

March 2018

Greetings,

The famous preacher and theology professor, Fred Craddock, told the following story about experiencing the Holy.

As a little boy of six, he asked a grown-up friend if he ever went to church. Will, a man in his 80's, replied that he went to church every Sunday. He went on to describe his church as having gold doors with silver handles and a high ceiling as blue as heaven itself. He told young Fred that at least 100 people welcomed him each week and the 500+ choir was so amazing that he was sure the angels joined in their singing.ⁱ

Dr. Craddock told his congregation that he later visited this church. It was a small, unpainted board-framed structure sagging upon fieldstone pilings. The furniture was hand-whittled and the congregation consisted of a few old people “fanning themselves with funeral home fans.”

“Will could see what I couldn't see,” the Rev. Craddock explained.

“Sometimes God disguises the good stuff and you have to close your eyes to see it.”ⁱⁱ

Fred Craddock was right: we do sometimes have to close our eyes to see God's “good stuff.” More importantly still, “stuff” sometimes only becomes good when we view it through eyes like Will's. The difficult child, the problem neighbour or the failing church might be that way simply because no one has ever taken the time to notice their gold and silver or pay attention to their angelic harmonies.

Seeing light and life where others only see darkness and despair is the essence of the Easter story. According to the Apostle Paul, only 500 people

saw the risen Christ.ⁱⁱⁱ (Jerusalem had 600,000 inhabitants in 66 CE.)
Faith-filled vision is a rare – and precious – faculty.

Every person, every community and every church is a resurrection waiting to happen. All they need is to be seen through the lens of love.

This Eastertide, when you come to church be on the lookout for sparkle!

And listen up for those angel tones!

Resurrection is just a look and a listen away...

Blessings,

Brenda

ⁱ Dr. Fred Craddock, "Jesus Saves," Woodmont Christian Church, July 10th, 2011.

ⁱⁱ Ibid.

ⁱⁱⁱ 1 Corinthians 15:6