

FCSS August 27, 2017
Rev. Curran Reichert

“Let It Go;
lessons from the worm farm”

Last week my family was invited to pay a visit to Lois and Jack’s worm farm. Lois Chambers is the beautiful, tall artistic woman who has become a regular visitor at the 10:30 service. She and her husband, with the help of their daughters, some faithful employees, and millions of tiny earthworms turn compost into highly nutrient soil that makes things grow like you can’t believe. Until you see it- then it is all right there under your nose.

Dalia’s, zinnias, gladiolas and amaranth in three different colors. Squash cucumbers, tomatoes, tomatillos, potatoes and green beans thrive in the rich soil providing a welcome bounty for workers, family and friends.

The key to the success of the worm farm, of course, is diversity. Ecological, chemical, natural and human diversity. There; art and sweat co-mingle, earth and life are partners, and our reliance on millions of tiny microorganisms becomes obvious to the naked eye.

Each worm has its distinct function, each plant its own, each worker has his or her role to play and all things work together for a common good.

Today’s scripture tells a similar story. It tells us that though the body may have many members they all work together for the good of that body- some days are better than others but still.

The body of faith functions similarly in that it has untold members whose goal according to the words of the Apostle Paul, ought to be to function as one. Each member using their gifts to flesh out the magnificent tapestry of life that reflects perfectly an image of God.

Our success in creating that body relies upon our ability to embrace the diverse attributes of each member.

How are we doing with that? I mean it- how are we doing with that?

Are we, the people of God, doing everything we can to uphold the gifts of the hand, the foot, the spleen, and the colon?

Or do we only really like the shiny bits, like the ones that bring us pleasure, or make us appealing to others? Do we pay much attention to things like our Achilles tendon and our saliva glands- no, but dependent on them we are nonetheless. Just as we are dependent on the worms and the microorganisms, and the amazing diversity that makes up our world!

Christian ethicist and botanist Sally McFague makes the point in her book Super Natural Christians that the smaller the organism, the more dependent humanity is on it. Because the bigger we are the more we can't afford to have the stability underneath us erode. If it weren't for the tiniest of tiny creatures we would not have solid ground upon which to stand, or trees that make oxygen and so on and so one. But, she says, each creature be it large or small, is allotted only a certain amount of space in the environment and human beings are taking up more than their share.

Some human beings are taking up way, way more than their share!

So, what I want to say this morning is that we are infinitely dependent on one another in order to thrive and survive. As people of God we need to examine and honor our interdependency to insure that we are not unwittingly complicit in taking up more than our share.

And also, as people who seek to reflect God in our living, we need to remember why we exist in the first place. You see the hand does not exist for the hands sake. I mean hands are awesome, but they are awesome because they exist to be in service to the rest of the body- our bodies- and **the rest of the bodies that make up the One body.**

How have your hands been in service to the rest of the body this week?

I saw at least one hundred of those hands holding candles on Friday night for Shabbat in solidarity with congregation Shir Shalom. Your hands were in service to the greater body- holding candles of hope and love.

And **I know** there are loads of other ways your hands are in service and deserve acknowledgement (the Let it Shine campaign, volunteering in the thrift shop, serving soup and making burritos for those who are hungry in our valley), I also know that you don't do it **for** the acknowledgement and that is what Paul is talking about in his letter to the Romans.

He is saying, *check yourselves my people. I'm not talking about personal grooming habits I'm talking about the body of God.* Where is your body in the greater whole? Are you one with the spirit, doing your best and doing your part or have you fallen prey to the trap of judging others- for how they do what they do or how they do what they do that is not like how you do what you think ought to be done?

I mean we have got a crisis on our hands here people, we have some folks believing that the only thing that matters in this life is their particular version of what matters in this life. Our scripture seeks to draw us back to a deeper and more universal truth. It only matters if it is a significant contribution to the good of the whole.

Everything we need to know is available through the truth of the worm farm:

- 1) That which is seemingly insignificant is, in fact, the most significant.
- 2) In God's economy, nothing is wasted.
- 3) Our survival is based on the intimate dance of interdependency.
- 4) And diversity is not a detriment, but a testament to the One we seek to amplify.

Good people of God, our delicate eco-system is dependent on diverse representation of gifts. Do something with your life this week to make certain that the diversity of God's tapestry is reflected in our lives.

Amen

Gathering of Spirits

Let it go my love my truest, D E Let it sail on silver wings C G Life's a twinkling
that's for certain, D But it's such a fine thing G C G There's a gathering of spirits D
There's a festival of friends C G And we'll take up where we left off D G When we
all meet again.

Verses: C G I can't explain it. I couldn't if I tried C G How the only things we carry
D Are the things we hold inside C Like a day in out the open, G Like the love we
won't forget C G Like the laughter that we started D And hasn't died down yet

Chorus: G C G Let it go my love my truest, D E Let it sail on silver wings C G Life's a
twinkling that's for certain, D But it's such a fine thing G C G There's a gathering of
spirits D There's a festival of friends C G And we'll take up where we left off D G
When we all meet again.

Verse C G Oh yah, now didn't we, and don't we make it shine C G Aren't we
standing in the center of D Something rare and fine C G Some glow like embers Or
light through colored glass C G Some give it all in one great flame D Throwing
kisses as they pass

Chorus (instrumental) Verse: C G Just east of Eden But there's heaven in our midst
C G And we're never really all that far D From those we love and miss C G Wade
out in the water There's a glory all around C G The wisest say there's a 1000 ways
D The kneel and kiss the ground Chorus G C G Let it go my love my truest, D E Let
it sail on silver wings C G Life's a twinkling that's for certain, D But it's such a fine
thing G C G There's a gathering of spirits D There's a festival of friends C G And
we'll take up where we left off D G When we all meet again. C G And we'll take up
where we left off D G When we all meet again.