



*Let Us Break Bread Together*  
*1st in a sermon series on I Corinthians*  
*I Corinthians 1: 10-18*

*Sunday, February 2nd, 2020*  
*First Federated Church of Peoria, Illinois*  
*The Rev. Dr. Forrest Krummel, Jr.*

*Text: Now I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you be in agreement and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be united in the same mind and purpose.” (v. 10)*

Many years ago at a family dinner as the food was being passed around the table I received a bowl of broccoli slaw salad. It is a family favorite of everyone but me. I never anyone that I didn't like it. As I scooped a small spoonful of the salad onto my plate I thought myself, “Icky, Icky, Icky”.

“What did you say?” my wife asked with a bit of emotion.

“What?” I replied.

“What did you say?” she repeated.

Nothing”.

One of my daughters, ever trying to be the helpful one said, “Yes you did. You said ‘icky, icky, icky”.

“I said that out loud?!” I incredulously asked.

“Yes you did,” the other daughter piped in.

“I didn't mean to say it out loud.”

My most senior son in law, catching the spirit of “let's pile on Pop” said, “That's the first sign of dementia.”

Back to my wife. “Why did you say' icky, icky, icky”

“Because I don't like it.”

“Then why did you take some? Why didn't you just pass on?”

“Well, I was trying to be polite.”

Oh boy, wrong thing to say.

“You were trying to be polite by saying ‘icky, icky, icky!’”

Well, now the salad, in my family, is called, “Icky, Icky, Icky Salad.”

Our reading today comes from a letter that is written to a church struggling to learn how to get along together with each other. There are factions and divisions. This is not new. We still struggle. Liberal and conservative, rich and poor, traditional and contemporary, black and white and brown, native-born and immigrant, gay and straight; there clearly are divisions within the church today. This isn't new. Since before the "Great Schism" of 1054 when the Latin and Greek speaking church split into the Roman Catholic Church and the Eastern Orthodox church there have been divisions within the Christian community. That is why this letter is relevant to us in the 21st century. .

In the face of this reality the apostle challenged the Corinthian community then, and Christian communities today to live what one commentator called a "cross-shaped life"; a life that reaches to heaven and to the world simultaneously.

*"Be in agreement," he says. Be united in the same mind and purpose, that of glorifying Christ. This is easier said than done. Paul is not naive. He knows, for example, that gossip is a community killer. "It has been reported to me by Chloe's people," he wrote, "that there are quarrels among you. ... Some of you say, 'I belong to Paul,' or 'I belong to Apollos', or 'I belong to Cephas'... Has Christ been divided?" (vv. 11-13)*

How do we surmount divisions? While there is no magic pill to bridge a gap, there is something that we can do; we can share a meal together. .

In her book We Feast: Rethinking Dinner, Worship, and the Community of God Kendall Vanderslice wrote about her experience of taking a year to travel around the country visiting what she calls "dinner churches"; those are congregations that intentionally eat together as a part of their life together. Some of the churches had a weekly pot-luck, others ate with and fed the hungry as a part of their weekly ministry. One church had a monthly international potluck that featured dishes from the American South and Ghana, West Africa. She wrote that these dinner churches satisfy two basic human needs-- food and fellowship.

It was not by accident that Jesus established his Church around a meal.

*And he took bread, and when he had given thanks he broke it and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me." And likewise the cup after supper, saying, "This cup which is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood. (Luke 22: 1-20)*

There will always be differences within the Christian community. This is to be expected for we have all had different life experiences and come from different families of origin. We all have certain inbred biases. We may see the world through different lenses. But we can be united in a common purpose. And we can build bridges across any divide through food...even "Icky, Icky Salad." As Paul wrote a little later in this letter:

*Because there is one bread, we, though many, are one body since we all share one bread. (The Voice Bible 10:17)*

So, let us break bread together.