

Children's Homily
Sixteenth Sunday After Pentecost
Sunday, September 25th, 2022
Church of the Ascension
Reading: Luke 16:19-31

I'd like to talk to you about bridges this morning. We've just heard about a rich man, and a poor man named Lazarus. We heard that the rich man was comfortable and happy. We heard that Lazarus was suffering, and that the rich man ignored him, day after day. After they died, their experiences were the opposite. Lazarus was comfortable and happy, and the rich man was suffering. The rich man found himself on the other side of a chasm.

That's the word that stood out for me in this story. That's not a word we use so often, and in different translations of the Bible it's called a canyon, or a deep pit. The point is, it was too big to cross. So, when the rich man asked for Lazarus to bring him a drink of water, even if he'd been willing to do that, he couldn't reach him.

That's what made me think about bridges. When there are chasms – or canyons, or deep pits – we need bridges to deal with that gap.

Sometimes, as human beings we might think and feel like there is a gap or a canyon between us, and God. Sometimes we might think, and feel, and act as though there are giant canyons between us and other people, between us and our world.

Think about who is telling this story: it's Jesus. Think about the examples we have of how he lived his life. He built bridges in the way he lived! There was a bridge between Jesus and God. He kept that bridge open with prayer, with time to sit and think. He broke down barriers and obstacles and connected with people who had been totally disconnected: that was bridge building. And so, as followers of Jesus, we are meant to be bridge builders, too.

Just we need bridges made out of wood or stone or metal in our world, we need bridges in our hearts and minds, too. We need to spend time thinking about the bridge – the connection – between us and God. We need to act in ways in this life that are like a bridge, making connections, especially with people who are disconnected.

In our Gospel story, the rich man had an opportunity to build a bridge with Lazarus instead of ignoring him every day. The sharing of his food, his clothing, a kind word – the rich man could have connected with Lazarus through these things and that connecting would have been like a bridge between them.

When we come here on a Sunday morning, it's a time to think about bridge building. We think about the bridge between ourselves and God, and we think about the bridges between ourselves and one another and our world. May we feel that bridge between us and God

opening, and may we feel bridges connecting all of us here. Then, may we leave this place with our eyes and hearts and minds open to opportunities to build bridges every day. In Jesus name. Amen.

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