

# MINISTER'S MESSAGE

SUNDAY OCTOBER 13 2024

KNOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

## “What Are You Wasting?”

Based on John 6:1-15

Jesus said, “Go and collect the leftovers, so we are not wasteful.”

You know the story as well as I do. A big crowd had gathered to listen to Jesus teach and the day was winding down. The people were hungry and moving towards grumpy. Jesus asked the disciples to help find food for everyone, and they rather threw their hands up in protest and disbelief. “Feed all these people? How? With what?”

Of course, Jesus had the answer. From a small offering, all were fed until full. But this is what caught my attention.

The leftovers.

Lots and lots of leftovers.

Not only enough food to feed the crowd, but lots of leftovers, gathered upon Jesus' request, so that nothing went to waste.

Today marks the time to celebrate bounty, the harvest, families gathering before the winter, and giving thanks to the Creator for the seasons of

life, honouring how the ground must rest so that it may come to life again in the spring.

But the deeper challenge of today's lesson asks us, “What are you wasting?”

What are you blessing?

What are you wasting?

*A bowl of soup is brought to the Communion Table.*

### **We bless...**

- When we give thanks for the meal on our table and consider those only have a little
- When we grow vegetables and make jams and jellies with the abundance of fruit
- When we share our food with friends and family, or our time to feed others

### **We waste...**

- When we refuse to consider why those living in poverty need our hot food, and advocate for ‘food for all’
- When we lose sight of the great bounty that is provided by small seeds and tending in the soil, taking the easy route to the grocery store

Knox Presbyterian Church

demanding only perfect shapes and colour

- We stop thinking that caring about Mother Earth is a responsibility each of us has a small part and some small thing we can do, so she can catch her breath.

*A prayer shawl is brought to the Communion Table*

### **We bless...**

- When we slow down enough listen to those who need our time and our attention
- When we offer comfort and a care to those struggling with health and medical conditions
- When we pray for those we know, and those we don't know

### **We waste...**

- When we know we should do something to help, but we don't
- When we tell ourselves ‘It's someone else's job’
- When we dull our senses to the point we cannot feel another's pain

*A book is brought to the Communion Table*

### **We bless...**

- When we share our knowledge and wisdom from our years of experience
- When we mentor others encourage, teach, and step back to let them take the lead
- When we read to a child, or sing to the frail and elderly

**We waste...**

- When we do not share Our Story to the world because we have convinced ourselves they don't care about Our Story anymore
- When we control The Story instead of letting God teach The Story through us
- When we think we are the only ones who have a Story to share

*A hammer is brought to the Communion Table*

**We bless...**

- When we offer to help another move on to the next chapter of their life
- When we fix small problems that consume big amounts of anxiety for some
- When we help build something or build someone up

**We waste...**

- When we don't help because we tell ourselves we've already done our 'little bit for the cause'

- When we chose not to learn a new skill because deep inside we are afraid to show the world we aren't perfect at everything
- When we tear things down, and tear people down

*Coins are brought to the Communion Table*

**We bless...**

- When we give what we can to the causes that are important to us
- When we look beyond our bank account to make the world a better place for all
- When black or red lines at the end of the budget are not the only reason we do things

**We waste...**

- When we only help when we've taken care of ourselves first.
- When we do not support projects or programs that will never have a profit line on a piece of paper because we think life is all about making sure there are no red lines
- When we lose sight of God's bank account

*The bottle of wine is brought to the Communion Table*

**We bless...**

- When we come to worship, earnestly seeking to hear God whisper

- When we allow ourselves to be changed by The Word, and challenged to think differently
- When we embrace the holy, however small it may be

**We waste...**

- When we simply go through the motions of worship or The Table
- When we decide we are too old or too tired to serve anymore
- When we give up

Jesus said, "Go and collect the leftovers, so we are not wasteful."

Blessed leftovers He did not want forgotten, lost, thrown away, or wasted.

Let us not be wasteful  
Of food  
Of Mother Earth  
Of each other  
Of our time here on earth  
Of our understanding  
Of our faith

Amen