



Greetings!

Ephesians 4: 1-6, Inclusive Bible

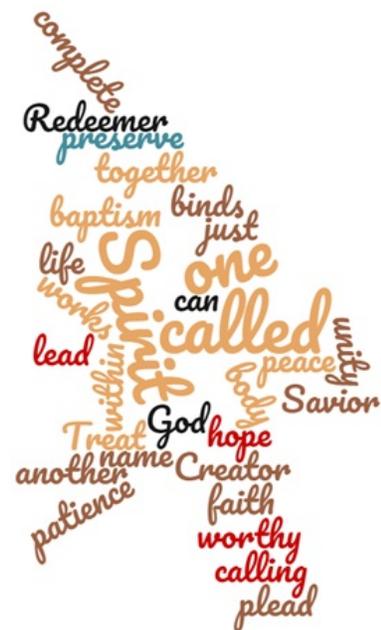
*I plead with you, then, in the name of our Redeemer, to lead a life worthy of your calling. Treat one another charitably, in complete selflessness, gentleness and patience. Do all you can to preserve the unity of the Spirit through the peace that binds you together. There is one body and one Spirit – just as you were called into one hope when you were called. There is one Savior, one faith, one baptism, one God and Creator of all, who is over all, who works through all and is within all.*

I was contemplating my call to ministry recently. I do that often; it is a spiritual discipline for me. I believe self-examination is important. Sometimes it is uncomfortable, but it is good to do. This passage came to mind as I was thinking about my call to ministry, which then led me to think about my baptism.

This passage from Ephesians is rich. It's not very complicated and filled with good theology! Several words and phrases jumped off the page for me:

- Calling
- Charitably
- Selflessness
- Gentleness
- Patience
- One Body
- One Baptism
- One God and Creator of all
- Who works through all and is within all

I made a word cloud of the text, and you can see that **Spirit** is prominent, as well as the words **One** and **Called**. Everyone has a call story. My call story began at



my baptism when I was 6-months old. Of course I do not remember the moment at all. So I spoke with my parents and grandparents and they told me bits and pieces of what they remembered. It was a gift to me.



The photo of the baptismal font is where I was baptized in 1966. The Rev. Dave Glen-Burns is the campus pastor serving there now. We have an interesting history together even though we have never met. Dave is the twin brother of our own West Ohio pastor, the Rev. Barry Burns, former NWP Superintendent and now Pastor at Maumee UMC in the Toledo area. They still use the same font and they still read this text from Ephesians just as we do – One faith, One baptism, One God and Creator of all.

Recently, I was having lunch with a friend and she told me the story of wanting to dig into her baptism story. She shared with me a deep desire to know the story because of a conversation she had with one of her professors in seminary long ago. She placed a call to the church where her baptism took place and the church was unable to help. No records. With her parents deceased, she thought she had run into a dead end. Questions to other family members yielded nothing. And yet her search for answers continued. And then a beautiful thing happened. A packed away box was discovered and inside was her baptismal certificate! This was experienced as a true gift and the completion of the wonderment that spanned many years. The experience set in motion a family custom that I have never heard of, but that I really like. For their children and grandchildren, the family celebrates not only birthdays, but also the dates of each family member's baptism. Wow! Now that is just cool!

For consideration:

- What do you know of your baptism?
- How has your baptism shaped you as a follower of Jesus?
- In what ways have you charted a course of charity, selflessness, gentleness and patience?
- In what ways are you called to serve One Body, One Faith, One Baptism and One God and Creator of all, who works through all and within all?

Peace,

Handwritten signature of Todd D. Anderson

Rev. Dr. Todd D. Anderson, West Ohio Superintendent  
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