

Augustana College  
Chapel of Reconciliation

**Blessed are the truth seekers ...**

Angie Hummel

May 5, 2006

As a young and naïve 17-yr-old, I stood in front of my home congregation, and posed the question, “Who am I? Who really am I?” Now Carl Rogers, a secular psychologist would probably have given me a pat on the back for asking the most important question an individual must ask in order to discover truth. Ok, let’s just throw my psych major out the window (just for a time being DL!), because the confessions we read earlier admit to the fact that the truth is not in us. So where, in this relativistic, postmodernist world, do we find truth? Well, my response at the time was simple (and what I thought was sheer brilliance as a jr. in HS): My name is Angie Hummel, and baptism has called me into life as a Christian. In that moment, I recall wanting to make the point that whomever I may appear to be on the outside was only the partial truth, and that the real truth comes in seeking God. But over the past five years, my belief in “God as truth” has been challenged, reworked, and brokened so that the question “Who am I?” was not dependent solely upon me, but instead, the question, “Who is God? And what do I believe to be true about God?” Nancy Murphy, a professor at Fuller Theological Seminary stated, “In the pursuit of Truth, one may end up changing her mind.” This quote symbolizes the journey my life has taken since that time six long years ago when I stood in front of my congregation.

Along the way, experiences at Augie undoubtedly continue to twist and turn my thoughts and ideas, pin me in corners I am a little nervous being in but manage to escape to discover, that throughout the entire process, my identity as a Christian is transformed and even strengthened-it is, well, kind of like a wrestling match. Such experiences include:

- 1) Serving at the tragic site our country knew as Ground Zero

- 2) The multiple deaths of friends' family members, and of course our own community members
- 3) Witnessing the massive despair @ Pine Ridge
- 4) Being told by a Moroccan Muslim, "that someday I would be in Paradise" for giving a small amount of dirhams to a street person and then apologetically adding, "if you believe in Paradise..." (ahhhh, Paradise sounds much better than FINALS WEEK!)
- 5) Experiencing the enormity of abject poverty one finds in India-now one day our group traveled to a site where, along the path, I purposely stepped around numerous elderly who were nearly unclothed, homeless, and starving, and through my deliberately placed sunglasses, I stared into the faces of God and found myself paralyzed. I have never felt so convicted as a Christian.
- 6) And finally, a moment of deepened brokenness came this fall when at 4 AM, with my reconstructed ACL securely latched in my constant motion machine (or what I labeled "the Devil Himself"), I started reading an assignment from Dr. Haar's After Auschwitz class because you know, I just couldn't sleep with my leg constantly going back and forth so I thought it would be a good opportunity to do some light reading. Light, huh?! In almost complete darkness, the reality of genocide became too much-the haunting images of emaciated bodies being tossed around like rag dolls, the brutal mass killings, and the blank stares of life that was just *sucked* out of its human form. On top of everything else, Hurricane Katrina updates were playing on CNN in the background. All of it just reeling over and over in my head. So in my state of emotional instability, I cried both in anger and for any help out there, "Jesus, if you are the Redeemer, where is the Redemption?" (A commonly heard question stated by Dr. Haar in his courses)

Out of these experiences of brokenness came many questions and doubts. I couldn't have agreed more when my fellow India travel mate, Kristin Zingler, stated in her Confessions of

Faith article; “And what of resurrection? It is certainly hard to maintain belief when so many deaths and atrocities occur; it is even more difficult to proclaim resurrection after such tragic events. Beliefs are fragile, disturbed, broken and smashed.” Perhaps some Christians would be uncomfortable with Kristin’s words, but let’s not forget the question on our dying Lord’s lips, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” In Jesus’ own emotional instability, own fragile belief, own brokenness, we hear a cry for all humanity. But if we freeze at the scene of death, we as Christians fail to recognize the equally important sign of hope through the resurrection. *Even still*, as we listened to today’s text, some continued to doubt even after Christ’s resurrection and return to earth. Notice, though, that it was not until the breaking of the bread, that Jesus’ followers opened their eyes and were able to recognize him as Lord. What is it, then, about Jesus breaking the bread, that causes newfound belief? Well, recall the final opportunity Jesus and his disciples had together. It was during the Passover meal when Jesus rejoiced in eating with his friends before he was about to suffer. He took a piece of bread, gave thanks, broke it, and gave it to them saying, “This is my body given for you.” Every Wed., our community as well shares in the feast of the Lord’s Supper hearing the words, “The body of Christ broken for you.” Do we not also recognize the brokenness of our Lord, that he was and continues to be made known to us in the breaking of bread? As we come to the table prepared for us by God, we bring with us our own doubt and brokenness as well as our neighbors at Pine Ridge, our neighbors living on the streets, our neighbors hungry, our neighbors suffering... You see, brokenness does not only affect individuals, but the entirety of God’s kingdom. I was struck when a student advocacy team member made the statement earlier this year, “If Africa is dying, *we all* are dying.” As a community of believers, we know too well the realities of brokenness and suffering, yet continue to rely on the resurrection to provide us hope. Further, when we admit to our own, our communities’, and our world’s brokenness, it is in Christ we can still have new life. So that

