

**And He Cured Many Who Were Sick
Health Care
Fifth Sunday after Epiphany, Year B**

OVERVIEW OF TOPIC

Focus Text: Mark 1:29-39

“And the whole city was gathered around the door. And he cured many who were sick with various diseases...”

Scripture Commentary by Denise Cumbee Long, Pastor, Binkley Memorial Baptist Church, Chapel Hill

“More than any other Gospel, Mark emphasizes the healing miracles of Jesus. The point of these stories seems to be that Jesus heals all sorts of maladies in all kinds of environments for all sorts of people. Jesus proclaims and embodies the presence of the Kingdom of God not only through his words but by his acts of compassion and his inclusive care for all people in all walks of life.”

Pastoral Reflection by Rev. Susan H. Harrison, Soapstone United Methodist Church, Raleigh

“While the world may value persons differently based on income, earning capacity, education, experience, race, physical ability, appearance, or socioeconomic background, there are none of these distinctions in Christ. All flesh and bones, all bodies, are God’s creation. We have all been gifted by God for God’s work in the world. The person who happens to be insured or who can afford the cost of medical care is no more or less important to God than the person who is uninsured or underinsured, no more or less important than the barren woman, the dying king, the wandering and hungry Israelites, the suffering Job, the blind and leprous men, the bleeding woman, the child on her deathbed.”

Personal Vignette by Stephanie Phillippi, Binkley Memorial Baptist Church

“When Doug’s neurologist told us he had Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis, “Lou Gehrig’s” disease, everything in the exam room became white. My mind sped forward while everything else lagged behind in slow motion. The room grew smaller. I couldn’t breathe. No diagnosis could have been more devastating. My best friend, my lover, my 36-year old husband and father of our three young sons – then ages 3, 7 and 11 – was going to die.”

Key Fact

North Carolina’s estimated number of uninsured as of January 2009 was about 1.75 million. This translates to about 21.2 percent of all non-elderly North Carolinians.