

Many Parts of One Body Working Together

God's Cake. Isn't that an interesting analogy? You know when you are making a cake, it takes different ingredients, that alone are horrible tasting, but when following a recipe, put together in the right order, and stirred with love, perfectly timed in the proper temperature, what a delightful outcome!

This makes me think of how a church is God's Cake.

There are many different people, different ingredients, that make up our Church. New babies being baptized witnessed by a loving congregation. Children and youth coming on Sundays to joyfully serve, whether it is taking the Walk a Mile Offering, lighting the candles, participating in the Children's message, or going off to Sunday School to learn about Jesus, God's perfect love for us, and how to share it with others. Parents, bringing their children to church, sharing with them time together to sing, worship, and learn more about God's love. Parents, singles, seniors coming to Bible study to learn more themselves about God's perfect love for all of us, building a foundation to knowing Christ more, inviting others to join in that learning. How about Choir members, who come faithfully each Sunday, joyfully sharing their God Given talents and love through song? We have many who willingly serve on different committees to help with the structure, vision, and growth of the Church.

So let's take a look at what makes up God's Cake in our Church.

I see the Sugar and flavoring of the Cake of our Church being the Education and Worship. They are the taste of sweetness of Christ leading us forward to our vision.

We have the Education Committee, the sugar, sweetness of God's word, who is helping to raise up the next generation in Christ loving believers. The Teachers who joyfully share their talents and care with our youth. We have some who are prayerfully considering building a youth group in our church since we have so many teens that still attend regularly. This has been a longtime hope and prayer for our congregation. We are so blessed! Please keep that in your prayers.

We have our Music, the vanilla and chocolate of God's Cake, with Lisa so generously giving of her time and energy each week to plan the processional music, Offering music, Anthem, and any other music to bring us to that place of worship in God's house. We have the amazing talents of so many voices in our choir and new voices joining all the time. We are so blessed! Praise God!

I see the Trustees and Finance Committee along with the Ladies Aid as the salt, baking powder, and baking soda of the Church.

We have the Trustees, the Salt to do the work, who oversee the upkeep and maintenance of the Church and the Parsonage which lovingly houses our pastors as they serve our congregation. They work together as a team to stay on top of any work needed to be done to our lovely House of the Lord. We understand the message “many hands make light work” and are willing to share opportunities to participate such as our work day today after church. I hope many of you have planned to stay and joyfully serve in this project. We are so blessed.

We have the Finance committee and the Ladies Aid, the baking powder, baking soda, oil, and buttermilk to help make the ingredients grow, making sure we are being good stewards of the resources we have, giving all opportunities to serve whether they can physically do things or can contribute financially to the health and wellbeing of our Church. We are so blessed! Please keep them in your prayers.

I see the Federated Board as being the Flour that works together with all the ingredients to create the substance of the Church. This is where the overall leadership of the church is practiced and developed. All the other parts of the church need to have an understanding of what direction the church is going in so they can all work together to get us there. All other groups are directly connected with the

Federated Board and this is an area we can grow in to work together for God's will in our lives and the life of the Church.

I see Pastor Bill as the Egg of the Church. He's a good Egg, isn't he? Binding together all the ingredients, allowing us to bake to a nice golden brown by sharing God's word with us, teaching us to worship Christ through prayer and sharing God's words impressed upon his heart each week, listening to us on what we see the vision and direction of the church is going. Witnessing spiritual gifts in all of us and helping us to discern what that means in our lives and in the life of the Church. Leading us to grow as a church.

But I remember babysitting a sweet young boy, Carl, who decided one day that he wanted to bake something. He told me his mother lets him do it all the time, so being a young teenager, I went along with it. Carl took out a bowl, poured some flour in it, added some water, vanilla, and tried to add an egg, to my dismay! Then he mixed it all together. He tried to take a taste, but he grimaced when it didn't taste as good as his mother's baking. He was upset and couldn't understand why it didn't work. I told him that in order to make something that tastes good, you not only have to have the ingredients, but you need to have a recipe to follow on how much of each ingredient, what order to put them together in, and how much heat from the oven to help all the ingredients work together to make the delicious cake.

In reality, even though we are all the ingredients that make up the Church, the Recipe to follow and the Heat and raise us up in the church is Christ. God gives us the Recipe but the only way for us to find it is through Prayer. Without prayerful connection with Christ in all our doings for the Church, we will just blindly mix the parts together and wonder why we can't get the sweetness of God's Cake. And, guess what, if we KEEP blindly mixing ingredients together, we will keep getting the same thing! A MESS! The Prayer leads us to God speaking to us that sets us on Fire for Christ, rising up God's Cake to Perfection!

Now, I don't know about you, but I am guilty of not "following the recipe", of only turning to Christ in prayer as the last resort when I'm trying to solve a problem. I usually try to do it myself, like sweet little Carl, until it becomes futile and frustrating. THEN, when I'm frustrated and at my wits end, I remember to pray, to turn to Christ for direction, and it is amazing how much clearer things get in my life. I've had my share of trials and tribulations in my life, and just like the bitterness of tasting the salt by itself, or the blandness of tasting flour by itself, these trials and tribulations are not a fun part of my life, but they are necessary and have made me who I am today. Why? They stretch me, grow me, and lead me to Christ in prayer. (Testimony re: praising God in sadness of break-up of marriage) When I turn to Christ in my times of trials, I see

Christ's hand, God himself, doing amazing things in my life and I grow in my faith and love for Him. In Psalm 139:13 the Psalmist is praising God for "you knit me together in my mother's womb." God has the recipe for our lives from the beginning!

I've been listening to a CD named Experiencing God and one song has stuck in my head: *Where the Silence Breaks*. The verse that inspires me says:

I WANT TO HEAR THE VOICES OF GOD NO
MATTER WHAT IT TAKES,
I WANNA BE WEAK ENOUGH TO LISTEN BUT
STRONG ENOUGH TO WAIT.

IT'S NOT ENOUGH TO KNOW HE'S SPEAKING, I
WANNA HEAR WHAT HE HAS TO SAY.

SO I'M STANDING IN THE SHADOW LIVING WHERE
THE SILENCE BREAKS.

What powerful words! What inspiring words! I want to be weak enough to listen. Hmm. So when I'm at my weakest, God is at His best. Allowing myself to be quiet enough, strong enough to wait as long as it takes, so I cannot only know He's speaking, but I can hear what He has to say.

Wow.

In Eckert Tolle's book, *The Power of Now*, he talks about trying to pray and could only last about half a minute before his mind would start to wander. But with practice, he is able to just be "weak enough to listen, strong enough to wait."

As in Romans 12:17 states, "Because there is one loaf, we, who are many, are one body, for we all partake of one loaf." Even though we are many different ingredients, when brought together through Prayer to God, the Recipe and the Heat makes a wonderfully made, tasty God's Cake! Please join me at Coffee Hour for your slice of God's Cake! Then join me in helping the Trustees clean up around our Church in order to welcome others in.

Please join me in prayer: Heavenly Father, Master Baker working in our lives. Thank you for bringing us together, all of us different in many ways, however, bound together by your Love through Prayer. Lord, I ask that you help us to be "weak enough to listen, strong enough to wait" to hear what You have to say. Set us on Fire with excitement and joy of the wonderful work you do in our lives. May we all celebrate together, enjoying your perfect God's Cake.