



Missal

Thursday, June 21, 2018 – 7:30 PM

Theme: *...to be neighbour I*

TRANSITION

7:30 PM: Bishop Pryse explains themed sessions and worship, and then calls on Songleader.

B. Pryse: Tonight we begin the first of three worship and learning sessions that ask what it means to be neighbour in our context. Each session will begin with song and prayer, and end with a response. Tonight we give thanks for guests from diverse religious traditions who you will meet in a few minutes, but first Cherub Philip will lead us in song as we prepare for our prayers.

SONG: *Hamba Nathi* – STCW #41
Songleader leads people in song

During the singing of the song, there is a transition of light in the room

GATHERING

MUSIC transitions to “Now it is evening” EvLW 572

SONG: *Now it is evening* - EvLW #572

A single candle is carried into the space. Soloists/Leaders stop at the mics on the floor. Soloist 1 sings “Now it is evening” verse 1. Soloist 2 then sings verse 2. They proceed to stage and candle is placed on table on stage, as assembly sings vs 3 and 4 of “Now it is evening.”

DIALOGUE:

from lecterns

- Leader 1: Creator God, cleanse our hearts**
that we may walk together along the good road, your holy way.
- Leader 2: Purify our minds,**
that we may be guided by your holy word.
- Leader 1: Clear our eyes,**
that we may see the goodness you have created.
- Leader 2: Open our ears,**
that we may hear your voice.
- Leader 1: Replace our hearts of stone with hearts of flesh,**
that we may embrace your loving kindness.

PRAYER:

All: Stay with us, Lord, for evening is upon us;
be our companion on the way
kindle our hearts,
and awaken hope,
that we may know you in creation, in Scripture and in our neighbour.
Grant this for the sake of your love.
Amen

WORD

SONG: *Thula*
sung by quartet

GOSPEL: Luke 10: 25 – 37

[Video, prepared by Rev. Matthew Anderson, based on Luke 10:25-37](#)

²⁵ Just then a lawyer stood up to test Jesus. ‘Teacher,’ he said, ‘what must I do to inherit eternal life?’ ²⁶He said to him, ‘What is written in the law? What do you read there?’ ²⁷He answered, ‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbour as yourself.’ ²⁸And he said to him, ‘You have given the right answer; do this, and you will live.’

²⁹ But wanting to justify himself, he asked Jesus, 'And who is my neighbour?'
³⁰ Jesus replied, 'A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell into the hands of robbers, who stripped him, beat him, and went away, leaving him half dead. ³¹ Now by chance a priest was going down that road; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. ³² So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. ³³ But a Samaritan while travelling came near him; and when he saw him, he was moved with pity. ³⁴ He went to him and bandaged his wounds, having poured oil and wine on them. Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. ³⁵ The next day he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said, "Take care of him; and when I come back, I will repay you whatever more you spend." ³⁶ Which of these three, do you think, was a neighbour to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?' ³⁷ He said, 'The one who showed him mercy.' Jesus said to him, 'Go and do likewise.'

BIBLE STUDY: led by Rev. Dr. Allen Jorgenson

SCREEN: "No Entry" from *Private Collection*

In what follows, I will make three simple observations about this text and after doing that, I will pose a couple of questions for your consideration in table groups. The three points I will discuss are

1. How do we read?
2. Who is my enemy?
3. What does it mean to be neighbour?

We start with "How do we read?" When discussing the parable of the good Samaritan, it is always important to note that it takes place within the context of Jesus's dialogue with an expert in the law, sometimes called a scribe, a kind of scholar. This dialogue bookends the Parable of the Good Samaritan, and so we don't want to forget this dialogue with the scholar. This expert in the law sets out to test Jesus: what must I do to inherit eternal life, he says. And Jesus answers

'What is written in the law? What do you read there?'

Except that Jesus doesn't really say that, since that way of translating isn't quite accurate. Jesus says something a bit more odd. The Greek text reads:

'What is written in the law? How do you read?' ... How do you read?

'How' here doesn't mean 'how is it that you read, or how did you learn to read?' Nor does it mean 'how do you read: aloud or silently?' since the phenomenon of reading to yourself is a rather modern phenomenon. No, the how here meant to focus on the task of interpretation. It is almost as if Jesus asks 'What is your strategy for reading?' Do you read literally? Do you read figuratively? Do you read carefully? Or do you skim? How do you read... how do YOU read?

SCREEN: *“What a Wonderful World” from Private Collection*

We learn something about the way that the scholar reads from his answer to Jesus’ question regarding what is read in the law. He answered:

‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbour as yourself.’

Now, this is an interesting answer because the lawyer has pulled together two passages into one: one from Deuteronomy (6:5) and the other from Leviticus (19:18). That in itself isn’t really so interesting, but what is actually quite interesting is that this scholar, this expert testing Jesus doesn’t actually properly quote Deuteronomy 6:5, which says...

You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength..

Instead, the scholar says

You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind

Notice how the scholar added a piece: he included “and with all your mind,” so technically he did not answer correctly... but notice what Jesus does. He says

‘You have given the right answer; do this, and you will live.’

