

From the Pastor's Pen

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

First of all I would like to thank you all for your wonderful and gracious birthday surprise – your thoughtful notes and gifts, the special cake and your presence (in thought or actuality). A joy shared makes any occasion better. And it was so nice to see a group of you at Mills River Park with the variety of delicious food, followed by a time of fun and fellowship. I am always grateful for the ministry you extend to me.

I am beginning to think that summer is finally here. The corn in the fields is developing new shoots and is gaining in height, the blueberries are ready to be picked and the thermometer has risen above the 75 degree mark once or twice. On my way to and from the church I encounter each day a picture of bucolic bliss as I watch this year's crop of lambs search through the grass for their favorite greens.

It appears to me that summer is God's special gift to us after the long hiatus of winter, mud season (not much spring here in Vermont) and planting season. Each day brings the wonder of the fruit on the vine growing just a bit larger, a bit more colorful, filled with juicy goodness.

Summer evenings too give me a sense that God is truly happy with what has been created. Around my house the sound of cicadas can be heard all around. It is a night noise that brings me back to summers many years in the past when my friends and I ran through darkening meadows to play one last game. As the shadows lengthen and the continuous rhythm of the cicada expanded like an excerpt from a baroque masterpiece, we laughed for the sheer joy of being alive.

Peace of mind and peace of heart have much to do with our quality of life. Unlike the children running and playing at dusk, we adults are often worried about the cares of the days ahead. Will we have enough money to pay the bills? What about our job? Can we provide for our children? What if anyone gets sick and we don't have (good) insurance? So we worry.

Our Gospel readings this month address this worry: "I am the bread of life," Jesus calls out to us. "When you come to me I will see that you are properly fed with the spiritual food that does not spoil, and I know of your physical needs as well. Remember how God fed the Israelites in the desert."

How blessed we are to be able to call on Jesus who knows our needs and is full of compassion, for fear and worry can even assault us during the balmiest of summer nights. When, during these fearful times we look to him for help, we can declare with the Psalmist

"It is good to give thanks to the Lord; to sing praises to your name Most High; to declare your steadfast love in the morning, and your faithfulness by night..." Ps. 92 v.1

Blessings,

Pastor Dagmar