

Lenten Devotional March 5, 2023

Scripture

Mark 3:31-35

31 Then his mother and his brothers came; and standing outside, they sent to him and called him. 32 A crowd was sitting around him; and they said to him, "Your mother and your brothers and sisters are outside, asking for you." 33 And he replied, "Who are my mother and my brothers?" 34 And looking at those who sat around him, he said, "Here are my mother and my brothers! 35 Whoever does the will of God is my brother and sister and mother."

Devotional

The Rev. Dr. Asa J. Lee, President

When I was a child, we always went down south to Georgia or North Carolina in the summer months for our family reunion. Returning to our ancestral roots in Georgia and North Carolina reminded us of our humble beginnings but also re-established the familial bonds with those loved ones we hadn't seen in months or even years. But it also allowed us the important opportunity to be introduced to the new members of our family. Through births, marriages, and other new iterations of relationships, our family increased in number with new members young and old. With excitement we welcomed these new people as part of our family with all of the rights, privileges, and burdens who had just been strangers moments before.

Jesus in this curious encounter abruptly redefines the bonds of family. When his mother and brother come to see him, Jesus declares an expansive view of the familial bond and connections. Those who do the will of God are Jesus' brother and sister and mother. Like my family reunion moment, those of us working the will of God now come to meet new family members. In the light of this declaration we, like Jesus' family, must come to grips with the fact that those who do God's will are now members of one family. We have the joy of knowing that no matter what we face, in God we have a family and belong one to another.

Prayer

This Lenten season, we pray for the openness to meet disciples as family and to commit to working toward God's will here on earth. Amen.