

Called to Community

Struggling

Day 3

Genesis 13:5-9 ... let there be no strife

Exodus 17:1-7 ... why do you quarrel

Matthew 18:15-20 ... if your brother or sister sins against your

1 Corinthians 12:12-26 ... all suffer together with it (also used Day 1)



When we live in community, every day, week, month, and year brings struggles or challenges – some are small, and some are large, some get resolved and some build over time. Sometimes when we are trying to cope with them, life seems to move on as it always has. Other times, life is completely turned upside down and changed in ways we don't expect. We are left to wonder what our response could be. Does being in faithful community with God and others mean taking a new path or does it mean staying the course?

All too often there are no winners when there are struggles and arguments within families. Sibling can be separated from sibling, parents can be separated from children – members shunned or not speaking to one another, sometimes for months or years. In our passage from Genesis, Abram and Lot's herders were quarreling – their disagreements and inability to treat each other fairly and with respect threatened to tear apart their family. Recognizing no good could come from the path they were on, Abram asked Lot to choose the land he wanted and put some distance between them. This action allowed the families and their servants to take different paths so that the struggles of living too close together would not create division and resentment between uncle and nephew.

In churches, like families, there are times when we face struggles and conflicts. Seeing ourselves as one body can be very challenging. When conflict comes to a head, we can be like the eye that says to the hand I don't need you – sometimes it is very hard to see that unity of purpose which Paul described in his letter to the Corinthians. Acknowledging the different roles that we occupy in our church community and the various gifts we bring, can help us open to new opportunities. In these times of struggle, God offers us new possibilities that we would never have seen.

A. Hills

For Reflection and Journaling:

1. How do I respond to struggles in community?
2. When has God opened me to a new possibility through a struggle?

Meditative Prayer:

*Holy Mystery, thank you for being with us as we struggle in community.
Guide us to seek your paths forward. Amen.*