



Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost Sunday, October 7th, 2018

O Saving Victim! World Communion: A Table with No Edges



Today we celebrate World Communion Sunday and we also have the joy of the presence of Andy Corkhill from Act for Peace. Andy joined Act for Peace in 2017, after spending a number of years living in New York. He brings experience working closely with Churches and has been a consultant with the Uniting Church, NSW Board of Mission. He has ministered in congregations in Sydney, Melbourne and Perth and spent time helping refugee families get settled in Melbourne. He's done a number of theological degrees and now is combining his skills in ministry and fundraising through his work at Act for Peace. In his role for Act for Peace and the Christmas Bowl, he works with passionate churches, generous supporters and people who make enquiries about leaving gifts in their Will. Andy is truly committed to ecumenical work and the wider church, living out God's call to mission.

GATHERING

Announcements

Greeting

In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit
 The Lord be with you
and also with you

Hymn: Crown him with many crowns (TiS, 228, vs 1-5)

Introduction to the Theme of World Communion Sunday in the light of the Gospel of Mark's Theology of the Cross

Recently, we have been focusing on the theme of what the Christian church refers to as the “theology of the cross”. Central to Mark’s Gospel, the theology of the cross is a cutting edge that questions, that interrogates the human tendency to interpret God as the force behind power and order, as if what exists in our world has some sort of divine sanction or approval. The theology of the cross, screams out to us of God as the victim of such order, not the apologist. Mark’s Gospel sums it all up in his contention that God must be known as ***the crucified***. Focused on this theme, we have during these past few weeks thought through the meaning of a crucified God in various ways: first as the ultimate expression of God’s generosity to us (*pro nobis*). Second, as God’s appeal to us to “bring people down from their crosses” so there are no more crosses, no more victims to be had. Finally, we have turned the cross toward our own internal psychology, what makes us tick, exposing, examining our dark tendencies to rationalize and justify what we say and what we do.

As we turn to the compelling work of Act for Peace – a Christian effort at “bringing people down from their crosses”, let us discern what we may do as a community to engaged and support.

A Community Prayer: A Table with No Edges

Round dining tables are always more expensive than the rectangular: it has something to do with the amount of timber that is lost in the design and the complexity of the work involved in producing it. That said, a round table is a perfect shape as we celebrate World Communion Sunday, since there is no head and no base, there is no implicit hierarchy. In effect, a round table reflects equality – social, economic and political – which we all know does not exist: not because of its impossibility, but because of the incessant tribalism of the human creature. Andrew King, the Canadian poet, pens a piece for our consideration, written especially for today.

We will sit down where feet tire from the journey.
 We will sit down where grief bends the back.

We will sit down under roofs wrecked by artillery.
We will sit down where cries sound from cracked walls.

We will sit down where heat beats like hammers.
We will sit down where flesh shivers in cold.

We will sit down where bread bakes on thin charcoal.
We will sit down where there is no grain in baked fields.

We will sit down with those who dwell in ashes.
We will sit down in shadow and in light.

We will sit down, making friends out of strangers.
We will sit down, our cup filled with new wine.

We will sit down and let love flow like language.
We will sit down where speech needs no words.

We will sit together at the table with no edges.
We will sit to share one loaf, in Christ's name, in one world.

Our Confession and Reconciliation

Let us be still and listen to the voice of God

Silence

O God,
enable us to see beyond ourselves: to the one next to us, facing us,
far from us.

O God,
enable us to think beyond ourselves: to the one next to us, facing us,
far from us.

O God enable us to live beyond ourselves: to the one next to us,
facing us, far from us.

***Crucify our tribalism, grounded in culture, class, religion
May we live, seated at a table with no edges.
Amen***

Some Observations about a World in Genuine Communion

In this world of ours, every believer must be a spark of light, a centre of love, a vivifying ferment for the mass; and it will be that all the more as, in the depths of his being, he lives in communion with God.

Pope John XXIII

Jesus said, 'Blessed are we where we are poor, where we are broken.' It is there that God loves us deeply and pulls us into deeper communion with himself. **Henri Nouwen**

My mother was an unbeliever - and still is. My father was a nominal Catholic. We would go in to church at the last minute before the gospel reading, take Communion, and walk right out again.

