



Simple Things
I Corinthians 11:23-26

Maundy Thursday, April 18th, 2019
First Federated Church of Peoria, Illinois
The Rev. Dr. Forrest Krummel, Jr.

Text: For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the death of the Lord until he comes. (v. 26)

I have officiated at enough weddings to have seen or heard just about everything from stubbled fields, to country woods, to fancy resorts, and the most formal of church sanctuaries. A bride was once so nervous that I thought that we'd lose her. The color literally drained out of her face and she clutched the groom's arm tight and tighter. We cut straight to the chase. "Do you take this woman to be your wedded wife?" "Yes." "Do you take this man to be your husband?" A shaking "yes" just a hair above a whisper. "I now pronounce you husband and wife."

Another bride walked down the aisle walk with her dog in a backpack. After one wedding the wedding coordinated told me that as the bride was waiting to make her entrance when the soloist missed his cue, she muttered, "Next time he's not singing!" Ah, next time?! Next time?!

I've seen weddings with tens of thousands of dollars spent on flowers and flowers that were picked that morning from grandmother's garden. The smoothest weddings are those with the fewest moving parts. There is a certain elegance in simplicity.

I believe that God has a soft spot in the divine heart for simplicity. I am particularly mindful of this tonight. God set aside two of the simplest elements of life as a metaphor for the Kingdom; bread and fruit of the vine.

In his undisputed letter to the Corinthians the apostle Paul said that that which he received "from the Lord" he "handed on" to us. On that night when the Lord Jesus was betrayed he took a loaf of bread, gave thanks, and broke it. "'This is my body that is for you. ...' In the same way he took the cup ... saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood.'"

And then Paul added, "as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes."

God's Kingdom is seen in broken grain and crushed grapes.

On this night, as we come forward, we remember the One whose life and death knit us together into his body on earth. On this night we are united in a real sense with the Risen Lord.

Let us prepare to come and enjoy the meal that he prepared for us.

Amen.