Imagine a basketball game at Moccasin Square Gardens. Everybody is ready for a great match between Wolf Point and Poplar, only to discover the baskets are gone as well as every single basketball in the area. There cannot be a basketball game without basketballs and baskets. That is what has happened at the Temple when Jesus has driven out the sheep, doves, goats and money exchangers. There cannot be worship without these for sacrifices. And the Temple is where we go to meet God and worship. What Jesus has done is crazy bad, and it is a miracle in John’s Gospel that Jesus’ life isn’t gone that very instance, 3 years before time.

And what is this talk of destroying the Temple and raising it up in three days? It is the radical crazy talk that where we meet the holy one of Israel is in the body of Jesus. It is through Jesus that we meet the Divine, it is in the body of Jesus, in the incarnation of the divine into human flesh and blood. And this is the craziness which we believe.

And the Gospel of John brings it up here at the very beginning of the Gospel - the Word, the Great I AM, Yahweh now here among us. The timing of this incident seems so wrong, what sort of story teller is this?

Because the Holy one does not wait for us. The Holy one meets us when we need to be met and meets us in the concrete action of a holy meal, in our pain and in our suffering, in flesh and blood that was poured out for us.

And so it is the right time then:

 • Because a woman at a well, whose body was rejected for the barren body it was, experiences the truth of neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem is solely the place of worship

 • Because a man ill for 38 years, his entire life to be exact, whose body has only known life on the ground, is now able to imagine his ascended life.

 • Because a man born blind, is then able to see, and to see himself as a sheep of Jesus’ own fold.

 • Because Lazarus, whose body was dead and starting to decay, found himself reclining on Jesus, eating and drinking, and with his sisters, sharing a meal once again.

It is the right time, now…

 • Because bodies in our midst continue to be shunned for the sexuality they should not be.

 • Because bodies in our midst continue to be dismissed for the color or gender they should not be.

 • Because bodies in our midst continue to be overlooked for that which does not conform to what bodies should look like and be able to do.

 • Because bodies in our midst continue to be assaulted and abused, battered and massacred because they are not valued as beloved children of God

 Because bodies are broken by drugs and alcohol

What happens to the beloved children happens to their bodies. The healing and love is

experienced through our bodies. Through Jesus we know that the Holy one meets us at all times

and in all places and ways.

Bill Wilson pastors an inner city church in New York City. His mission field is a very violent place. He himself has been stabbed twice as he ministered to the people of the community surrounding the church. A Puerto Rican woman became involved in the church and was led to Christ. After her conversion she came to Pastor Wilson and said, "I want to do something to help with the church's ministry." He asked her what her talents were and she could think of nothing---she couldn't even speak English---but she did love children. So he put her on one of the church's buses that went into neighborhoods and transported kids to church. Every week she performed her duties. She would find the worst-looking kid on the bus, put him on her lap and whisper over and over the only words she had learned in English: "I love you. Jesus loves you."

After several months, she became attached to one little boy in particular. The boy didn't speak. He came to Sunday School every week with his sister and sat on the woman's lap, but he never made a sound. Each week she would tell him all the way to Sunday School and all the way home, "I love you and Jesus loves you."

One day, to her amazement, the little boy turned around and stammered, "I---I---I love you too!" Then he put his arms around her and gave her a big hug. That was 2:30 on a Sunday afternoon. At 6:30 that night he was found dead. His own mother had beaten him to death and thrown his body in the trash."I love you and Jesus loves you." Those were some of the last words this little boy heard in his short life---from the lips of a Puerto Rican woman who could barely speak English. This woman gave her one talent to God and because of that a little boy who never heard the word "love" in his own home, experienced and responded to the love of Christ.

Because we are bodies we receive love, all love through bodies, broken bruised and resurrected in Christ. Amen.