

# "Belonging"

## June 1 Confirmation Sunday

### Scripture: I John 5: 9-13; John 17: 6-19

This morning I would like to say a few words to our Confirmation class, but I hope the rest of you will listen in. I hope the rest of you will eavesdrop on the sermon this morning.

My young brothers and sisters being baptized and confirmed today: Sometimes people think of Confirmation as the day you join the Church. After you are baptized and confirmed, you now belong to church.

Well, you have belonged to Foundry for a long time. You have attended Sunday School here. You have had lock-ins here. I bet there are places in this building some of you have been in that I haven't seen yet. You have belonged to Foundry for a long time, and Foundry has belonged to you.

Baptism and Confirmation are really about something even more profound than belonging to church or belonging to Foundry.

Baptism and confirmation are celebrations, ceremonies, that announce to the world that we belong not just to church; they are announcements that we belong to Christ.

My young sisters and brothers being baptized and confirmed today: You belong to Christ. All of us here who have taken Jesus Christ as our Savior and Lord and who have decided to be followers and disciples of Jesus, we belong to Christ. We are Christ's.

In the reading from the Bible you heard read this morning, Jesus says something that I want us to think about today:

Jesus says that we belong to him because God gave us to him. We belong to Christ because God gave us to Christ. "They were yours," Jesus says to God. "You gave them to me."

I have a friend who tells me that an idea that he first heard when he was in Sunday School, younger than you, has recently grabbed him and startled him. The idea is this: We are the body of Christ. Have you heard that? The Bible says that the church, we who are Christians, followers of Jesus, we are the body of Christ.

We are Christ's body in the world. When Christ moves, if we are his body, he moves through us. What Christ accomplishes in the world, Christ accomplishes through us.

We are the Body of Christ.

We belong to Christ. We exist so that Christ can move through us, work through us, love through us, establish peace and justice in the world through us.

Christ prays and works for a world of love, mercy and justice. He prays and hopes for a world in which no one is hungry, no one is lonely, no one is homeless, no one is without the medicine they need, no one is addicted, no one is condemned or rejected.

Christ prayed and worked for these things when he lived on earth as Jesus. Christ still works and prays for these things today. Only today he is not living and walking on earth in the body of a man named Jesus.

We, who belong to him, are his body. So he prays and works for these things through us.

Let me tell you a secret: I haven't always wanted to belong to Christ. Sometimes I want to belong only to myself. Sometimes I want to do only those things I think will make me happy, get me the things in life I want.

And sometimes I do things that are selfish and self-serving.

But something always pulls me back to Christ. When I am selfish, I discover it doesn't really make me happy the way I thought it would. When I do what I want to do rather than seek to be and do what Christ would have me be and do,.

The know why I think that is? Because God has given me to Christ, to be part of his body, to help accomplish what Christ is trying to do in the world.

Well, you have been baptized and confirmed today, and that means you belong to Christ, too. There will be times when you will do selfish things. I can almost guarantee you of that. There are times when you will do what you want to do, just because you want it.

But those things will not really make you happy. Something will always pull you back to Christ. My young sister and brothers who have been baptized and confirmed today: You belong to Christ, you are part of Christ's body and Christ will always claim you and pull you back, and take you back. You belong to Christ.

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