



## It's All About the Texture

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"The bananas don't taste right," my husband announced. I'm thinking maybe Idaho sources its bananas from somewhere else. "Well, it's not the taste exactly," he explained. "There's something chewy in the middle of the banana." I'm not a big fan of bananas anyway. Something about the texture doesn't appeal to me. Having a chewy chunk in the middle made it sound all the worse.

Our sense of touch might be most finicky in our mouths. We shy away from particular foods, not because of the taste always, but because of the texture. Eggs, fruit pies, soggy bread, whip cream...I'm sure you have your personal food dislikes based on texture. Our sense of touch through our hands can be equally sensitive. Even thinking about chalk or cotton balls can make some of us cringe.

When in Louisville for our General Assembly, I started noticing some of the textures of the city: weathered wood and cracked mud. There were brick walls painted smooth with murals and the rough bark of trees.



It got me to thinking about the textures of the Bible. For example, Jacob fooled his father Abraham by covering his hands with animal skins, mimicking the hairiness of his brother Esau. David chose five smooth stones before his battle with Goliath. We read in the gospels about the woman with a blood flow who touched the fringe of Jesus' cloak, and we are given the opportunity to imagine both the feeling of the fabric and the sensation of healing power that left him and entered her.

So often we focus awareness of God on our other senses. We taste and see that the Lord is good. The wine and bread hit our taste buds. The juice is sweet or tart. The bread is rich or stale (depending on whether you're using the prepackaged communion elements). We hear the music and song by which we praise God. We might even smell incense, wood polish, or Easter lilies and recall strong memories of special church services.

But, what are the *textures* of the Church? What sensation of touch connects us most closely with the Holy? In some traditions, the baptismal font is always full, and water can be applied to one's body in the sign of the cross. We offer healing oil from time to time. I don't mean to discount the power of communal touch through a hug or handshake, but I'm more curious about whether we can experience God through textures.

As you move through this week, will you join me in paying attention to textures? What might God reveal through this powerful sense? Perhaps you will experience God in something prickly or soft or rough or bumpy. Maybe even something squishy with a chewy center. I'm curious where you will touch God this week. Let me know, will you?