The website Sundays and Seasons commentary writes “You are what you eat.”

But that is not really true. “You may eat lots of bacon, but you will not turn into a pig.
Eating lots of carrots won’t turn you into a carrot.” “This is true with *everything* *we eat*—

...**except** for the bread and wine of Holy Communion. When we eat and drink of the bread and wine... we become Jesus.”

“We become resurrected people,

We become people of forgiveness,

We become people of faith,

We become **like** Jesus.”

“We are invited to *not only* **join** Jesus at the table, but we are invited to be at home in His love, knowing that Christ makes his home in our hearts and lives as well.”

You may have noticed that in today’s gospel, “Jesus’ [never] really answers their question. Instead, he [repeats] the words that he is the **true** bread from heaven, the **true** source of eternal life.” We’ve been hearing that Jesus is Bread of Life for 3 weeks and will continue to hear it. And we may take, for granted, the promises of the Lord’s Supper because most of us have known this amazing fact since...well for as long as we can remember.

Take a moment, though, to reflect...on the “overwhelmingly grace-filled invitation to share in the meal of his body and blood. When we eat and drink, we are reminded of “the **breadth and depth** of God’s love and **God’s desire** for us to abide in that love” (John 6:56)

Jesus says “abide in me—and I promise [that] through this meal I [will] abide in you.” Abide means to dwell, reside, ***live*** in. What a wonderful promise. WE ARE indeed the Body of Christ.

Not only does Jesus promise to sit here *at the table* with us, to be present with us, but Jesus promises to go with us when we leave this place....out of this sanctuary, into the narthex, the fellowship hall and into the world. We carry a little bit of His amazing grace and share with others throughout the coming week. We get to BE Jesus ...to others. Everything we do reflects His love. We take the **living** part of Christ and transplant that love into the many lives of those whom we touch...people we pass on the sidewalk, in the mall, the grocery store, at work...at ball games, and concerts, in our cars and in homes and schools.

As Christians it is our duty to be **like** Christ always...and to share that **likeness**. It can be as tiny as a seed...beginning with our words, a smile or kind gesture. We can do countless things to spread the word of God. To make our community grow. But we must be consistent - continually working at it, not missing a day...sort of like a gardener.

Over the last few weeks where we have had more rain than not, it has been difficult to nurture the plants outside. But when we want something to prevail we stay at it-- weeding, cultivating and fertilizing. Until we get the results we are looking for.

The same goes for building relationships. I know it’s a tall order to be all things to all people.

For instance, just those few people who visit our church need a little TLC.

First we make their acquaintance, then slowly we build a relationship with them...and finally we promise to stay in touch. Our new relationship doesn’t end with a hello, how are you? Or do you live around here? We’d love for you to come back.

The kind of growth, we are looking for, takes a lot of work. Just as a gardener is reliable, determined, and excited in caring for his or her living plants so that each one gets what it needs to survive and to thrive, so, we, as Christians, have the same responsibility.

We have to be enthusiastic! When we are passionate about what we do it shows.

We must be determined! When something is dear to us we don’t let anything get in our way. We must be persistent!

We may be unaware that we already plant seeds through daily interactions inside and outside of church. The message today is that we think about *how* and *when* we do this. We need to Think of it as **recreating a new day every day.**

Recognize the Spirit of God walking with you, inside of you and leading you to where God needs you most.

We can *all* learn to do more, which is why the future of our church depends on everyone doing his or her part. We will encourage each other to implement new ideas of how we go about planting...even a tiny seed ---more often and more intentionally.

When we leave this sacred place of worship we carry with us a part of Christ. With every breath we take we inhale the power of the Holy Spirit and exhale the work of Christ Himself. It is true.

Because we have just met around the table with Jesus the true bread, the true source of eternal life. We give it away so that each person has a **little** bit to get it **started. You can also** Look at is as kind of a bread starter. “To make certain breads you have begin with a bit of starter right?...*which contains active, living yeast.* Sourdough bread “became popular in California during the gold rush of 1849 and later in Alaska during the Klondike gold rush. Gold miners guarded this starter and carried it, with them, in pouches” (S&S).

We all contain a little bit of Jesus ...and like the bread starter...we, ourselves, have inside of us, an “active ingredient.” Ways to start new ideas, new ministries, new life in the community. Even by suggestion...we can plant a thought or idea in someone else’s mind...and let them grow with it. There’s a song by Casting Crowns which tells a story about people who find their way into a Christian setting but end up fading into the background, not being recognized.

In the song the artists ask...over and over...

“If we are the body...Why aren't **His** arms reaching?
Why aren't **His** hands healing? Why aren't **His** words teaching?”

If we are the body...Why aren't **His** feet going?
Why is **His** love not showing them there is a way?”

The last line of the song reminds us that “*Jesus paid* ***much too high a price*** *for us to pick and choose -who should be given the chance to receive even a morsel of God’s Word... a bit of starter...for their salvation... “we ALL are the body of Christ.”*

So I invite you to come...in a few minutes to the table God has prepared for you: eat, drink and be fruitful out there in the world!!!” Carry a little bit of Jesus with you and give Him away...plant His love in the heart of someone who needs to know the Good News of Jesus Christ.” Amen