

August 15, 2021
Tenth Sunday after Pentecost

Meditation: “Dreamers”

He wasn't like the other boys his age. They were all into Batman, Superman, and Wolverine. They all watched their superheroes on TV and at the movie theatre. And when they played outside, they pretended they were their superheroes. But not him. No, every fourth summer he would be glued to the TV set watching the athletes of the Olympic games. They were his superheroes. And he dreamed that one day he would be just like them.

At school he worked hard at his dream. He competed at the school track meets. Outside of school he worked hard at his dream. He was always trying to run faster and get stronger, physically and mentally. And when his school days were done, continued to work hard at his dream. He competed at sporting events at many levels, until, one day, he was selected to represent his country at the Olympic games. And then, a pandemic struck, and his training was disrupted. But he had worked hard to get where he was, and nothing, not even a pandemic, was going to get in the way of his dream. He trained in an empty arena, with improvised equipment. And after a year long delay, he headed off to Tokyo to represent his country. His dream was becoming a reality. He poured everything he had into ten events, and Damian Warner won the gold medal in the decathlon. He had achieved his dream.

Nelson Mandela once said, “a winner is a dreamer who never gave up.”

He was not like others his age. Others his age dreamed of the comforts that riches and power could bring them. But he already had these. When he looked at society he saw the hardship of the many. He saw the difficulties and the hardships and the strife between neighbours that the economic disparities of their society created for the vast majority. He had a dream of what his society could look like if everyone had what they needed not only to survive, but to thrive.

And then, one day, he was thrust into the role of leader of his society, King of Israel, and he had a dream. He knew that in order for all the people to be treated fairly, equitably; for all the people to thrive, he would need one thing more than any other, he would need an understanding mind to rule justly. In asking for this, Solomon revealed that he was already wise.

Actually, a better translation of an ‘understanding mind’ would be a ‘hearing heart.’ In making hearing God the starting point acknowledges that we are not self-made; we are not the prime determiners of our future; we are not in control of all that happens. A hearing heart goes beyond knowing information, knowing tradition, knowing precedent. A hearing heart is an act of imagination, of being able to put one’s self in another’s situation. Solomon had dreamed of what his society could look like if God were in charge, and now he, Solomon, was king. In order for him to rule as God would rule, he needed wisdom, in the biblical sense of the word. And what is that? Walter Brueggeman, in his book *Theology of the Old Testament*, said that it is “a sense of how things are put together and how things work in God’s inscrutable deployment of creation...in order to enhance the well-being willed by and granted by God for the whole earth.” In order to discern the mind of God, Solomon needed to be able to listen to God’s heart with his heart.

So far this morning I’ve talked about Damian’s dream, about Solomon’s dream, even about God’s dream. What I want to know, what I want you to spend a minute or two thinking about is, what is your dream? What is your dream for your congregation? What is your dream for your community? What is your dream for the world?

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At the risk of this all going awry, I want to put you into small groups to talk about your dreams for your congregation, your community, our world. I’m going to give you five minutes. Try to make sure that everyone in your group has a chance to share.

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Welcome back. So, inquiring minds want to know, what are your dreams? Please raise your hand if you want to speak so we are not all trying to speak at the same time.

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The Christian dream is really God’s dream, and God’s dream is primarily one of relationship – right relationship between individuals, right relationship between groups, right relationship of humans in God’s creation, right relationship between creation and God.

In Damian's life, he pursued his dream unrelentingly, and his dream became a reality – Olympic gold. In Solomon's life, he pursued his dream unrelentingly, and his dream became a reality. Under his leadership the kingdom of Israel reached its pinnacle politically, militarily, economically, and spiritually. The borders of Israel were at their largest, the country was never so wealthy, and the first temple was constructed. In our lives, if we want our dreams to become a reality we must pursue them unrelentingly, and with a sense of urgency.

My prayer is that our dreams align with God's dream, and may God's dream become a reality for all of creation. Amen.