You have given the right answer. Jesus could have nailed his inquisitor to the wall, but instead he affirmed this way of reading, this way that is not literalistic, but instead a way of reading that looks for the heart of the text and then translates it so that a more fulsome reading follows. How do you read? The scholar read expansively, and Jesus says “correct!” My Jewish colleague Daniel Maoz reminds me that the Talmud says that every text has 70 faces, 70 ways of being understood, a plenitude of interpretations.

It might well be that every word of my neighbour can be heard in 70 different ways, in a plenitude of ways. How do you read? How do you interpret? How do you interpret what your neighbour says? Luther, in the small catechism, concerning the 8th commandment writes:

“We should fear and love God so that we do not tell lies about our neighbor, betray him, slander him, or hurt his reputation, but defend him, speak well of him, and explain everything in the kindest way.”

SCREEN: *“Handle with Care” from Courage*

Point two: who is the enemy? Often the Samaritans are considered to be antagonistic to the Jews and vice versa. This is an important point to note, because the story does not stop with Jesus commending the scholar for his correct reading. The scholar, wanting to make himself right, goes on to ask: who is my neighbour, and Jesus goes on to tell this most important parable of the Good Samaritan. Bishop Johnson has nicely explicated this text, and Matthew Anderson has vividly illustrated some key themes from it in a kind of artistic fashion. As I was preparing for this study, reading commentaries, and watching videos, and looking at parallel passages, I took a moment to ask my aforementioned Jewish colleague Daniel about this passage. He told me that the Samaritans, for the Jews, were not considered to be of a different religion. They were thought to be within the family of Judaism. Perhaps that explains the antagonism! And it seems that Jesus, too, thought them to be family. We read in Chapter 9 of Luke that

“when the days drew near for Jesus to be taken up, he set his face to go to Jerusalem, and he sent messengers ahead of him. On their way they entered a village of the Samaritans to make ready for him, but they did not receive him because his face was set toward Jerusalem.

Jesus planned a stay with the Samaritans along the way to Jerusalem, but it seems that the Samaritans did not appreciate Jerusalem as his destination. The Samaritans disagreed with the Jews on whether one ought to worship in Jerusalem, and because of this disagreement they refused to host Jesus. You may remember that Jesus’ disciples ask if they should pray for fire to rain on them, for this refusal, but Jesus says no. In fact Jesus rebuked them for suggesting such a thing. That is the last thing we hear about Samaritans before this story of the Good Samaritan, the Samaritan who chooses to be neighbour. Do you see what Jesus does? Jesus takes the enemy, the antagonist in his life and tells him into the parable as a protagonist. Jesus makes the enemy into a hero. Who is my enemy? My enemy is the one I reach out to. My enemy is the one who needs me and invites me to be a neighbour, which brings us to point three.

SCREEN: *“Madonna with Child” from Private Collection*

Point Three: what does it mean to be neighbour?

What kind of neighbour is Jesus? What does it mean to be neighbour? What does it mean to be a neighbour in the Jesus way. It means choosing to put your enemy – even your familial enemy – in the role of the protagonist; it means giving the place of honour to those who want to throw you out. To be neighbour means to counter refusal with acceptance; to respond to enmity with compassion; to be neighbour is to speak the truth in love and to speak love into truth.

It is important to underscore that Jesus forcefully changes the question from “Who is my neighbour?” to “Who was a neighbour?” And the answer to that question is told using a story, the story of the Good Samaritan. At the heart of the story is a paradigm shift. Neighbour is first used as a noun; a neighbour is a someone, a something that you can point to, an object in our sight, used to exercise our piety. But Jesus invites us to use neighbour like a verb. We might want to recall that the English word neighbour comes from older northern European languages in which neighbour means to be the one who dwells near. Being neighbour is about dwelling, about being near... near the wounds, near the hurts, near the suffering. We might also want to recall that the OED includes neighbour as a verb: to neighbour is to dwell alongside of. Neighbouring, it seems, gives birth to the neighbour.

Joy Kagawa, in an interview speaks about the horrific bombing of Nagasaki notes that the community that the nuclear bomb exploded directly over, was the oldest, the preeminent Christian community in all of eastern Asia.¹ A bomb from the Christian west dissolved the beloved from the Christian east. She speaks of the truth of this dark event: our best friend is within every enemy. To do violence to our enemy is to do violence to our friend, including the friend who I am to myself. When I wound you, I wound me. When I destroy your dwelling, I destroy mine because neighbouring is about being inter-twined. To be neighbour is to recognize that we are one human family; all made in the image of God. And to be made in the image of God is to be intrinsically related to one another. What makes us unique is not meant to divide us but to reflect God’s delight in diversity; diversity in race, in religion, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, the list goes on and on. To be neighbour is to choose to dwell nigh, to be with the other no matter who they are because who they are is also who I am.

So, to summarize:

To be neighbour is to read generously and sympathetically.
To be neighbour is to dwell beside so as to make an enemy into a friend.
Neighbouring is a verb, a way of being in the world, a way of love.

