

“We Want To Be Whole”
A Communion Meditation Offered by Rev. W. Dale Osborne
August 3, 2008
Lectionary Texts: Isaiah 55: 1-5; Matthew 14: 13-21

This is a wonderful day to be breathing. The Creator of heaven and earth and all that dwells within and beyond the cosmos is with you. The giver of life, the designer of breath is with you. When we sneeze and our heart and breath are halted for a moment, someone nearby often says “God bless you.” They want our breathing to go well. They want our breathing cycle to be whole and life-giving. The in and out of breathing is a blessed gift from God.

Many of you know that our Interim Minister, Denise Cumbee Long experienced pain in her heart while breathing last week after church. In those moments of discomfort and anxiety, she was grateful for the presence of church members who were willing to come to her aid. They gave her guidance and offered compassion during her time of infirmity. They helped her on the way back to wholeness. For this kindness and for the many others shown to Denise during her time away, she is grateful.

On this communion Sunday where we are delighted to hear from Dr. Shobha Arole, my mind and heart began to drift to matters of health and wholeness. Then when I read the passages from Isaiah and Matthew, I felt even stronger the pull to reflect on health and wholeness. Therefore, I took the example of Jesus and withdrew by myself to a deserted place so that I could breathe deep and consider the scriptures and life’s quest for wholeness more fully. My time of solitude resulted in the following poem which will serve as our meditation prior to receiving the bread of life and the cup of miraculous blessing. Breathe deep and hear it well as you consider your own quest for wholeness and health.

We Want To Be Whole

Ho! Says the prophet in the scripture of old
 He demands our attention - no shyness marks his voice.
 There is talk of miraculous meals purchased without credit card, barter or gold.
Who is he trying to fool this prophet of old?

Yet, We want to be whole, we want to be whole,
 feed us what is good, quench our thirst with savory wine,
 the fields are ripe with blessing but our troubled lives too full to taste the vine.

Isaiah talks of David the leader
 David the shepherd, David the king, David the covenant keeper
 Yet David, the human fell hard for Bathsheeba
Where are you now when your people they need ya?

And We want to be whole, we want to be whole,
 Send a leader who is good, quell our fears with robust hope
 The fields are filled with pesticides, the workers start to choke.
Time and ages pass so swiftly, like petals in the wind
 Eternity’s a whisper for the God who breathes us in
 Transported past a thousand, the years go rushing by
 Now is now forever in our Creator’s eye

When Jesus heard his friend was dead by a dancer’s coy request
 He withdrew from the hubbub and sought a quiet rest
Eager crowds still pressed upon him, with desires of their own

Touch us gentle teacher cure our ills and make us whole.

For we want to be whole, we want to be whole

Wrap your loving arms around us and save our sin sick souls

This earth is filled with murderous kings who sell our lives for coal

Then the son of Mary heard disciples' words of woe

The hour is late, the crowd is strong, only hunger fills their plate,

We beseech you gentle Jesu send them home to buy more food

If they stay perched on this hillside we can not judge their mood

They want to be whole, they want to be whole

More than five thousand this day have gathered

And every one wants to be whole

With grace the carpenter's boy created a field of full blessing

In the grip of day's end all sat down on the grass

Every woman, man, disciple and child huddled hopefully - wearing no mask

Each heard a prayer and felt the fast leave their troubled body

Are we not whole?, are we not whole?

As we sit round this table of grace.

We know we are whole, we know we are whole

Our hearts have uncovered his face.