

Reflection for May 25, 2025 – I Spy

Inspired by Acts 1:1-11

I'm in the car with my granddaughter Athena; she was probably five or six. Five and six-year-olds get bored easily in the car, so Papa decided to play a game. "Let's play I-spy I said." We had played it a few times before. "OK says Athena." "I'll go first I say."

I gaze in the mirror, and she is wearing a grey T-shirt with a big pink unicorn on the front. And I say, "I spy with my little eye, something that is pink." I think she will get it right off the bat, but of course she is facing forward, not looking down.

Athena begins to ramble off several things, "the pink stuffy hanging from the visor?" "No, but good guess I say." The pink lights on the car (as she points to the dashboard, they are actually red)." "Nope I reply." "The pink flowers by the road?" "Nope again." She looks down and she has pink laces on her shoes. "My pink laces?" "Nope again, but good guess." "Papa, are you sure it's pink she asks?" "Yes, it is." Finally, she realizes she is wearing a shirt with a pink unicorn on it. "My unicorn T-shirt?" "Yes, I reply, you got it. Good for you." It had been there all along, but it took her a little while to recognize it.

The resurrected Christ has been with the disciples for some time. The book of Acts suggests forty days. In that time, he spoke and taught about the peace, justice and healing work that needed to continue. And he advocated for his disciples to continue on his ministry when he was gone.

The disciples wonder about the changes to come and whether Jesus was going to restore the kingdom of Israel. Jesus responds by saying ***"It is not for you to know the times or periods that the Father has set by his own authority."*** Unfortunately, you don't get to know that. Jesus implies. What is left out is the fact that Jesus himself doesn't really know when that might happen.

Well then, when might they know? When will the time come when the followers of Jesus receive assurance that the time will arrive when pain and suffering will cease, when peace and justice will reign and love will be present in every heart. Jesus' response is ***"...you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."***

When the Holy Spirit comes to you, you will understand the way to the kingdom. You will know what to do to bring about the transformation of the nation. The Holy Spirit will be your guide as you sew seeds of harmony into brokenness. It will hold you in your doubt and despair. It will sustain you during times of loneliness and discouragement. It will help encourage your journey in the new Christ community.

But when will this happen? How will it transpire? What do we have to do? Those gathered with Jesus on the day he ascended wanted answers to those questions. And so, they gazed up into heaven as Jesus left them, anticipating.

Two strangers appear out of nowhere. They are clothed in white, and they say, ***"This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven."***

They could easily have said, let's play a game. It's called I spy. We will give you a clue and you see if you can figure out what we are talking about. One of them says, "I spy with my little eye, something that is pure love."

The disciples are flummoxed for sure. They are alone except for the two men next to them. They think of Jesus, but he is gone. They are dumbfounded and have no clue how to respond. One of the cloaked figures says, "look at yourselves, do you not see Jesus in you? The Jesus you knew has passed over but his spirit remains. It is now and forever imbedded in your hearts and has become part of your souls."

Like Athena the believers were not looking to themselves. They were looking elsewhere, expecting another miracle, another sign to follow, another pathway in the darkness. You are it, is the message. The same Jesus you saw go into heaven is the same Jesus that preached, healed and loved. He has passed that responsibility along to you now. I Spy you, his disciples. You are to do the work that Jesus began. You are the way to the new kingdom

Jesus has passed along his ministry to us. The answer to the “I spy with my little eye” question is you and I, and all those others that understand what Jesus was about.

In recent weeks and months, we have been subjected to some of the most bizarre and troublesome events of our time. We have shared our frustrations and our concerns of our world in chaos. We have lamented and prayed over those concerns. We have tried to center ourselves on moving forward in hope and remembering those who are much less fortunate than ourselves. It has been and will continue to be tough sledding.

And so today when we reflect on the passage Phyllis shared from Acts, and we envision a stunned community witnessing Jesus final departure, it might be helpful to celebrate. Celebrate all the incredible stories that remind us Jesus is in the world working through individuals like us. Celebrate because there is much kin-dom living being practiced.

I went on my computer to the Good News Network and I “I-spied” Jesus at work.

The first successful human bladder transplant was recently completed at the UCLA Medical Centre, a procedure that was four years in the making. Bladder transplants have not been done previously, in part because of the complicated vascular structure of the pelvic area and the technical complexity of the procedure.¹

The owner of a California Dry Cleaner is doing his part to help those down on their luck by offering free dry cleaning to any unemployed customer heading to a job interview.

A former Canadian Social Worker is spending his retirement in a similar way to his career. He is on a cross-country tour where he just shows up somewhere, sits down and offers to listen to anyone about anything. And his time is free.

A family-run dairy business has reached a significant milestone this week: Müller UK & Ireland donated the equivalent of four million meals through its partnership with FareShare, an ongoing effort to support low-income people across the UK by transforming surplus food into vital meals.

Thanks to the charity of “Merch Ships” and successful surgery, a boy from Madagascar who has been unable to wear shoes for 13 years due to a childhood injury, can “now wear sneakers for the first time in his life and play football with his friends.”

I read about a story of a grade one boy who was really upset getting on to his school bus. It was pajama day, and he couldn’t participate because he didn’t have a pair of pajamas. His school bus driver went to the dollar store and made the situation right.²

We don’t have to look far of course to witness the ministry of Jesus in our midst. We have been doing it now for almost 100 years as a United Church. How many lives have we touched in those years? How many tears have we dried? How many have felt a belonging? How many outside these sanctuary walls have been touched in some way by grace, friendship and hospitality?

And who has been responsible for this discipleship, this work to bring about the new kin-dom? I spy with my little eye – and it’s you! Don’t look skyward for Jesus, he is here.

Thanks for listening this morning, Amen

¹ [Surgeons Perform World’s First Human Bladder Transplant at UCLA](#), accessed May 24, 2025

² [Bus Driver Saves Day By Getting Pajamas For Boy Who Needed Them](#), accessed May 24, 2025