

Being the Church at Brentwood

It Takes a Community (Trinity Sunday)

**Ps 29 & Rom 8:12-17
June 3, 2012 – Celebrating the Lord's Supper**

I want to pick up on this graphic
we created with the youth this morning.

[insert picture of graphic]

We are exploring how it takes a community
to nurture and live a flourishing life.
Human beings do not live in isolation, alone,
cut off from each other and God.

They may think they do.
They may develop this image of themselves
as the strong individual who survives on his/her own.
Or they may descend into a depressed state
in which they feel isolated and cut off from everyone.
But the reality is that they are surrounded by others
who sustain and support them,
even in their most isolated moments.

For Christians, for followers and disciples of Jesus Christ,
the sense of being in a community
transcends the human dimension
and includes the divine.

We are convinced by the work of the Holy Spirit
that we are in an intimate community with God.
Indeed, on this Trinity Sunday,
we remember that God themselves are a community –
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

As Paul says in the passage that we read this morning,
we are joined to that community
and made God's children by the work of the Holy Spirit
as she brings us into union with Jesus Christ,
the One in whom God came to be with us
and raise us to our true nature and destiny as friends of God.

Several experiences were sent by the Spirit this week
to remind me of the need for community
in nurturing and living a flourishing life.

First and foremost,
Friday, June 1, was our 10th anniversary.
It took me a long time to learn the true dynamics
of the intimate community formed through marriage.
But I have and am learning it with Jill.
And I am flourishing in that community.

On our anniversary, we went to see *Marley*,
a documentary on the Jamaican singer Bob Marley.
It brought back many memories of Jill's days in Jamaica
during the 10 years between 1968 and 1978
when Bob Marley was becoming a powerful social force
and Jamaica was going through its birth pains as a nation.
Marley's musical vision of a getting together in love
remains a powerful inspiration for being all right,
for flourishing together.

In the work I do with Jazzthink,
using jazz as a metaphor for improving teamwork,
we did a session for the Divisions of Family Practice
of the British Columbia Medical Association.
These are the family doctors throughout the province.
Since 2008, they have been setting up
Collaborative Services Committees
that bring family doctors, other health care providers,
health administrators, and the ministry
into conversation about improving the health system
in ways that cut costs, improve physician experience,
and improve patient experience.
They have made remarkable progress
and there is still much to do.
But they are working out the details of a new vision
of how it takes a community to provide health care in this province.

Just as I was putting the final touches on this sermon,
I received in my e-mail
the weekly *Brain Pickings* mailing from Maria Popova.
It's a provocative and delightful collection
of quotes, clips, and reflections
on how our brains work to generate creativity in community.

This week she highlighted
social investor and micro financier Jacqueline Novogratz,
who gave the graduation address at Gettysburg College this year.

Here's part of what she said about realizing that it takes a community
to live a flourishing life:

*Before you finished getting out of bed, brushing your teeth with clean tap water,
putting on clothes, making breakfast, turning off the light, walking out the door,
you are benefiting from the work of hundreds, if not thousands, of individuals
from all around the world. They all deserve your spirit of generosity. So walk with
humility and reverence for the human endeavor, and know it's your job to help
take that endeavor forward.*

Jacqueline Novogratz is the founder and CEO of Acumen Fund,
a non-profit global venture fund
that uses entrepreneurial approaches to solve the problems of poverty.
Acumen Fund aims to create a world beyond poverty
by investing in social enterprises, emerging leaders, and breakthrough ideas.
Under Jacqueline's leadership, Acumen Fund has invested more than \$70 million
in over 60 companies in South Asia and Africa,
all focused on delivering affordable healthcare, water, housing and energy to the poor.
These companies have created more than 55,000 jobs,
leveraged an additional \$200 million,
and brought basic services to tens of millions.

I see the gift that we gave to Everlyne Anyango Anyangu,
the young Kenyan mother of 3,
to help her go to university to study business,
as another example of the way in which it takes a community
to nurture and live a flourishing life.
And that community can be half way around the world.

We are fed for that kind of community at this table this morning.
The Lord invites all who hunger for communities
that will nurture and live flourishing lives
to be fed with the grace and truth made available to us
through the work of the Holy Spirit.

Come, be joined with this community of the children of God
And share the glorious energy of the Holy Trinity
as it builds this community to be a blessing.