SCREEN: *“Last Supper” from Courage*

Three questions for table discussion:

1. How do you react when someone interprets a biblical story, or another text, or some situation, in a way differently than you do?
2. Where have you experienced someone being a neighbour to you?
3. Who are people your faith community might be neighbours to?

¹ Joy Kagawa, “Interview,” interview by George Stroumboulopoulis, *Tonight*, CBC, July 12, 2013, video: 9:08 <http://www.cbc.ca/strombo/videos/joy-kogawa-1>

MUSIC plays transitional music leading to “Between Darkness and Light”

Reader: The origin of the song “***Between Darkness and Light***” imagines neighbouring as a verb – a way of being in the world. Palestinian Manal Hreib wrote the lyrics, while Jewish Israeli Daphna Rosenburg composed the music, both working for peace in Israel-Palestine. They share it generously with us, asking for us to become peacemakers with them. Let us sing together #29 in ***Sing the Circle Wide***.

SONG: *Between darkness and light* STCW #29
Twice through in English

PANEL DISCUSSION

Sitting on Stage, around round table, on chairs, with wireless mics

Brice Balmer – WLS, Moderator

Sarah Shafiq – Muslim

Chattar Ahuja –Sikh

Zhi Hong (Sarah) Chen – Buddhist

Bishop Michael Pryse – Eastern Synod, ELCIC

Bishop thanks participants. *Participants remain in place, seated to pray*

RESPONSE

PRAYERS/READINGS

Brice: Let us sing our longing for the Mystery, the Holy One, who goes by many names.

SONG: *O God we call* STCW #6
led by quartet

Qur’an 30 – 22, Qur’an 49 - 13 – Muslim
read by Sarah Shafiq

Brad - Instrumental refrain

from the Guru Namak – Sikh
read by Chattar Ahujah

Brad - Instrumental refrain

The Heart of Prajna Paramita Sutra – Buddhist
read by Zhi Hong (Sarah) Chen

Brad – Instrumental refrain

Brice: Let us pray in silence for the needs of the world.

Silence

SONG: O God we call STCW #6
led by quartet

SENDING

PRAYER:

Leaders at lecterns

**Leader 2: To the home of peace
To the field of love
To the land where forgiveness and right relationship meet
We look, O God,
We look with longing for earth's children
With compassion for creatures
With hearts breaking for nations and people we love.**

**Leader 1: Open us to visions we have never seen
Strengthen us to be neighbours on the way
And delight us with an inspiring unity of faith
so that we may truly reflect you,
Maker of peace.**

PEACE:

Leaders move to behind Panel members, who are seated at the table.

Leader 1 & 2: Let us share a sign of peace with one another.

Worship Leaders

Leader: Rev. Anne Anderson

Leader: Rev. Mark Kalvaitis

Bible Study: Rev. Dr. Allen Jorgenson

Moderator: Rev. Brice Balmer, Waterloo Lutheran Seminary, Interfaith Grand River

Panel Discussion Participant: Sarah Shafiq, Interfaith Grand River, speaking from a Muslim perspective

Panel Discussion Participant: Chattar Ahuja, Interfaith Grand River, speaking from a Sikh perspective

Panel Discussion Participant: Zhi Hong (Sarah) Chen, Registered Social Worker – Community Counselling, speaking from a Buddhist perspective

Panel Discussion Participant: Bishop Michael Pryse, Eastern Synod, ELCIC

Guest Hospitality: Robb Wilson

Worship Planning Team:

Debbie Lou Ludolph – Worship Ministry Director, Jonah Bruce, Sherry Coman, Rev. Steve Hoffard, Brad Moggach, Cherub Philip, Kathryn Smith, Robb Wilson

Music and Art

Music Director: Brad Moggach

Song Leader: Cherub Philip

Band: Deb Elligson, Rev. Ronnie Smith

Quartet: Alicia Becker, Brad Moggach, Cherub Philip, Kathryn Smith

Video: Rev. Dr. Matthew Anderson

Images: Kerry L. Ross, Artist, Oil Painter

Resources / Copyright and Permissions / Acknowledgements

Now it is evening: Words: Fred Pratt Green © 1974 Hope Publishing Company. All rights reserved. Reprinted under OneLicense.net #A-720800.

Thula: Words and Music – Swaziland traditional., transcribed by the Swedish Youth Exchange project, 'Meeting Swaziland'. Available through GIA Music – D-7404/G-7404. www.giamusic.com

Dialogue – Haudenosaunee Edge of Woods ceremonial language, adapted by Scott Knarr, 2017

Qur'an 30 – 22, Qur'an 9 – 13 (Muslim)

from the *Guru Namak* (Sikh)

The Heart of Prajna Paramita Sutra (Buddhist) uses only 260 Chinese words.

Prayer – John Philip Newell, *Praying with the Earth*, adapted.

Video: based on Luke 10:25-37, prepared by Rev. Dr. Matthew Anderson. <https://unsettledwords.com/2018/06/25/a-canadian-parable/>

Bible Study images: Kerry L. Ross, Artist, Oil Painter; www.KLRartist.ca; kerry@klrartists.ca