

Flourishing as Friends of Jesus (who really like jazz!)

Some Notes for the Reflection on March 29, 2017



So much of the story
behind so much of the writing
that goes into jazz
is about love.

Love found, love lost, love awry, love in the groove,
love confused, love confined,
the complexities of love and the mysteries of love.

One of the most painful lessons in my life
was the recognition
that I couldn't rely on human love
for the security, appreciation, and power
that I knew deep in my being
that I was called to have and use.

The road to that recognition
was twisted, toxic, and torturous.
The appreciation for the quality of that needed love
that I believe can only come from God
is still growing within and about me.

During Lent and Easter
we reflect on the depth and breadth of God's love,
seen most clearly in life and work of Jesus Christ.

We are invited to discover afresh
the security, appreciation, and power
that comes from know that Jesus loves us
and from that love flows our capacities to bless.

The Brentwood Manifesto of the Christian Faith

How We See God, the World, Humanity, and the Future

*In the beginning, God created the world
and delighted in its diversity and development.
God created humanity, male and female,
and nourished them to flourish in blessing all of creation.*

*But humanity rebelled, rejecting the limits of their power.
Their rebellion against God's vision of justice, peace, and joy
brought tyranny, suffering, and death.*

*God never tired of calling humanity home
to work in common to cultivate the well-being of the world.
Through the law and the prophets,
God's Spirit invited love of God, love of others, and love of self
as the empowering energy for engaging in this mission.*

*In one final act of reconciliation
to overcome our alienation and loneliness,
God took flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth.
In the life, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus of Nazareth,
God restored the whole of creation to flourishing as divine friends
in a commonwealth enjoyed on earth as in heaven.
God continues to work out the completion of that act.*

*Through the church universal, visible and invisible,
the Holy Spirit empowers people
to flourish in their reconciliation with their Creator
through worship, learning, fellowship, and service.*

*By God's grace in Jesus Christ through the work of the Spirit,
we know what it is to be loved and to love
amidst all the problems of the world.
We are equipped and sent to sow seeds of God's vision of SHALOM
in all of our circles of influence.*

*In the end, God's love will transform heaven and earth
and bring justice, peace, and joy to full realization.*