

Devotion, Week of June 9, 2024

Rev. Jeanne Simpson

Water – that’s all we’ve heard about in the news for the last week. Water main breaks everywhere. Bill Torpy, one of my favorite writers for the Atlanta Journal Constitution, loves to take government folks to task, and he’s been all over Mayor Dickens, as well as most of the past mayors who didn’t address the aging water infrastructure. He also called Michael Thurmond, County Commission Chair for DeKalb, and asked him about the water there, since they also had a small water main break this week. Thurmond said it could just as well as been him in the spotlight – both counties have ancient water systems. At the same time, I read an article this week about ancient aqueducts outside of Rome where fresh spring water was channeled into the city over 2000 years ago. The aqueducts are still there, and fresh springs still supply water in that area.

We take water for granted. I never had a time in my life where I couldn’t just turn on the tap to get water. My grandparents had well water, but it was good, clean water that I thought tasted better than the chlorine-treated water in my hometown. But we should never take water for granted. Think of all the countries in Africa where they struggle for water. Out west in the U.S., the limited amount of water is being used up with irrigation and over-development. The Hebrews wandered through the desert for 40 years with a constant need for water, crying to Moses to pray to God for water. With global warming, more areas are going to be short of water. We continue to foul the drinking water throughout the U.S. with discharges from industries. The primary disputes in Israel over the years have been over water rights, because the Jordan River is the only freshwater drinking source for most of the country. We’ve had our own issues here between Alabama and Georgia over the use of the Chattahoochee water basin. Water is probably our most important commodity.

So as I made dinner tonight, I thanked God for the gift of good drinking water. I hope Atlanta and DeKalb get funds to rebuild those aging water pipes, and in the meantime, I am grateful that I live in a county where the water and sewer systems were upgraded not too long ago. I am trying to remember every time I use water that it is a precious gift from God that I need to be responsible about using. I hope you’ll do the same, and also remember that the waters of baptism have blessed us all with the cleanliness of God’s grace. May our children and grandchildren continue to have access to this necessity for life, and be thankful.

Jeanne