

Squamish United Church

August 5, 2018

Rev. Karen Millard

(long weekend worship this was adapted into a conversation)

Scriptures

Ephesians 4:1-16

John 6:24-35

Daily Bread

So its summer and there are more and more diet options out there everyday. Even on dragon den lately there is some drink that will apparently shrink you in days. Lets be clear - believe I know fad diets don't work. I haven't' tried one recently but as someone who obviously has weight to loose I know there are two types of diets - those that work and those that don't. Fad diets rarely work. If fast results with no effort are promise go with your gut "it's too big to be true." Most of us know by now don't diet, make it a lifestyle. Gain good nutrition and make healthy choices long term is the best idea. It means discipline and faithful practice. Good food and exercise.

This week our Scriptures talks about the bread of life and a community coming together in the unity of the spirit. On this communion Sunday as we consider what it means to follow Jesus we are reminded that perhaps following Jesus takes a bit more commitment than we like to think. Perhaps coming together to commune together has purpose more than this world likes to think. I have had a few conversations lately with people who have tried to do faith on their own but are realizing that coming to a place with community is important. As we rediscover ourselves in this place coming together as community is a huge part of what we are to be about.

Following Jesus, having a diet of daily bread is much like any other practice that makes us better people healthy food, healthy exercise, healthy choices. Make a lifelong commitment for positive results. One author suggested Jesus is like a personal trainer with us every step of the way. Feed us, nourishing us, guiding us, preparing us for a full life. This weeks gospel follows Jesus feeding of the 5000. The crowd thinks this is amazing and they simply want to receive more. As most skeptics do they request a better sign so that they can really believe. They suggest a reenactment of manna from heaven and this is when we hear Jesus say "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry." Of course as is often the case because Jesus does not meet every need or give an instant result many of them are disappointed. Jesus doesn't promise an easy life nor does he promise material goods. Jesus instead offers spiritual food.

As we consider what it means to follow Jesus as the bread of life it takes us back to the reason for the experience of communion. We are not only to follow Jesus' words we are to consume them so that they might nourish us. Jesus wants to become a part of us so that we too might be deeply connected with the holy.

Jesus as The Bread of Life is the manifestation of God's love in human form. We are not separate individuals experiencing something that is strictly private and unique to us. Jesus as the bread of life brings us to a feast that united us. We are Christians because we are baptized into grace;

nourished and strengthened, body and soul, fully committed, fully absorbed in the love of Christ. As we are nourished by the bread of life we are transformed to live out the love and grace of God in the world. The Grace and love of God is a free gift but if we fully receive it we will be transformed by it and we too we share that life-giving gift with the world in a community of faith and love.

So my recommendation for today is that we all continue a diet of daily bread. Following Jesus, staying close to God and one another will help us make healthy choices. Keep pace with prayer and scripture. Workout with love in ministries of worship, outreach and community. Get on the Jesus Diet. It's not about losing; it's about gaining... gaining serenity, purpose and direction in this life... gaining the joy of eternal abundant life