

Listening for the Promise

WEEKLY DEVOTIONAL

Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost (Proper 16) – August 23, 2026

“For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.”

- Romans 12:3-5 -

There’s a memorable quote by Margaret Thatcher in which she observes, “Power is like being a lady... if you have to tell people you are, you aren’t.” This quote cuts to the heart of when people think too highly of themselves. Know anyone like this? It’s natural for people to pride themselves on when they’ve accomplished something they’re proud of, but what does Paul say in Romans 12:3? “For by the grace given to me, I say to everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned.”

Paul goes on to make a comparison in verses 4-5 to the human body saying, “For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.” Each function of the human body works together, big or small, just as we should do as members of the body of Christ.

Our sense of purpose in this world also comes from what God has given us. As Christians, we are called accordingly to serve the Lord and “Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them.” (Romans 12:6) God’s gifts are for building up his church. Therefore, it makes sense that we all have different gifts. There is no room for arrogance in the body of Christ; everything we have comes from God, so we cannot be boastful of our gifts and talents. Anything at all that we accomplish, big or small, is because of him and not of our own doing.

Dear Lord, thank you for the many gifts you have bestowed upon us. Help us to value one another’s gifts and work together as one body in Christ and to seek ways to serve others with what you have given us. Amen.