

“The Home of Faith: Contributing”  
John 14:12-14

I recently saw the sign “Expect Miracles” at my friend’s house. It is a beautiful sign with the words made out of brass. When I asked my friend about it, she told me that she used to have it above her office door where she practiced medicine. At first, I thought that it was a little audacious or ostentatious for a doctor to make such a bold claim. But the more I thought of it, the more it spoke to me. Sometimes we expect miracles to be supernatural events, like magic. Miracles are about the joining together of divine love and human love. Our work on this earth is to learn to live out of that deep connection which we easily forget. Our life here is about learning to grow deeper in our spirits. Miracles are not about results and outcomes. Miracles are about being in the flow of divine and human love.

Jesus himself believed and proclaimed this. As he was preparing his disciples for his death, he reminded them that they were entrusted with his work and his mission. It was going to be the time of the disciples to get the work of Christ done here on earth. While Jesus did a lot of work during his time on earth, his impact was not going to last unless his followers carried the mantle and continued the mission. The Roman Empire and the corrupt religious leaders at the time believed that by executing Jesus, they would be able to put an end to his movement. But what they did not count on was the commitment of his followers.

Here is a part of what Jesus said to his disciples to prepare them according to John 14:12-14:

<sup>12</sup>Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do and, in fact, will do greater works than these, because I am going to the Father. <sup>13</sup>I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. <sup>14</sup>If in my name you ask me for anything, I will do it.

It may seem overwhelming to think of ourselves as the ones who can do greater works than what Jesus did. The disciples also struggled at first with recognizing their potential. They needed Jesus to let them know that his love, his spirit, and his power were going to be with them. They were not going to be left orphaned as the Holy Spirit was going to animate everything they did for the sake of Christ’s mission. All they had to do was to ask for help and guidance and it was going to be given to them.

Sometimes it is hard to believe that we can do greater works than what Jesus did here on earth. The tendency is to think that only big deeds would count. We recall Jesus’ deeds of power like walking on water, healing the sick, calming the storm, raising the dead, and feeding the crowd with just the lunch of a boy. But what we forget is that Jesus’ deeds of power also included his amazing and inclusive love for everyone. He redeemed the life of a corrupt tax collector (Zachaeus). He recruited Matthew, the tax collector, to be one of his disciples, he lifted up those who were lowly in society to make them leaders. He reached out to hated groups at the time such as the Samaritans and

included them in the circle of his love. He confronted the powers of his day through the power of love. His deeds were indeed great and yet they were things that the disciples themselves were able to do and to continue.

I believe that Jesus was referring to the people and generations after him who would do loving things in his way and name. They are the ones who would flow with the power of God's love and pass it on to others.

And today, we are the ones who find our belonging to the household of God by doing the same deeds of power. The home of faith is built on living by this vision for our lives. Expect miracles! You have what it takes to be the hands and feet of Christ because you have the Spirit of Christ in you. Every choice, word, or action for love can bring God's blessings on others. Your words, your stories, your connections, your actions, and your contributions are valuable and essential to the work of Christ. It took all kinds of people and gifts to build the early church movement:

- People who gave money
- People who fed the hungry
- People who visited the sick
- People who preached the good news of God's love
- People who went on missionary trips
- People who prayed
- People who worshipped
- People who taught their children and grandchild the stories of faith
- People who withstood the pressures of the empire and the culture around them and stayed faithful to love
- People who opened their homes to church gatherings
- People who were willing to risk their own safety
- People who wrote Gospels and letters to spread the story of Jesus

And the list goes on and on. The same is true for us today. Each of us can contribute to the work of Christ. Consider how you are contributing to the work of love. Consider how you are encouraging others to do the same.

Today, I want to invite you to contribute to the ministry of our community. We have a potential opportunity to start a warming center for Genesee County through community partnerships. We are going to have a planning meeting on the 18<sup>th</sup> of November at 6:30 pm. You can attend the meeting, or you can also pray for this effort. You can put it on your calendar to pray for 5 minutes a day for this effort. You can visualize the center. You can pray by imagining the warmth of our community extending to those who are

lonely and who find themselves on the street. You can simply say verbal prayers. There are a couple of sign-up sheets for you to contribute to this. One sheet is for attendance and the other is for prayer. For those of you online, just drop us a note if you are feeling moved to do so.

Here is a short video about a Church in San Diego which is a reminder about our need to contribute to the work of Christ:

<https://youtu.be/nbgHsXnZvIY>

St. Teresa of Avila:

Christ has no body but yours,  
No hands, no feet on earth but yours,  
Yours are the eyes with which he looks  
Compassion on this world,  
Yours are the feet with which he walks to do good,  
Yours are the hands, with which he blesses all the world.  
Yours are the hands, yours are the feet,  
Yours are the eyes, you are his body.  
Christ has no body now but yours,  
No hands, no feet on earth but yours,  
Yours are the eyes with which he looks compassion on this world.  
Christ has no body now on earth but yours. Amen.