



Looking Out My Window, July 8, 2022

Have you ever thought of yourself as a minister of Christ? Normally, we think of clergy in that way because they are so visible on Sundays as worship leaders and because we call on their ministry in weddings, funerals, baptisms, and moments of crisis.

The Outline of the Faith (Catechism) in *The Book of Common Prayer* asks the question, “Who are the ministers of the Church?” The answer: “The ministers of the Church are lay persons, bishops, priests, and deacons.” (BCP, 855). Does it surprise you that lay persons comes first in the list? A parish can carry on worship and ministry without a priest (maybe not easily), but a parish cannot carry on worship, mission, and ministry without laity who assume leadership and servant roles. Clergy come and go but the laity remain. Lay ministry provides the lifeblood that courses through the arteries and veins of the community.

The next question? “What is the ministry of the laity?” The answer: “The ministry of lay persons is to represent Christ and his Church, to bear witness to him wherever they may be; and, according to the gifts given them, to carry on Christ’s work of reconciliation in the world, and to take their place in the life, worship and governance of the Church.” (BCP, 855).

Pentecost Sunday and the season of Pentecost (lasting until Advent) focuses on the ministry of all Christians. The Holy Spirit empowers and enables each of us for our particular ministry in our unique areas of living, working, and playing.

As we seek to involve more laity in leadership and ministries at Christ Church, would you consider this question, “What is my ministry?” However daunting the answer may feel, I hope you will dare to pray for boldness and strength to engage more fully in your unique, personal expression of ministry as described above in The Outline of the Faith. And, if invited to serve as a committee chair or member or a team leader or member, please discern and pray. Don’t take initial dis-ease as your final word. The Spirit may be calling. You will have a ministry outside the community to discern, of course, but engaging within the community can be your ministry “boot camp” that can prove a launching pad for your ministry outside Christ Church.

God’s peace,

David W. Perkins, Interim Rector+