

The Quilt

Christ the Redeemer Church
February 28, 2010
2nd Sunday in Lent

Luke 13:31-35
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(I called Pinky this morning and told him he had the invocation since Jessica was sick. He asked me what the scripture was today. I told him it was about a fox. King Herod was after Jesus to take him out in life. The disciples told Jesus he needed to get out of town.

Jesus said, I think with a grin, "Tell that old fox I am not done doing some good yet on this earth. Tell that old fox the game is not over yet. Tell that old fox that I am not finished yet pushing out demons, healing, and doing some good." Pinky, new to this Life of Faith in the Christian Church, said, "I feel like I have a personal trainer when I talk to you." I have my personal trainers. I hope you have yours.

One person said to me this week, "Give me a reason why I should get up and face the day instead of staying in bed." I said, "Because you have to tell the Fox you are not done doing good yet." Be it the Fox called Death. Or the Fox called Life's Challenges. Or the Fox called Disappointment and Loss. Or the Fox called the demonic ones in your world who would like to destroy you and any good you attempt. You tell the Foxes in your life that you are not finished yet doing good. Tell that old fox' I am not done yet.'")

Jesus called Herod a fox. Jesus was having fun with Herod even when the stakes were high in life and the game was serious. God's Love enables us to have fun while living our temporary lives on this earth.

You know Janice has made a competitive game to see which of us can obtain the most items for next Sunday's 5th Anniversary Dinner Silent Auction to raise money for summer camp. I am ahead 32-14 and she is the director. She is Smart like a fox.

Steve Jones Classic grew up in an Episcopal church and he sits in the front row here each Sunday. On my way to the pulpit last Sunday I asked him if he would use the ashes to mark the forehead of each person who came up for communion after the sermon.

We would have a belated Ash Wednesday service. Ash Sunday service. After my sermon I motioned for Steve to come and join me and the others serving communion at the altar. He asked me if he could say a word about the Ashes.

He told you, "When you stand before me waiting for me to mark the shape of a cross on your forehead with the ashes, I will ask you a question, 'Will you turn from your sinful ways and be faithful to the Gospel?' Your answer is 'Yes.'"

I was so impressed that he remembered the liturgy and the wording.

Quin asked Steve, “Will you repeat the question?”

When Steve asked Bobette the question she answered, “I do.” Steve said, “Bobette, this is not a wedding. Your answer is ‘Yes’ not ‘I do.’” Bobette then said, “Yes.”

Steve told people that they need to wipe the ashes off their foreheads after church otherwise people will think they have not taken a bath since Ash Wednesday.

I was so impressed that Steve knew the words and the liturgy. I told him so.

He grinned at me. Like a fox. He told he used his Blackberry during the sermon – to Google and research the history and wording of the Ash Wednesday liturgy. I thought he was texting while I was preaching a serious sermon about life and death and eternal Life.

Janice was embarrassed as she thought he was texting business partners during church. He was researching Ash Wednesday liturgy to use on Ash Sunday. It worked.

Michael, a Catholic who attends our church and who knows these things, complimented Steve after church on his wording. I told Michael about Steve Googling during the sermon to find the words. Michael cracked up.

I hope you hear the thread of the Gospel weaving these stories together.

This past Tuesday evening while waiting for my pork loin stuffed with sage sausage and cinnamon apples to bake Lisa sent me an email at 5:31 pm. It read: [I've been waiting for the right time to donate this item and I believe it is now. Remember the CTRC 2005 VBS quilt that was raffled and I won. I would like to donate it to the silent auction. There are some VERY special handprints on the quilt...as far as who gets credit for it, you or Janice, not my problem. \(too funny\). Lisa](#)

Lisa, a CPA, is so busy in life right now with a new job at the university and getting her Master’s degree, on top of all her other family and church responsibilities, that she never has time to write emails or cook or call anymore. This was a special email from her.

So at 5:32 pm I called Lisa and asked if she had cooked dinner yet, knowing she had just gotten home from work when she sent that 5:31 email. She said they had nothing to eat yet. I asked her if she wanted some fresh-out-of-the-oven pork loin stuffed with sage sausage and cinnamon apples. She was thrilled. I told her I had two pork loins in the oven and that one was for her. She was thrilled.

At 5:45 pm I delivered her a still steaming stuffed hot pork loin, broccoli and Hollandaise sauce, two boxes of animal crackers for Claire, and freshly baked corn bread. She met me at the door, accepted the food, and I told her I had to go feed my family. I acted in a hurry.

She asked me if I got the email about her donation and about the VBS quilt. I looked at

her and said, “Come on Lisa. You are smarter than that. Why do you think I just brought you dinner? This is a bribe. I want your donation before you give it to Janice. Where is the quilt?”

You have to be smart as a fox to stay in ministry. To stay married. To keep a job. To lead a church. To serve Christ.

I handed her the food and she handed me the quilt. I told her that is the way God works. Janice who?

At home I was laughing so hard while telling this story to Pam, Daniel, and Nora who had joined us for dinner. We were eating pork loin, cornbread, and candied yams. When I got to the part about taking Lisa the broccoli, Pam interrupted me and said, “Hey, we don’t have broccoli.” I told her she had candied yams. There were only enough candied yams for one family and enough broccoli for one family. So Lisa got the broccoli and we got the candied yams. Claire loves broccoli. I told Pam that is the way God works. I suggested everyone have more candied yams and let me finish my story. They did.

Mona Parkerson’s handprints are on that 2005 CTRC VBS Quilt. Mona went to be with the Lord last March. Curtis joined her this past Wednesday. I got the quilt with her handprints on it. For just some pork and some broccoli. Now I am ahead 33-14.

Friday morning, after a long week for all, we did what most people do when tired. We were easily irritated with each other. No good bye was said to each other when we left the house to start our days.

Pam never calls me during the day. She called me on my cell phone at 1130 am. I answered. She said, “I love you.” I said, “I accept your apology and I love you also.” Then it hit me. I said, “What do you want?” She said, “I forget that today is my student teacher’s birthday. I need two dozen cupcakes and flowers for her.” What time?” “In one hour.”

I said, “You only called me because you need something.” She said, “You have been married to me 34 years. You know that. Can you get them here in one hour?” Smart as a fox. We all have to be in life, marriages, jobs, church work, parenting, and community work.

I know Mona and Curtis are laughing right now in Heaven over this story and cheering us on this week. We have to be as smart as a fox. Will you turn from your sinful ways and be faithful to the Gospel? Your response is “Yes.” Amen.