticking with this being my last Mid-Week Ponderings.

Two years ago, I was gifted by my beloved mentor with a registration to the Festival of Homiletics. This is a conference that is held annually to help preachers become better preachers. It is filled with full days of hearing people preach excellent sermons and lectures about how to craft good sermons. It is an amazing experience and one I hope to repeat. This year's festival was scheduled for Atlanta. When COVID-19 arrived in the United States, the committee shifted and made it virtual and free! I did not listen to all of the preachers, since I still had work to do last week, but I listened to a few — one particularly excellent one by UCC pastor the Rev. Otis Moss III. This quote came as a benediction at the end of another preacher's sermon and I was awe-struck.

When I was able to track down the exact quote, I was not surprised that it was St. Francis of Assisi. I was struck by the simplicity of this. All we have to do is love? But then why don't we do it? We have a great teacher to show us how to do it, yet it is so difficult for us. It's not hard for us to be nice to people, but sometimes it is hard to love. Yet that is what Jesus came to earth to teach us — and just this past week in our scripture, Jesus assures God that we "got it." I am not always so sure!

Am I being loving when I condemn someone for thinking differently than I do? Am I being loving when I think of myself first? But let me tell you where I do see the love in this congregation. I see you loving when you bring boxes of cereal for those who have less. I see you being loving when you volunteer to put flags on the front lawn. I see you being loving when you call someone to check in on them. I see you being loving when you continue being faithful givers. And that love looks a whole lot like being the church.

It is true that we are not worshipping in the building, but all of you are being the church during this time.

So as God says to each of you, "Love, just love," know that you are loving well during this time of pandemic. Keep on loving and keep on being the church!

Blessings,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Pastor Brooke".