

## Isaiah 6:1-8 Uniquely Wired



18 years ago, at the Monday morning worship at General Assembly, Rev. Maria Lallouet shared a message that has stayed with me all these years. She began, “as members of the Body of Christ, we are uniquely wired. We are wired not just in ministry, but in life generally. ... Gifted is the more usual way to put it. It is who we are and what we can become if we use our giftedness well.”

And then she told this parable from Bruce Bugbee’s book, *What Do You Do Best in the Body of Christ*.

“It wasn’t too long after the creation that the animals got together to form a school. They wanted the best school possible for their little ones. They developed a well rounded curriculum of swimming, running, climbing and flying. In order to graduate the animals had to take all the courses.

“The duck was an excellent swimmer. In fact, he was better than his instructor. But he was only getting a passing grade in running school. Although, he tried. The little duck even stayed after school to practice his running.

“The rabbit was at the top of her class in running, but after awhile she developed pain in her leg from all the time she spent in the water trying to improve her swimming.

“The squirrel was the top performer in climbing, but was absolutely frustrated in the flying class. His body became bruised from all the hard landings.

“Now, the eagle was a problem child. She insisted on doing everything her way, like flying on the water, or in climbing class flying to the top instead of climbing. But when it came to flying class, there was peace and quiet and she performed the best. ...”

Isaiah was called by God, uniquely wired by God, to be a prophet. Nicodemus’ life wasn’t right, didn’t fit right, until he came out into the light of day to talk with Jesus and to follow him. When they learned to listen for the voice of the Lord, to follow the path God had created for them, their lives took on meaning and purpose, energy and passion.

After telling the parable, Maria continued, “Each of the animals had a particular expertise. When they did what they were supposed to do, they excelled. When they tried to do something they were not wired [gifted] to do, they were not nearly as effective. ... [Yes], ducks can run. But is running what they do best? ...”

This week, I’ve been thinking a lot about the General Assembly of our Church – and in particular about the year I was moderator. One of the things I remember most clearly concerns the times I was preparing to head out onto the road, to visit churches and communities, to preach and to share less formal messages. I can still see myself sitting at the keyboard of the computer – frozen! I didn’t know where or how to begin. What did I know about writing moderator worthy sermons or messages?? Absolutely nothing!! And then I would remember that God didn’t call The Moderator. God called me, to be me. And finally I could write.

The prophet Isaiah describes similar feelings, when he hears God call. The scene opens with a profound portrayal of majesty of God. The appearance of the Lord to Isaiah is set in the temple at Jerusalem, within a worship setting. The angels were seraphs, one of many types of angels said to be in attendance upon God in constant praise. Their reiteration of the word "holy"

was an attempt, with mere words, to express God's glory.

Isaiah, who had this vision was so overcome with the sights and sounds of the Lord's presence and that of the angels that he believed he would die because of his faithlessness before God's holiness. His cry, "Woe is me ..." was followed by an approaching angel with a burning coal held in a tong. The coal touched Isaiah lips, and he was assured that he was saved - made holy by the cleansing fire. And then came a question from the Lord - "Whom shall I send and who will go for us?" The prophet's response was, "Here am I, send me!"

In the midst of the magnificence and omnipotence of God, Isaiah was first overwhelmed and frightened. Then the cleansing power of God touched him, and with quiet surety, Isaiah gave his life into God's service.

There are no words sufficient to describe the wonder of God, the magnitude of God's love and grace and mercy.

In John's gospel, Jesus told Nicodemus that God longed to give him the gift of salvation by means of a new birth. Nicodemus was stumped - what was this new birth? From whom would the new birth come? To whom would it be offered? Jesus told him about the God who loves everyone, even to the point of the death of God's own beloved Son.

There's a story about a man who uses a commercial in his prayer life. It's an old iced tea commercial where a number of people, sweltering from the summer sun, fall into a swimming pool with a heartfelt, `ahhh!" Apparently, the man would picture himself, falling into the arms of Jesus with a profoundly indebted `ahhh!' He said that for him, this was the perfect image of the Prayer of Relinquishment. To give oneself completely to Jesus, obeying, following, trusting - is to be born anew.

Jesus came to show us the Creator. He came to give us life – abundant and eternal. He came to show us that each day is a gift, a miracle. And he calls us his friends and depends on us to share the good news with the world, beginning in our homes, in our communities, in the places where we work, play, socialize ...

Each of us is hand made, unique, uniquely gifted, uniquely “wired”. When we live into our particular giftedness, not only is our life richer, but all the places we live and work and play become infinitely richer as well. We discover the truth in the promise of abundant life. Our hearts fill with visions and dreams and we behold the miracles that surround us. And we engage in all of life and in service to our Creator, with a new passion, an amazing power and an effervescent joy.