

For Our Mutual Flourishing

Scriptures:

Exodus 16:13-27

Matthew 6:19-21

Purpose:

To highlight God's + Nature's + our Neighbors' reliability when we are in right relationship to each other. God + nature are to be trusted and can be trusted. We will be provided for when we trust and get out of scarcity mentalities and remember to exist within community. When neighbors live together in faith, in trust, and in equity; when we come together and live together across differences, people with abundance and people with need, everyone can be provided for. No one can have too much or too little.

Exegesis:

1. The Israelites are being called into a new way of living that is very different from their recent past. The new way that they are being called into is one where faith, trust, and equity are at the center of everything they do. Their recent past was one, where they could not reimagine or know a different way to live besides to let fear be their motivating factor. The Israelites were afraid. *Fear can exist and there can be another way to live.*
2. The reality about the distribution of bread in Exodus 16 is that their practices in sharing and living together generously, really did work, and worked for everyone. No one is able to grab too much or too little. Those that took "too much", didn't have anything left over to eat. And those that gathered too little, filled their bellies. (17-18)
3. Where are we storing up our treasures? Robin Wall Kimmerer, *The serviceberry* speaks of storing up our meat in the belly of our brothers. Where are we storing up our treasures/our abundances? Do we allow neighbors to store their abundance inside of us?
4. True Scarcity does exist. On the 7th day there wasn't anything for the Israelites to eat. And true Scarcity with climate change/with hoarding is real. With billionaires, with white supremacy/racism; there isn't always enough in this world, and many people are left without. All of this can be true, and we can start building something with the communities and natural habitats that we are part of know. We might not be able to release the pressures of capitalism, of climate change, of burnout completely. But we can lessen the burden on each other just a little, and that is good enough.

Questions?

1. Fear and anxiety are real – Which mindset do you tend to fall into, scarcity or abundance? What conditions or practices could you put into place to remember to go to abundance? How do you feel God's presence calling you into abundance?

2. We must go through life together, – who are your people? Do you have a community in which you can share and receive resources? If not how can begin to build community where these principles are practiced?
3. Write a poetic response or haiku [5 syllables, 7 syllables, 5 syllables] To the question: How do you imagine a liberative future centered around abundance? Responses can connect to all senses (smell, hearing, touch/movement, sight, taste, etc.)