

GATHERING WISDOM
MCC Eastern Network Fall Gathering 2017
October 21, 2017

Readings

First Reading ~ 2 Chronicles 1:10

Give me wisdom and knowledge so that I may go out and come in, performing my duties before this people, for otherwise, who can rule and administer to this great people of yours?

Second Reading ~ *adapted from Barbara Brown Taylor in
"An Altar in the World: A Geography of Faith"*

In biblical terms, it is wisdom we need to live together in this world. Wisdom is not gained by knowing what is right. Wisdom is gained by practicing what is right, and noticing what happens when that practice succeeds and when it fails. Wise people do not have to be certain what they believe before they act. They are free to act, trusting that the practice itself will teach them what they need to know. If you are not sure what to think about washing feet, for instance, then the best way to find out is to practice washing a pair or two. If you are not sure what to believe about your neighbor's faith, then the best way to find out is to practice eating supper together. Reason can only work with the experience available to it. Wisdom atrophies if it is not walked on a regular basis. Such wisdom is far more than information. To gain it, you need more than a brain. You need a body that gets hungry, feels pain, thrills to pleasure, craves rest. This is your physical pass into the accumulated insight of all who have preceded you on this earth. To gain wisdom, and to grow in wisdom, you need flesh and blood, because wisdom involves bodies— and not just human bodies, but bird bodies, tree bodies, water bodies, and celestial bodies. According to the Talmud, every blade of grass has its own angel bending over it, whispering, "Grow, grow."