

Main Passage

Acts of the Apostles 16:9-34 [NRSV]

During the night Paul had a vision: there stood a man of Macedonia pleading with him and saying, “Come over to Macedonia and help us.”¹⁰ When he had seen the vision, we immediately tried to cross over to Macedonia, being convinced that God had called us to proclaim the good news to them.¹¹ We set sail from Troas and took a straight course to Samothrace, the following day to Neapolis,¹² and from there to Philippi, which is a leading city of the district of Macedonia and a Roman colony. We remained in this city for some days.¹³ On the sabbath day we went outside the gate by the river, where we supposed there was a place of prayer; and we sat down and spoke to the women who had gathered there.¹⁴ A certain woman named Lydia, a worshiper of God, was listening to us; she was from the city of Thyatira and a dealer in purple cloth. The Lord opened her heart to listen eagerly to what was said by Paul.¹⁵ When she and her household were baptized, she urged us, saying, “If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come and stay at my home.” And she prevailed upon us.

¹⁶ One day, as we were going to the place of prayer, we met a slave girl who had a spirit of divination and brought her owners a great deal of money by fortune-telling.¹⁷ While she followed Paul and us, she would cry out, “These men are slaves of the Most High God, who proclaim to you a way of salvation.”¹⁸ She kept doing this for many days. But Paul, very much annoyed, turned and said to the spirit, “I order you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her.” And it came out that very hour.¹⁹ But when her owners saw that their hope of making money was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the marketplace before the authorities.²⁰ When they had brought them before the magistrates, they said, “These men are disturbing our city; they are Jews²¹ and are advocating customs that are not lawful for us as Romans to adopt or observe.”²² The crowd joined in attacking them, and the magistrates had them stripped of their clothing and ordered them to be beaten with rods.²³ After they had given them a severe flogging, they threw them into prison and ordered the jailer to keep them securely.²⁴ Following these instructions, he put them in the innermost cell and fastened their feet in the stocks.

²⁵ About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them.²⁶ Suddenly there was an earthquake, so violent that the foundations of the prison were shaken; and immediately all the doors were opened and everyone’s chains were unfastened.²⁷ When the jailer woke up and saw the prison doors wide open, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself, since he supposed that the prisoners had escaped.²⁸ But Paul shouted in a loud voice, “Do not harm yourself, for we are all here.”²⁹ The jailer called for lights, and rushing in, he fell down trembling before Paul and Silas.³⁰ Then he brought them outside and said, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?”³¹ They answered, “Believe on the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household.”³² They spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house.³³ At the same hour of the night he took them and washed their wounds; then he and his entire family were baptized without delay.³⁴ He brought them up into the house and set food before them; and he and his entire household rejoiced that he had become a believer in God.

Additional Scripture Passages

Genesis 18:1-8 [MEV]

The Lord appeared to Abraham near the great oak trees of Mamre while he sat in the tent door in the heat of the day.² Abraham lifted up his eyes and looked and saw three men standing across from him. When he saw them, he ran from the tent door to meet them and bowed himself toward the ground.

³ He said, “My Lord, if I have found favor in Your sight, do not pass by Your servant.⁴ Please let a little water be brought and wash your feet and rest yourselves under the tree.⁵ I will bring a piece of bread so that you may refresh yourselves. After that you may pass on, now that you have come to your servant.”

And they said, “So do, as you have said.”⁶ So Abraham hurried into the tent to Sarah, and said, “Quickly

prepare three measures of fine flour, knead it, and make cakes.”⁷ Then Abraham ran to the herd and took a choice and tender calf and gave it to a servant, who hurried to prepare it. ⁸ He then brought butter and milk and the calf that he had prepared and set it before them; and he stood by them under the tree while they ate.

Acts 2:42-47 Good News Translation

They spent their time in learning from the apostles, taking part in the fellowship, and sharing in the fellowship meals and the prayers. ⁴³ Many miracles and wonders were being done through the apostles, and everyone was filled with awe. ⁴⁴ All the believers continued together in close fellowship and shared their belongings with one another. ⁴⁵ They would sell their property and possessions, and distribute the money among all, according to what each one needed. ⁴⁶ Day after day they met as a group in the Temple, and they had their meals together in their homes, eating with glad and humble hearts, ⁴⁷ praising God, and enjoying the good will of all the people. And every day the Lord added to their group those who were being saved.

Book of Order References

F-1.0301 The Church Is the Body of Christ

The Church is the body of Christ. Christ gives to the Church all the gifts necessary to be his body. The Church strives to demonstrate these gifts in its life as a community in the world (1 Cor. 12:27–28):

The Church is to be a community of faith, entrusting itself to God alone, even at the risk of losing its life.

The Church is to be a community of hope, rejoicing in the sure and certain knowledge that, in Christ, God is making a new creation. This new creation is a new beginning for human life and for all things. The Church lives in the present on the strength of that promised new creation.

The Church is to be a community of love, where sin is forgiven, reconciliation is accomplished, and the dividing walls of hostility are torn down.

The Church is to be a community of witness, pointing beyond itself through word and work to the good news of God’s transforming grace in Christ Jesus its Lord.

F-1.0302d The Apostolicity of the Church [paragraphs one and two]

Apostolicity is God’s gift to the Church in Jesus Christ. In Christ, by the power of the Spirit, God sends the Church into the world to share the gospel of God’s redemption of all things and people.

Because in Christ the Church is apostolic, it strives to proclaim this gospel faithfully. The Church receives the good news of salvation in Jesus Christ through the testimony of those whom Christ sent, both those whom we call apostles and those whom Christ has called throughout the long history of the Church. The Church has been and is even now sent into the world by Jesus Christ to bear that testimony to others. The Church bears witness in word and work that in Christ the new creation has begun, and that God who creates life also frees those in bondage, forgives sin, reconciles brokenness, makes all things new, and is still at work in the world. To be members of the body of Christ is to be sent out to pursue the mission of God and to participate in God’s new creation, God’s kingdom drawing the present into itself. The PC(USA) affirms the Gospel of Jesus Christ as received from the prophets and apostles, and stands in continuity with God’s mission through the ages.

G-1.0101 The Mission of the Congregation (paragraph 2)

Through the congregation God’s people carry out the ministries of proclamation, sharing the Sacraments, and living in covenant life with God and each other. In the life of the congregation, individual believers are equipped for the ministry of witness to the love and grace of God in and for the world. The congregation reaches out to people, communities, and the world to share the good news of Jesus Christ, to gather for worship, to offer care and nurture to God’s children, to speak for social justice and righteousness, to bear witness to the truth and to the reign of God that is coming into the world.

Questions

1. How do these passages speak about **Hospitality**.
2. In what ways does your Church or Ministry Setting embody **Hospitality** as it is reflected in the passages used in this study.
3. In what ways does the Presbytery embody **Hospitality** as it is reflected in the passages used in this study.
4. In light of our reflections this morning, how have you experienced **Hospitality** in your faith life.