Frederica Mathewes-Green

A peaceful world where all people share a safe, just and dignified life.

Act for Peace

BREAKING OPEN THE WORD

Hebrews 1:1-4: 2:5-12 (Good News Translation) Pam Mayrick

Like much of the Letter to the Hebrews, the focus is upon on the one hand, Christ's transcendence, Christs' place and dignity in God's plan of salvation. But equally, there is emphasis upon his humanity, his being like us. With regard to the first dimension, Jesus is explained as "superior to the angels" – biblical language for meaning that Jesus stands above the powers that exist in and beyond the world. being. In the ancient world such a claim was significant, since people saw themselves fatalistically as subject to the will of the celestial beings who could play with them at will. Regarding the second dimension, the humanity of Jesus; the writer appeals to the beauty of Psalm 8, and the point is that Jesus is the man who is our pioneer, our example, since he completed the journey of life successfully: he got it right. Equally, he understands the human plight and condition, having lived it himself.

1 In the past God spoke to our ancestors many times and in many ways through the prophets, **2** but in these last days he has spoken to us through his Son. He is the one through whom God created the universe, the one whom God has chosen to possess all things at the end. **3** He reflects the brightness of God's glory and is the exact likeness of God's own being, sustaining the universe with his powerful

word. After achieving forgiveness for the sins of all human beings, he sat down in heaven at the right side of God, the Supreme Power.⁴ The Son was made greater than the angels, just as the name that God gave him is greater than theirs.

2 ⁵ God has not placed the angels as rulers over the new world to come—the world of which we speak. ⁶ Instead, as it is said somewhere in the Scriptures:

“What are human beings, O God, that you should think of them; mere human beings, that you should care for them?

⁷ You made them for a little while lower than the angels; you crowned them with glory and honour,

⁸ and made them rulers over all things.”

It says that God made them “rulers over all things”; this clearly includes everything. We do not, however, see human beings ruling over all things now. ⁹ But we do see Jesus, who for a little while was made lower than the angels, so that through God's grace he should die for everyone. We see him now crowned with glory and honour because of the death he suffered. ¹⁰ It was only right that God, who creates and preserves all things, should make Jesus perfect through suffering, in order to bring many children to share his glory. For Jesus is the one who leads them to salvation.

¹¹ He purifies people from their sins, and both he and those who are made pure all have the same Father. That is why Jesus is not ashamed to call them his family. ¹² He says to God,

“I will tell my people what you have done;
I will praise you in their meeting.”

The word of the Lord
Thanks be to God

Mark 10:2-16 (Good News Translation)

Rob Mayrick

This reading, which included Jesus' instruction about divorce, is dangerous, because poorly read, it serves to reinforce religious dogmatism. Religious people, including Christians, love rules, and the danger is always that of imposing them on everyone else. So how to read this teaching in a balanced way, free of spiritual bullying? A number of points: in the face of the abuse of the right that Jewish men had to unilaterally divorce their wives, Jesus reaffirms the divine intention of marriage: that relationships be unbroken and equal. He subverts the dominant patriarchal worldview that only men could get divorces, and only women could commit adultery against her

husband. His teaching recognizes the profoundly wrenching experience of divorce, as anyone who has been through it can attest, and also recognizes the reality of divorce and the importance of maintaining justice in its application. His turn to children, or the “little ones”, reinforces his criticism of ‘rules-based religion’ that is frequently abusive. Just as women are not the property of men, nor are children. Here, Jesus embraces the children as a critical message to those who abuse them.

Some Pharisees came to him and tried to trap him. “Tell us,” they asked, “does our Law allow a man to divorce his wife?”

³ Jesus answered with a question, “What law did Moses give you?”

⁴ Their answer was, “Moses gave permission for a man to write a divorce notice and send his wife away.”

⁵ Jesus said to them, “Moses wrote this law for you because you are so hard to teach. ⁶ But in the beginning, at the time of creation, ‘God made them male and female,’ as the scripture says. ⁷ ‘And for this reason a man will leave his father and mother and unite with his wife,^[a] ⁸ and the two will become one.’ So they are no longer two, but one. ⁹ No human being must separate, then, what God has joined together.”