on the cross we not only see Christ carrying the sins and brokenness of the world, we also experience the reflection of God's unmerited grace and love. Gandhi once said, "When you want to find Truth as God, the only evitable means is love...and God is love." We as Christians find truth in knowing that it is through the unfathomable gift of God's love, hanging on the cross of brokenness *and* hope, that we are freed from the constraints of fear, self-doubt, and death. From this freedom, we are called to also be reflections of God's love, demonstrating a desire for peace, justice, and for the world to be turned right side up.

Though we may have a faith filled with doubt, questions, and many memories of brokenness, there is still hope in remembering that Jesus goes before us, broken but leading us to new life, a life that can be and will be used to create hope in and bring light to this world of darkness. Lillian Daniel, a UCC minister, believes that we are meant to enter worship, move through it, and be sent from it not just convicted (knowing that indeed the truth is not in us), but also repentant and forgiven, too. It is in this state of grace that we might have the strength to take on life's hard questions and continue conversations about the world God calls us to be at work in. So do not be afraid...of the hard questions, the wrestling matches, the struggles with doubt, or times of brokenness, because as Jesus' life, death, and resurrection reveal to us, it is out of the questioning, doubt, and brokenness, that comes wholeness, renewal, and life. Amen.

**MORNING WORSHIP**

**Friday, May 5, 2006**

**PRELUDE**

*“Come, All You People”*

**WELCOME/ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**FACULTY RECOGNITION AWARD**

**BRIEF ORDER OF CONFESSION**

**AND FORGIVENESS**

LBW p. 56

**OPENING PRAYER**

**SONG**

*“Gather Us In”*

WOV 718

**SCRIPTURE**

Isaiah 25:1-9

Psalm 13

Luke 24:26-35

**SERMON**

Angie Hummel

Hometown: Lakefield, MN

Majors: Psychology, Sociology, German

**SPECIAL MUSIC**

*“Prayer of the Children”*

**CLOSING PRAYER**

L: In peace, we pray to you, Lord God.

For all people in their daily life and work;

**C: For our families, friends, and neighbors, and for those who are alone.**

L: For this community, the nation, and the world;

**C: For all who work for justice, freedom, and peace.**

L: For the just and proper use of your creation;

**C: For the victims of hunger, fear, injustice, and oppression.**

L: For all who are in danger, sorrow, or any kind of trouble;

**C: For those who minister to the sick, the friendless, and the needy.**

L: For the peace and unity of the church of God;

**C: For all who proclaim the gospel and all who seek the truth. Amen**

**BENEDICTION**

**SPECIAL MUSIC**

*“Walk Down This Mountain”*

**SENDING**

*It would be impossible to thank everyone who has impacted my faith journey. For the past 5 yrs, God has blessed me with an amazing cloud of witnesses to guide, support and love me, and for this I am deeply grateful for all of the Augustana community. God's peace!! - Ang*

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## **CAMPUS MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**KOINONIA** - Next Tues., May 9<sup>th</sup>, 10 am, will be our final meeting for the year. Seniors who are considering or entering seminary will be relating helpful moments in their discernment process.

**SENIOR SPEAKERS** - Sign-up for senior speakers for 2006-07 school term has begun. The sign-up sheet is on the Narthex table. Senior who are going to be off-campus during either semester are encouraged to select a Friday when they are on campus.

**MIDNIGHT MADNESS** - Our Savior's Lutheran Church is again opening it's doors to Augie students on **Sunday, May 14<sup>th</sup> and Monday, May 15<sup>th</sup>**, for study areas during finals. Study space will be available from 6 pm to 2 am each night. Snack and beverages are provided as well as well as a late night meal of 'comfort food' from 11 - 12 pm.

**FR. MIKE'S 2<sup>ND</sup> ANNUAL 1K "RUN"** - The Vikings and the Cougars are teaming up for this 'challenging event'. Come on over to Christ the King parish (26<sup>th</sup> and Lake Ave.) **at 4 pm on Wed., May 17<sup>th</sup>**. Sign up on the Chapel Narthex table. T-shirts available to participants.

### CHAPEL SCHEDULE

Sunday (7)	Worship, 11 am - Pr. Paul
Monday (8)	Worship, 10 am - Peg Preston, Hist
Tuesday (9)	Koinonia, 10 am
Wednesday (10)	Holy Communion, 10 am - Jim Bies; ASA Inauguration; Women's Choir
Friday (12)	Worship, 10 am - Celebration of Intern Sarah!!
Sunday (14)	Worship, 11 am - Sarah Sumner-Eisenbraun
Sunday (21)	Baccalaureate, 10 am - Elmen Center Commencement, 2 pm - Arena