

For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many are one body, so it is with Christ.

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and from our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

I was in a hurry, I turned to say something to Sue as I rushed along. I strayed just a little from the path. My toe caught an edge and down I went. Hard. The moment of impact is still vivid in my mind. Right there is where I hit. It really hurt. I picked myself up and played nine holes of golf. But for the next two months right there kept hurting.

And here in my elbow, and here in my shoulder and even up here in my neck. All connected. The other day I was swimming and noticed that my shoulder felt great. It was then I realized that my hand has not been bothering me lately.

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It is Saturday night, it has been a tough week. Long days, late nights, do you set an alarm to get up and go to church? You had communion just last week, you know the sermon will tell you of God's love and forgiveness and will encourage you to share that love and forgiveness with others, you do not have any responsibility as an usher or a lector, or cantor this week. You decide to sleep in.

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Sunday morning, you take your place here in this room for worship. You look around. Where you expect to see that woman who is usually here is only an empty space. Each week you greet her – share some small talk – sometimes talk about joys the week has brought or challenges. You do not think of her as a friend but she is part of your Sunday mornings. Today when she is not here it is not the same.

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You lost your job this week. You did not see it coming. Who will you tell? You do not want people to pity you. Seems like some people pull back when there is anything that shows that we do not have control over our lives. If you tell him will he be thinking, “Thank God it is not me that lost a job.” Or will she be wondering what you did wrong that caused you to lose your job? Can you trust these people at church?

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You know how many are hurting. Income decreasing, jobs lost. It has not happened to you as yet. It is like we have been pulling a heavy load all together and some are no longer able to pull their share. Will you give more to make up for them? If it were you who could no longer do your share, would you want them to pick up the slack?

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Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. If one member suffers all suffer together, if one member is honored, all rejoice together with it.

We are connected like your hand is connected to your elbow is connected to your shoulder is connected to your neck. Connected. Parts of one body.

God has connected us. This morning Charlotte will be connected to Christ in his body. God chooses her to be a daughter of God and a sister of every one of us. She will come to know God in the connections that she has with you. She will learn about God’s love as a gift through your love. She will learn about forgiveness by experiencing your forgiveness. She will learn about service by working side by side with you to make a difference for the poor – whether that poverty be in health or money or status or goodness. She will meet Christ in that service side by side with you.

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