

Listening and Talking . . . by Rev. Tom Cici

The season of Epiphany ends with Transfiguration Sunday, the time we celebrate the mystery that the light of God shown through the face of Jesus Christ. The next weekend, we celebrate the first Sunday of Lent, and I begin a new five-week sermon series:

“Recognizing Our Spiritual Gifts.” This is the agenda of our new sermon series:

<u>Dates:</u>	<u>Scriptures:</u>	<u>Themes:</u>
Feb 18, 2024	Acts 8:26–40	Philip Baptizes an Ethiopian Eunuch
Feb 25, 2024	Exodus 18:10–24	Jethro’s Advice Accepted by Moses
March 03, 2024	John 12:1–9	Sisters Serve Dinner to Jesus
March 10, 2024	Acts 6:1–8	Seven Chosen to Serve
March 17, 2024	Ruth 2:1–16	Ruth Gleans in the Fields

Let’s suppose that you and I are really used margarine containers. Has anyone ever called you a margarine bowl? I didn’t think so. But I want you to pretend that you are a used margarine container. Do you have any margarine bowls at home? What do you use them for? Personally, I keep old screws and nails in one container! In another one there are string, washers, pitcher hangers and junk! Just suppose that you are one of God’s plastic containers, and God has chosen you to carry something around. What do you suppose God would put in you if you were one of God’s old plastic containers?

Well, the truth of the matter is that God thinks you are a pretty nice margarine container! If we open the plastic container, and pretend that this is really you, we will find that God’s loving and merciful Spirit – the same Spirit that is in Christ – is in you. In other words, we will find out that all of God’s precious jewels are inside of you. Wow, what an ole margarine container! We can call God’s precious jewels – “Spiritual Gifts.”

Our Creator trusts us with the very best that God creates. Of course, God doesn’t actually put jewels and money inside of us, but God trusts us with the very best – we call them “spiritual gifts” or talents that allow each one of us to reflect God’s love according to our individually unique passions that God has put in us.



Some of us have spiritual gifts of playing musical instruments, singing, acting, writing scripts, encouraging others, preaching, teaching, leadership, mentoring and gardening. Some of us have spiritual gifts of mathematics, computer science, crafts, sewing, art, cooking, cleaning, tutoring and building things. As you can see, the list of spiritual gifts is endless. God now asks us to share what we have with our neighbors and creation.

May the One Spirit speak to and through you as we journey together.