

April 4, 2022

You Will Not Have Me

[John 12:1-8](#)

You always have the poor with you, but you do not always have me. –John 12:8

In March of 2020 when the pandemic began, I was halfway through the second semester of my junior year of college. Life was normal. Then, the world was in crisis.

My college announced it would not be reopening and I moved home to complete my academic year from my childhood bedroom. The communities and relationships I had come to rely on were, suddenly, inaccessible to me.

My biggest connections to the outside world were 24-hour news channels which featured endless variations of stories regarding inequalities and tragedies that were being exaggerated by the pandemic: poverty, sickness, substance use, social injustices...

Now, three years into a pandemic, the world is still hurting, but is more open. We're less isolated. Yet I still feel myself longing for connection.

As I read the scripture to prepare for this devotional, I found myself repeatedly drawn to the last line where Jesus says to Judas, "You always have the poor with you, but you do not always have me."

Though Jesus is speaking of his impending death, it reminded me of the sudden isolation we experienced at the beginning of the pandemic. We certainly still had problems, perhaps even more than normal, but we no longer had each other.

Through these three years I have learned that opportunities for connections are not guaranteed. In fact, they must be forged, must be intentional. And most importantly, we must stop waiting.

Imagine a world where we didn't wait to connect. A world where we didn't have to be thinner, smarter, prettier, healthier, holier, better before we sought connection.

What does the kingdom of God have to gain by reaching out and loving each other as lavishly and intimately as Mary does when she anoints Jesus's feet? More importantly, what do we have to lose if we don't?

Prayer: *Creator God, we thank you for the gift of community. In a time of distance, isolation, and waiting, may we intentionally seek deep and intimate connection even amongst the grief of the world. Amen.*

Sierra Rexrode
Crim Memorial United Methodist Church, Philippi, WV
sierraem.rexrode@gmail.com