

WORLD COMMUNION SUNDAY

Do you set aside a special Sunday to celebrate World Communion Sunday in your church? At Stockbridge Presbyterian, October 6th was our day, as it is with many churches throughout the world. For some reason, this felt like an especially important day to us. I think much of that had to do with recent problems in Syria, the continuing mess in the Middle East, and reports of persecution against Christians in places where I'd naively thought they were free to worship as they pleased. Every now and then something hits home, gets our attention in a new way, doesn't it?

In our own congregation, we have folks from Ghana, India, Asia, South America, Mexico, Haiti, and the Bahamas. Another family has a heritage of English, Irish, and Native American. Each person or family brought in bread (or a tortilla, or a scone) that was new to us in the U.S., but common in the countries they represent. The table was absolutely beautiful, and we loved hearing the stories. A woman from Colombia remembered seeing her grandmother grind the corn to make the tortillas everyone ate for breakfast when she was growing up. And did you know there are 3 different kinds of "seed bread" that are made only in Ghana?

We talked about the Exodus from Egypt, when God delivered the Israelites from slavery and they began their journey toward the Promised Land. God gave them specific instructions: find an unblemished lamb; roast it on the appointed day; eat it, together with your neighbors; and take some of its blood to put on the doorposts of your home. When God brings destruction on Egypt, you will be spared – because of the blood on your doorposts.

Saved by the blood of the lamb.

In Luke, Jesus is at the Passover meal with his disciples, knowing he's just hours away from being arrested and executed. He breaks the bread: "This is my body, broken for you." And he lifts the cup: "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you for the forgiveness of your sins."

Once again, and eternally, we are saved by the blood of the Lamb.

Even though Jesus tells us, "Do this in remembrance of me," we tend to forget. We get caught up in disagreements, and worship styles, and personal convictions, and all kinds of conflict. This happens in our homes, our churches, and our countries. We concentrate on the things that too often drive us apart, rather than on the one thing that is meant to hold us together: the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

The world is much bigger than our front porch. There are believers all over the globe who are saved by the blood of the Lamb and live as disciples of Jesus, with the same challenges, struggles, and joys. When we forget what we have in common – Jesus Christ himself – we need to be reminded. He is bigger than anything, bigger than any of our differences or disagreements. There's nothing on this earth that is stronger or more important than our salvation through Christ. Let's do what we do in remembrance of him.