

The Promise of Ministry

Presented By Pastor Scott Walters on 1/26/20

At Crossroads United Methodist Church

Waunakee, WI

Last week, I began be referencing Mark Twain's Hannibal, Missouri.

Today a quote by Mark Twain: "the only person who likes change is a wet baby (and I've been told that that's not always the case.)"

Today, our scripture readings, provides a contrast in need; for comfort & safety on the one hand; and for change and risk on the other.

In Psalm 27, David writes, "For God will hide me in his shelter in the day of trouble; he will conceal me under the cover of his tent."

The Psalmist (David) was at a point where he or she needed protection and comfort;

And, there are times when we need that as well.

Today passage from Matthew is also a response to trouble. In an often overlooked detail, we hear that John the Baptist has been placed in jail.

Implies: 1] Jesus isn't safe; 2] Is a major spark for Jesus' ministry.

Jesus responds NOT by seeking safety, but by going into the unknown and taking some risks.

He speak about a new kingdom with new and different values: the Kingdom of Heaven.

He takes a risk in the variety of disciples he calls: from a tax-collector who is regarded by most Jews as a traitor to his own people TO Simon the Zealot who would believe that the Roman occupying forces should be overthrown, and a new powerful Israel begun again.

And he says to them that if they follow, he will have them fish for people.

So the net isn't there to ensnare people; it becomes something that is opened up to allow others in -

That promise to those would-be disciples is a promise to us.

Part of the promise is a promise of "presence"

For each of us, part of the promise is that there is a role for each one of us: no matter how old or how young; no matter how unsure we are of our gifts and abilities;

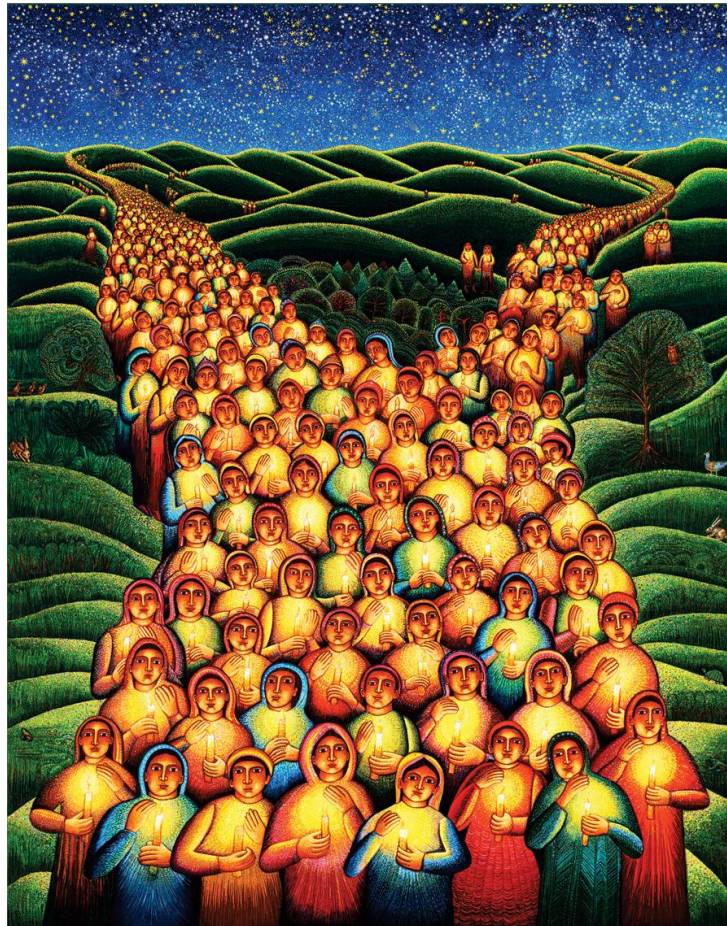
And with that promise, we are given the responsibility as disciples of

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Jesus to discover the way – or the new way – to be in ministry with Jesus.

The Joy of Ministry: Being able to live life in the present in a new way with a different point of reference guiding the way;
The joy of ministry also offers a way for hope in the future, and a chance to redeem the past.

Jesus' ministry (and ours) is about shining light into darkness and inviting others to join in:



There is a word in the vocabulary of Christianity that has been given ugly and exclusive connotation as of late. It is a word that most of us (including myself) are careful in associating with.

But, in reality, 'evangelical' or in Gk., *evangelion*, is a beautiful word that literally means, a bringer or bearer of good news.

Just like each of the participants in that painting, God reminds us that we are not supposed to be spectators, but participants in

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bearing the light and love of Christ; to be one of those who actually “open their nets” to allow others to be transformed by this amazing love of God.