

Sunday Morning Worship at Brentwood, Jan 8, 2017 (Epiphany)

Notes for the sermon In the Beginning ...



Ps 147 and John 1:1-18 Sermon Text = John 1:1

***In the beginning was the Word,
and the Word was with God,
and the Word was God.***

[Hymns = 376, 712, and 727 in the *Book of Praise*]

Key Ideas

1. This is the way the Christian story starts – God creates stuff to be in relationship with God – God wants relationships – God thrives on relationships – God is God only in relationships – indeed, as we took in more and more of God’s revelation of God’s self to us, it turns out that God in God’s very essence is a community – some of the best language we’ve been able to compose to point to this reality has to do with energies that dance around and interfuse or interpenetrate – our short-form for it is Trinity - the details are quite mysterious – the result is not – it is a story of a God who flourishes and delights in relationships with the creatures that community has made
2. The Christian story veers off track when the humans that God created to be cultivators of the creation, creating with what God gave them as gift as part of this community that is God, decided to try to go it on their own – they tried (and are continuing to try) to flourish without a relationship with the community that is God – they (well, let’s be honest, we ...) go well outside the boundaries of our created freedom and get into disasterous trouble that the Scriptures record in graphic detail – darkness dominates – at times, the light of God’s creative love seems lost completely, totally obliterated by the excessive self-indulgence in sex, money and power – what many observers, inside the church and outside, have called the big three temptations – let these rule your life, for your own benefit, and the light of God’s love will have a tough time breaking through
3. The Christian story really gets back on track when God, who for some miraculously marvellous reason, refuses to get tired or give up on their original intention in creation – they take flesh, dwell among us as a Jewish tradesman, are full of grace and truth, and live out the humble confidence that is faithfulness in relationship with this strangely attractive God – the Relationship (an ancient translation of the Greek word *logos*) that got everything going pursues us relentlessly to bring us back into the project – that happens with and in Jesus, the person within what we now call the Trinity who is delegated to come and restore us to original blessing in a fascinating, scandalous, and foolish way – but more of that as we ponder God’s witness to this fact further this year ...

At this point in our ponderings, then ...

... what happens with and in Jesus, as God’s Christ or Messiah or Chosen One, continues and completes what God started in the beginning – the cultivation of a community of justice, peace, and joy in which everyone and everything flourishes in the energy of God’s loving relationship