

"The Gift of Hospitality" by Rev. Barbara Florvil Lavarin
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American Baptist Women's Ministries
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The Gift of Hospitality

By Rev. Barbara Florvil Lavarin, Young Adult Women's Ministries Advisory Team member

What does it mean to be hospitable
To me?
To create safe spaces
Where the
Broken parts of me
Don't cut the healed parts of me
They just sit
And discuss how they'd come to be
And learn from one another
How broken pieces are yet still
Evidence of survival
And possibility
When put back together
And healed
And real
Hospitality turns on the axis of accessibility
To reach out and touch
Or turn around and hear clearly
The texture of the voice of the inner child
We have perfected ignoring
All for the cause of adulting
Please
Lay down the rug
Sit and talk with her
Hear her broken phrases
Incomplete thoughts
Like a 100 piece puzzle
Begin to piece them together
And maybe you'll come to believe
That the incoherence of a child
Might be clearer than the knowledge of a teacher
Because she might be able to
Serve us unadulterated wisdom on a platter
Because the child inside of us
Knew of a life before walls built with the bricks of insecurity
She knew of a life of grass fields and daisies
Before someone taught her how to lay cement
For the sticking of unbelief and "reality"
And practicality
Break down the walls

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Of the inner me

Of the inner you

Let her reside out in the open

Bring her joy with a cup of warm hot chocolate

It's been cold on her side of the wall

It's your call

To embrace the welcome

It might mean going backwards

It might mean retracing the steps

It might mean remembering things you longed to be unsaid

But the day that the wall sees its own cracks showing

And the light breaking through

The only one thing that will out unbroken

That will come out holy whole

Is you

Is me

What does hospitality mean to me?

Lay out the rug

And sit