

Sunday Morning Worship at Brentwood, Aug 28, 2016

Notes for the sermon on Who's Invited to the Banquet?



**Ps 112 and Luke 14:7-14 – Sermon Text =
Luke 14:13-14**

But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind. And you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you, for you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous.

**[Hymns = 565, 456, and 477 in the
Canadian Presbyterian *Book of Praise*]**

Key Ideas

1. Let's start with the banquet and its significance in Luke – its an image that points to the companionship of being nourished by God together with other friends in the Commonwealth of God – in the Jewish tradition, these family meals were times of remembering God's love through good times and bad, especially God's saving grace in times of distress and despair – carried over into the Christian tradition in our regular gathering around the Lord's Table – to remember the act by which the Holy Trinity (God as an authentic community of friends) brought the whole creation back into friendship with the divine and realigned it with its original purpose – a space of hospitality, a community of friends, a banquet table laden with all that is needed to nourish a flourishing life – empathy, courage, grace, rebellion, and imagination – a list of qualities I discovered this morning in a blog post by Umair Haque (<https://umairhaque.com/the-myth-of-getting-out-of-your-comfort-zone-874902a9a27e#.troee5gog>) – emphasized, like Victor Frankl, the importance of purpose in moving up, above, beyond suffering and not letting it fall into a vicious cycle of pain, abuse and trauma
2. But throughout his Gospel and continuing into the Acts of the Apostles, Luke insists that the seats at the banquet are not reserved for a select and privileged few – in Jesus Christ, a lot more chairs and tables were added – the banquet is for every beloved friend of God in creation – for all humanity – whatever their suffering and whatever their dysfunctional response to that suffering, they are welcome to the community gathered at the table where they will be fed with all the nourishment needed to live in empathy, courage, grace, rebellion and imagination – I've been intrigued by the provocative way photographer and artist David LaChapelle portrays the Last Supper – not who we normally imagine at the Lord's Table – but that's the point, isn't it? – if our imaginations are formed by the empathy, courage, grace and rebellion of the Gospel, then anyone and everyone is welcome to be nourished to flourish by the Trinity at their table

At this stage in our ponderings, then ...

Are there people, in your imaginations, who don't belong at the Trinity's banquet table, who don't belong in the Commonwealth of God? – what leads you to exclude them? – is the Spirit prompting you to re-examine those attitudes and rebel against social norms that do not reflect the breadth of God's love? – what difference do you feel when you are welcomed rather than rejected?

Sermon notes of Rev Dr Brian Fraser,
Minister with Brentwood Presbyterian Church, Burnaby, BC