

Rev Rita Message April 25 2021

When I was in high school, I decided that I didn't want to spend another summer doing childcare and that it was time to find a 'real' job. Back in the day, if you couldn't find a job via family or friends, then headed down to the Government Summer Works office to peruse the bulletin board.

Help Wanted: Hardware store needs temporary help to do inventory with possible fulltime summer position.

I got the job! I knew I was the help they would want for the entire summer. After all, my dad gave me a hammer when I was 3 years old to help with house renovations. I knew my way around tape measures, screw drivers, and drills.

My first work morning arrived. I was an eager beaver even when I discovered that one other person had been hired and they were after the same fulltime job. And then, I overheard the boss say to a customer that there was no way he would ever hire a girl to work in his store but he was desperate for help to get his inventory done. The other worker was a guy. In the midst of the dust and the clutter, my heart sank.

At lunch time, I phoned my dad and told him all about it and how I wanted to quit. Looking back, I am grateful that he told me that I didn't have to work in a place that didn't value who I was and what I could offer. I started looking for Help Wanted Signs that very afternoon. Yes, I did find a job.... a few weeks later.... At the Regina Co-Op. I worked there for many a summer and many a Christmas vacation.

Finding a job is never easy and finding people to do a good job isn't easy either. While some employers use social media to look for applicants, others decide that their future employees are hidden in plain sight among their customers and the foot traffic around their establishment so they post signs in their windows and on road signs.

I googled "Help Wanted" signs. The results included some rather unique signs.

Help Wanted! Part-time salesperson who won't quit after 2 months, who works hard and doesn't think they are doing a favor by working here.

Help Wanted! We mean customers. Please come in and buy something.

My favorite Help Wanted sign that I found was posted at a winery.

Help Wanted! Grape Stompers. Must have good balance and large feet.

This past week when I read through this morning's scripture reading, it reminded me of a Help Wanted Sign! Both Jesus and Peter needed help.

After Jesus' death, the disciples didn't know what to do with themselves, other than return to their old livelihood of fishing. This band of fishermen were lost and lonely, but just when they thought things couldn't be stranger, Jesus showed up. He told them to fish on the other side of the boat. They did just that, and they were overwhelmed with fish. The nets were bulging. Jesus shows them that not only will their old ways of living leave them as empty as the nets, but their old habits will not work either. He has impacted their lives in a way that changed them forever. They can't go back. And He knows they don't know how to go forward. Jesus offers Peter and his companions a different line of work.

Help Wanted: Shepherds to feed and tend my sheep. Must be willing to follow directions from the Good Shepherd.

Frederick Buechner is an American writer and theologian. In his book *Wishful Thinking*, Buechner says that God's call to service and ministry, in other words, Jesus' help wanted sign to feed and tend sheep happens wherever our deep gladness and the world's deep hunger meet.

Sitting on my desk is a cross with a sign that says: "The purpose of life is a life of purpose." It reminds me on a daily basis to answer God's Help Wanted sign.

May God guide each one of us to discover the work that God needs us to do.

Thanks be to God. Amen.

Amen.