

East Hartford  
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Alice L. O'Donovan  
Psalm 68, Jn 17:1-14

## We Belong To One Another

How many of us remember this ad line from Campbells Soup to a Jimmy Van Heusen tune?

Soup and sandwich, soup and sandwich go together like a horse and carriage.

The ad tune was this song sung by Blue Eyes himself - Frank Sinatra, then later, Dinah Shore with the Sammy Cahn lyrics - 1955. (Wikipedia)

Love and marriage, love and marriage go together like a horse and carriage.

Lots of things in life go together - so well they belong together.

Some things are *designed* to belong together - nuts and bolts for example- buttons and button holes. The ball and socket joint in the human body, in fact, all the parts of the body are designed to belong together. All the parts of each and every living organism are designed to belong together.

Then we have *discovered* some things that belong together. Here are some of my favorites - how about you?

Hot fudge and vanilla ice cream.  
Maple Syrup on pancakes.  
Ham n eggs.

Bluebirds and delight.  
Hot sun, a cool breeze, a sandy beach and a big fat paperback book.

My early preparation for a sermon most always includes a visit to the spot on the UCC Website where Kate Huey offers some biblical commentary along with some relevant quotes. This week, it was Mother Theresa's words that hit home - enough to become our sermon title. Mother Theresa observed, *"If we have no peace, it is because we have forgotten that we belong to each other."* RPT

Our sermon title? "We Belong to One Another"

How is it that we so belong together that we actually belong to one another??

My across-the-hall-neighbor in seminary had this poster on her dorm room door. "No one of us is as smart as all of us." In a world leaning towards rank individualism, faith is not a private me-and-God thing, not a solitary journey. Remember Paul's metaphor for the church? The church is the body of Christ, in which all the parts belong to one another.

*Indeed, the body does not consist of one member but of many. 15 If the foot would say, "Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body. 16 And if the ear would say, "Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body. 17 If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole body were hearing, where would the sense of smell be? 1Cor 12*

We need one another - not because we are alike - but because we are different.

I suppose if we had any theology police among us, they would haul me out for heresy - but I believe we belong to one another as people of different faiths, as much as belonging to one another within the Christian church. I believe God needs Buddhists, and Christians and Hindus and Jews and animists and Muslims and aethists and agnostics and . . . the list goes on. I believe that even in, perhaps especially in, our differences, we are one. We belong to one another. I suspect that is not exactly how the text is

commonly understood - but that is what I believe is true. How large, how wide is the “we” of which I speak? “We” are humanity, each and all of us, at least. We are one in God and in God’s embrace. “We are members of one another.” Eph 4:25 We belong to one another.

Remember Mother Theresa’s observation, *“If we have no peace, it is because we have forgotten that we belong to each other.”*

When we forget - how might we remember?

Today is Jubilee Sunday - when we celebrate those people who have been church members for 50 years that is one way of remembering.

Even something as simple as showing up, as simple as gathering for worship, is a way of remembering.

But this morning I want to place before us a way of growing our hearts as a way of remembering. How many of us have ever witnessed a wedding? The questions in the marriage ceremony go like this: “Do you freely give yourself to this other person.” The consequent question is, “Will you take, will you accept this man or woman ...?”

Do you freely give your self and will you accept another’s self?

I place before us the answers to these questions as a way of growing our hearts, a way of remembering that we belong to one another.

Yes. I will freely give myself to you.

And

Yes. I will accept you.

The answer is yes.

Have you ever noticed that we say yes in a million ways? When we get out of bed, we say “yes” to a new day. When we have a

glass of water, we say “yes” to life. When we say “good morning” we say “yes” to another person.

Friends, this week, let us pay attention to all the ways we say “yes” and let our “yes” grow deep and deeper - let our “yes” grow into “I freely give,” “Yes, I freely receive”.

I promise — when we let our “yes” grow, we will find peace for we will remember we belong to one another even as we belong to God.

Amen.