

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

Some Notes for the Reflection on March 22, 2017



'Georgia on My Mind' –
what a great song and a great rendition.
32.5 million pages on Google.
It's touched a deep chord in the human soul.

It captures powerfully the yearnings
of a homesick soul.
Some relate it to a place, others to a lover.
But home is sweet.
It welcomes us and warms us.
It connects us and comforts us.
At least, that happens in kind of home
sung about here.
That's what happens in the home longed for here.

It's the home the prodigal son returns to,
and, to his utter and astounding amazement,
where he finds an unconditional welcome
and peace in returning to where he belongs.

Another thought crossed my mind in reflecting on this song.
The old, sweet song for many Christians is
"Jesus loves me, this I know,
for the Bible tells me so."
Home is a community
gathered around that expression of the wisdom of God
and sharing that wisdom, in word and deed, with the world.
It's a community like Brentwood.

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.*