

What does the word values mean to you? Two weeks ago there was a webinar of the annual trinity institute presented by Trinity church on Wall street. Their theme this year was "values in Action" There was a summary at the end that said that we talk about values; American values, Christian values, all kinds of values; but it all boils down to God's values. Those values are simply held in the beatitudes and simpler yet in Jesus command to love god and your neighbor.

Last week was Global Mission Sunday and today we celebrate the work of ER&D. In today's Gospel we hear : "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news." What better way to celebrate God's work that goes on in the world than to take that good news wherever we go in His name. Our Epistle from last week has Paul's words to the Corinthians: "For we do not proclaim ourselves; we proclaim Jesus Christ as Lord and ourselves as your slaves for Jesus' sake. For it is the God who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."

In the past couple of weeks there have been many facebook pictures of the work that has been happening with this year's Mission of miracles trip to El Salvador. It is a great work for all involved. It is God's values at work. And that is fine ...BUT... does the work have lasting effect for anyone? How has it helped the world? How does it shine the light of Christ to anyone?

Sometimes whatever we do does not feel like enough. How can we do more. I learned a long time ago that it is simple. Follow through with values that God has given us and let Him do the rest. I guess you just show up where God has

called you and let God speak to those who will listen whether in El Salvador or your own back yard.

When I went to Haiti 24 years ago I did not feel that I was a holy enough person to go as a Christian missionary. I went as a nurse at the Albert Schweitzer Hospital in the Artibonite Valley about 2 hours north of PAP. That area is in the heart of voodoo country in Haiti. People at the hospital experienced their practice of voodoo in many ways. There is a saying in Haiti that the Haitians are 90% Catholic and a hundred percent voodoo. The local Haitians were using voodoo in a campaign to get rid of one of the European supervisors by leaving all kinds of voodoo symbols around to curse them and scare them off. That woman **was** scared off and returned to Switzerland. They went after another couple that was in charge of the community development area of the hospital mission. They also ran away, back to Belgium. I watched as all that went on and I stated to a Haitian friend that I was really glad that they were not going after me. He said that some folks come to really help and others to help themselves feel good. I was seen as a real Christian who was there to help the people, so the voodoo would not work on me anyway. I was shocked...I was surprised that they had such respect for Christianity that they felt it would not be effected by their spells; and I was very surprised that I had become a Christian missionary after all.

It is important to remember all the folks that have become the "slaves for Christ" that the reading in Corinthians talks about. They have given their lives in service to others as they feel God has called them. They are in every country, every culture doing the work of clothing the naked, feeding the hungry, comforting the bereaved, healing the sick and promoting justice, in other words doing the work that God has given them. Our Episcopal church

does good work helping with that. One entity is the global mission Global Episcopal Mission Network. They Proclaim, Inspire, Ignite the Joy of God's Mission through Global Mission Opportunities to equip people with the tools they need for mission! their emphasis is thru:

- The Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society of the Episcopal Church
- Young Adult Service Corps (YASC)
- The UN Millennium Goals
- The Episcopal Church thru
- Episcopal Migration Ministries
- Episcopal Public Policy Network (EPPN)
- Anglican Women's Empowerment (AWE)
- Episcopal Peace Fellowship
- Council for World Mission
- Canadian Churches Forum for Global Ministries
- They sponsor a yearly conference to help inform and train folks to work with these ministries around the world..

Then there is ER&D Episcopal Relief & Development . Their mission is:"the compassionate response of The Episcopal Church to human suffering in the world. Hearing God's call to seek and serve Christ in all persons and to respect the dignity of every human being, Episcopal Relief & Development serves to bring together the generosity of Episcopalians and others with the needs of the world."

At present ER&D serves in 15 countries in Africa, 6 in Asia, 8 in the Caribbean and Latin America, also in the middle east in Israel and Palestine. They also work in disaster relief and rebuilding in the US.

Global mission is very important, and to those who have been called for that work, it shows the face of Christ around the world. But that mission also reflects right here in our own communities. It means serving God as we are called in our communities, our neighborhoods, our church and our families. I also believe we are all called to some way to use our god-given talents to further expand God's kingdom around us.

All of this mission work does take two things...faith and love. Faith that God is always there with whatever tools we need and He helps us have the love to use those tools to help our neighbor. It does not matter if you do big things or small things to accomplish what is asked of you. Martin Luther King Junior once said: "Be a bush if you can't be a tree. If you can't be a highway, just be a trail. If you can't be a sun, be a star. For it isn't by size that you win or fail. Be the best of whatever you are." —from speech before a group of students at Barratt Junior High School in Philadelphia, October 26, 1967

And Mother Teresa said: Not all of us can do great things. But we can all do small things with great love.

As we move into lent, let us all think about the aspect of love that is mission, but especially global mission; let us pray for all those who serve in places far from home and family. Let us pray for their mission and for their safety as they serve in God's great kingdom out there. Also pray for each and every person who is serving right here. Helping with our worship, helping the lunch program; caring for the building; and serving in the greater community. Remember we are all a part of that mission and sometimes it takes something as simple as a smile or a kind word, or some small action for the light of God to show through.. Listen for God's call then just show up.... and God will do the rest.