

Reflections on serving communion:

Our pastor is away. I had the opportunity, for the first time, to lead our congregation through the liturgy and serve communion this morning. I stood there, my arms open, with a deep sense of humility. Here I was, a gay man, a drug addict, living with HIV, someone who does not, even refuses to, subscribe to the norms of what so many see as the necessary demographics for salvation, standing in front of the congregation, saying the words of Jesus from nearly 2000 years ago, inviting anyone to the table, to the meal of nourishment for our bodies, souls and spirits. I am alive today, only through the grace of God. I, in this moment, have the opportunity to minister to others, to invite others to communally participate in this meal, this love, this grace.

What a powerful reminder of God's unconditional love. A new covenant, everlasting life – God, present in human flesh laying down his life for mine – 2000 years ago, prophesized before then in the Old Testament. According to scripture.

The bread. A symbol of God in the flesh. Broken. For me. For all of us.

The juice. A symbol of blood, that which carries the elements essential to keep us alive. An essential element of life itself. More importantly of a covenant, a holy and sacred mutual promise, confirmed in blood. This grace, just as essential and element for life then, now and forever.

Just the day before, watching the coronation of the King of England, the Archbishop of Canterbury repeated the words of Jesus, the same words I would repeat the next morning, the same words that have been said countless times across millennia. What connection. Connection of tradition. Connection of belief. Connection through our desperate need for God's grace. Connection of love, true, pure, unconditional love given to each of us simply because we are loved children of God. No other reason. We can't earn it. We can't buy it. Doesn't matter if we are a contemporary apostle of Jesus, a twenty first century king or a humble servant, saved by grace, in Watertown, CT.

Wow! The love. The grace. The covenant that God is ALWAYS with us. God. Me? Us? Yes! Powerful!