

Tuesday, April 14

Take My Yoke upon You

Pastor Hank French

Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light (Matthew 11:28-30).

In many ways, the church is a service organization. We serve and care for people in the name of Christ. In our personal lives, we also find ourselves called upon to serve and care for others. Serving and caring for the needs of others is a good thing to do, but we all get tired from time to time. There is so much to do and so little time to do it. We have so many responsibilities, duties and obligations. We are pushed and pulled in a hundred directions at once, always running from one thing to the next, trying to get it all done. And it often feels like we are all alone, carrying the weight of it all ourselves.

Often, in our fast-paced, over-scheduled, get-it-done-right-away world, we are left feeling burdened if not burned out—and yet it needn't be that way. Into the demands of our fragmented lives, Jesus says, "Come to me, all you that are carrying heavy burdens. Take my yoke upon you."

If you grew up on a farm (or have ever watched Western movies) you know what a yoke is—a crossbar with two U-shaped pieces that encircle the necks of a pair of oxen, horses, or other draft animals. The yoke binds them together and makes the power and strength of each available to the other.

Jesus invites us to bind ourselves to him, to be yoked to him so that our strength and power are available to him and his strength and power are available to us. Of course, being yoked to Jesus means our lives will move in the direction of justice, love, compassion, mercy, kindness, forgiveness. But that's a good thing—it will make setting priorities and deciding what matters and what doesn't matter much easier.

Prayer: God, today let me be yoked to Jesus so that his power and strength are available to me in the service I give and in the caring I show for the needs of others. Amen.