In Winston-Salem, NC, the deacons at Highland Presbyterian Church are responsible for putting out traffic cones every Sunday morning before worship. They put out these cones on the street between their church parking lot and the sanctuary. To attend worship at Highland, you have to park in the parking lot and cross the street to enter the sanctuary.

A new deacon at that church did not understand why they went through this formality every Sunday. Every Sunday a couple of deacons had to arrive at the church early to put out these traffic cones. It wasn’t that busy of a street. This deacon wondered if they were going a little overboard.

But then this deacon was told a story. This deacon learned that in 2005, a worshipper at Highland was leaving worship to cross that street to get in her car in the parking lot. She did not realize she was walking into a street with a speeding car. As terrified church members looked on, this woman was killed on that street leaving worship from Highland. When this deacon heard this story about why they assign deacons to come early and set out traffic cones, this deacon never complained about that task again.

Unfortunately, most of us have memory problems. And I am not just talking about those of us who are husbands. Although maybe the loss of memory is pretty acute among those of us who are husbands. But many marriages disband because couples forget the qualities of their spouse that attracted them together in the first place. Sometimes husbands and wives go looking for something out there that they think they will find in that passionate affair that burns out over time.

Many children forget the times their parents sacrificed things for them. Many friends forget why that friend is important. Many employers forget the qualities that make that employee unique and important. Our culture has real memory problems. If we forget why certain things are important, then we become anxious and make poor choices.

The text we have read today is all about remembering. We have been reading through the book of Exodus over the past few weeks and we have come to the story of Passover. Previous in the book of Exodus, the Israelites, God’s chosen people, have come under the authoritarian rule of the Egyptian pharaoh. The Israelites want to worship as they feel led but pharaoh says, “No.”

Eventually Moses encounters God through the voice in a burning bush who instructs Moses to lead these people to a new land. Pharaoh resists. God sends 9 plagues and after each plague Pharaoh says, “No.” But then God says that the tenth plague will be the death of the firstborn son. The Israelites are given the instructions that we have read. Instructions about sacrificing a lamb that they are to take the blood from and place over their door. This will be the sign that they are to be spared this tragedy.

This act of Passover then becomes the traditional way that the Jewish people are to remember that God led them out of slavery and protected them. The celebration of the Passover is what Jesus is doing when he gathers with his disciples prior to his death.

When we were reading this text, you were probably a little bored by what we were reading. Details about preparing a lamb for a sacrificial meal. Who really cares whether or not it is boiled or grilled. But the re-enactment of this Passover meal becomes very important to the Israelites. The re-enactment of this meal reminds them of who they are and who God is to them.

This invitation into remembrance is why we gather around the communion table this morning. This act is an invitation into remembrance. It is an invitation to remember that God loves you. God saves you. God forgives you. God restores you. It is an invitation to remember the sacrifices that God is willing to make on our behalf.

I love worldwide Communion Sunday. And let me tell you why I think this day is important. So much of Christianity is focused only on the one on one relationship between individuals and God. Many of our brothers and sisters in the faith only seem concerned with individual decisions. Personal decisions to follow Christ are extremely important and where it begins.

But Christianity is not just about you and God. Or about God and me. Christianity is also about God and us. The original Passover meant the saving of the entire community of God’s people. It was God’s invitation for all of them to experience God’s liberation.

On this Worldwide Communion Sunday Christians around the world are invited to share communion together. And this service reminds us that our relationship to God is not just a one on one relationship. It is also about our community remembering why we gather together. It is about the entire Christian community remembering together. Our entire community.

**When asked why she takes communion, Danielle Shroyer of Dallas says this, “**I take communion because I am hungry for a place of radical acceptance, where the tragedies and hopes of life are confronted. I am hungry for food that reminds me God's love is so abundant it feeds the whole world. I take communion because I have been hungry for the wrong things. At the table, I am reminded of my hunger --and of the Only One whose bread does not leave me empty.”

Later in the service, everyone will receive the invitation to partake of Holy Communion. Holy Communion is tied to the story of Passover. This invitation to the table is a holy invitation to share with one another and to remember. AMEN.

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-Harris, Randy, “THE *STORIES* OF OUR LIFE: BIBLICAL, CONFESSIONAL, AND CONGREGATIONAL NARRATIVES FOR THE EQUIPPING OF CHURCH OFFICERS and found at <http://www.ctsnet.edu/files/documents/Harris_Telford_StoriesOfOurLife.pdf>

(I took a little creative license with the deacon’s response to the cones based on my conversation with the author)

-http://www.patheos.com/Resources/Additional-Resources/Why-I-Take-Communion?offset=0&max=1

-Text: Exodus 12: 1-14

-Given: Oct. 2, 2011 in Allison Creek Presbyterian (York, SC)