



grow. pray. serve.

Reveille UMC Weekly Guide

August 6-12, 2018

2nd Sunday in Sermon Series: This Holy Mystery

Sermon by Rev. Kelley Lane: "A Taste of Heaven"

Notes from sermon on 8/05:

Prayer requests:

Family Focus Questions (before sermon):

Who are the saints in your life?

3 Questions for small groups (after sermon):

1. What is eternal life?
2. What is the communion of saints and how do we experience the communion of saints in worship?
3. Why is it important to partake of communion on a regular basis?

Monday, August 6: Read John 6:35, 41-45

Eternal Life. Heavenly Banquet. What images do these terms evoke in our minds? If we're imagining a place full of clouds, harps, and wings that we go to after we die, we are getting our images from popular culture, not the Bible. If we are imagining a world of peace, inclusion, relationship, justice, joy, forgiveness, purpose, and love, then we imagine the life available to us through the life, death, and resurrection of Christ. None of us has yet experienced this life in perfection here on earth, but by drawing close to Christ, we can enjoy more and more of the eternally sustainable bread of life that Christ has to offer. When we come together to commune with Christ and one another, in agreement with Christ's commandments to love God and love one another as he has loved us, we experience a sacrament – a touchpoint with God and God's kingdom – that gives us what Kelley Lane will describe on Sunday a "foretaste of the heavenly banquet."

As we read Christ's powerful and, at the time, controversial words in today's gospel reading from John, let us think of the times when drawing closer to Christ gave us those moments of peace, rest, or comfort that transcended our earthly situation. The times when Christ's teachings brought us moments of perfect clarity or joy. How can we more intentionally approach the communion table ready to experience this foretaste of the heavenly banquet, every time?

Tuesday, August 7: Read John 6:46-51

We search for eternal life in so many places. We might believe money, prestige, the right diet, good works, our children, our grandchildren, or our reputation will chase away our gnawing fear that we are declining, alone, and irrelevant. Or perhaps we turn to a leader, a spiritual practice, or a regimen that seems to keep our demons at bay and gives us a sense of peace and purpose and promises deliverance. While there are many wonderful pathways for us to care for our “temple” and leave legacies of love and healing on earth, Christ teaches us in today’s gospel that we can stop searching for a way to create an eternal life for ourselves and accept the gift of living bread from him. By continually accepting this bread of life from Christ, in the form of communion and in our daily practices of prayer and scripture reading, we can be continually renewed by God’s grace, allowing us to have sustenance for our journey in this life.

Wednesday, August 8: Read Ephesians 4:25-5:2

Today we are reminded that Holy Communion is not just between us and God, it is also about community. We cannot experience true communion if we are angry, dishonest, or hateful to one another. Holy Communion calls all of us to come together in agreement under Christ. It calls us to invite others to experience God’s love and grace. It spurs us to forgive one another. As we prepare to approach the communion table this Sunday, let us ask ourselves who we need to forgive? With whom do we need to be reconciled? Who will be sitting at home in pain, loneliness, boredom, or regret whom we could invite to Reveille? In addition, let us also look at the saints in our lives with whom we can commune. How will our lives improve if we more regularly break bread with those who demonstrate the love and peace of Christ?

Thursday, August 9: Read 2 Samuel 18:5-9, 15, 31-33

Today we juxtapose the ideal of the Kingdom of Heaven against what is possibly one of the most tragic stories in the Bible. The story of the estrangement, conflict, and death of King David’s son Absalom has inspired the imaginations of readers, artists, musicians, and writers for millennia. Here, the greatest king in Israel’s history experiences the worst tragedy we can imagine. We know that God’s plan for humanity involves healing our damaged relationships, ending strife, and reuniting us all in love for eternity. How can the act of communion help us move toward this ideal today? How can regularly breaking bread with one another through Christ help us begin to heal our fractured families, neighborhoods, congregations, and communities?

Friday, August 10: Read Psalm 130

Today’s psalm beautifully and tragically expresses the longing all of us have for eternal life and the heavenly banquet. We are tired of the strife, want, pain, suffering, and discord of this world. We call out for the bread of life that will allow us to transcend our temporary circumstances and give us the strength to go on. We need hope in a life of eternal joy and peace that our fate is not in our hands, but in our loving God’s. Today’s psalmist joins us in our need to be forgiven for everything we have done, and in our relief that God is not keeping track of our sins. As those who have experienced Christ’s redemption, let us recognize how desperately the world is crying out for the communion table of God and find ever-increasing ways to bring others to the communion table with us.

Saturday, August 11: SCRIPTURE MEMORIZATION: John 6:35b

“I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry,
and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.”

Sunday, August 12: Let us prepare our hearts and minds for worship in praying our Prayer of

Common Confession: Gracious God, you call us your own children and cover us with your love. We would seek to be merciful as you are, and to show compassion as you do, but we fail to live the life to which we have been called. Where we ought to forgive, we condemn; the evil we should shun, we embrace. Forgive our sinful ways, tame our wayward wills and make us more like Christ, until we are raised in perfection on the last day. Amen.