¹⁰ When they went back into the house, the disciples asked Jesus about this matter. ¹¹ He said to them, “A man who divorces his wife and marries another woman commits adultery against his wife. ¹² In the same way, a woman who divorces her husband and marries another man commits adultery.”

¹³ Some people brought children to Jesus for him to place his hands on them, but the disciples scolded the people. ¹⁴ When Jesus noticed this, he was angry and said to his disciples, “Let the children come to me, and do not stop them, because the Kingdom of God belongs to such as these. ¹⁵ I assure you that whoever does not receive the Kingdom of God like a child will never enter it.” ¹⁶ Then he took the children in his arms, placed his hands on each of them, and blessed them.

The Gospel of the Lord
Praise to you Lord Christ

Some Thoughts: Andy Corkhill

Offering

Doxology

*Praise God, from whom all blessings flow,
praise him, all creatures here below,
praise him above, ye heavenly host,
praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost.*

Prayer of Dedication

EUCCHARIST

Hymn: Here in this place (TiS 474, Gather Us In, Marty Haugen)

Great Prayer of Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you
And also with you

Let us lift up our hearts.

..... ***We lift them to the Lord.***

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

.....***It is right to give our thanks and praise.***

It is indeed right to give you our thanks and praise, O God,
for your love is forever
and you have raised the crucified Christ from the dead.

You created all things and placed Christ as the cornerstone.
You made your grace known to Israel in the wilderness,
and through your prophets you pledged
your everlasting love and constant faithfulness.

You anointed your child, Jesus,
 with the Holy Spirit and power,
 and he went about doing good
 and healing all who were oppressed by evil.
 He was put to death, hung on a tree,
 but you raised him on the third day,
 and allowed him to appear, first to Mary Magdalene
 and then to your other chosen witnesses.
 So now we praise you within the gates of justice
 and raise our glad songs of victory
 for you have become our saviour
 and hidden our lives in Christ in glory.

Therefore we join with all the company of heaven in their song

***Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
 Heaven and earth
 are full of your glory.
 Hosanna in the highest.***

***Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
 Hosanna in the highest***

Through him, in him and because of him,
 We affirm the Church's faith

***Christ has died.
 Christ has risen.
 Christ will come again.***

Institution

Lord's Prayer

Let us say the Lord's Prayer

***Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.***

***Forgive us our sins,
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.***

***For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours,
now and forever. Amen.***

하늘에 계신 우리 아버지여
이름이 거룩히 여김을 받으시오며
나라이 임하옵시며
뜻이 하늘에서 이룬 것 같이
땅에서도 이루어지이다.
오늘날 우리에게 일용할 양식을 주옵시고
우리가 우리에게
죄 지은 자를 사하여 준 것 같이
우리 죄를 사하여 주옵시고
우리를 시험에 들게 하지 마옵시고
다만 악에서 구하옵소서
대개 나라와 권세와 영광이
아버지께 영원히 있사옵나이다. 아멘

Breaking of the Bread

Christ is the bread of joy
Who shares food with sinners.

Christ is the cup of life,
Who revives the faint-hearted

Let us receive what we are;
Let us become what we receive.

Agnus Dei

Jesus, Wisdom of God,
have mercy on us

Jesus, Word made flesh,
have mercy on us

Jesus, Liberator of creation
grant us peace.

Communion

Distribution

We come forward as a family to partake of the elements together at the Communion Table. The cup on the right-hand side as you face the table is unfermented grape juice and the cup on the left-hand side is alcoholic wine.

Prayer after Communion

God of heaven and earth,
 you make us one in Christ.

Inspire us with new vision of the sabbath
 becoming a community marked by the freedom to serve.

Give us strength to walk together

In Christ's name

Amen

Prayers of the People

Rob Mayrick

The one who prays ends each petition with the words, "***help us to see***", and the congregational response, "***to read the signs of the times***".

Closing Hymn: Love Divine (TiS 217, Blaenwern, 590, Charles Wesley)

Blessing and Sending Out

Christ is life!

Let us live
with perception and discernment,
without fear, with imagination and courage

Our service has ended

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord

In the name of Christ

Going Out: Shalom to you now (TiS 778, Somos del Señor, Elise, Shoemaker Eslinger)

Musical Postlude

Organist:

Jim Abraham

