

Key Insights for Christian Discipleship
@ Jazz Evensong

#23 – Feb 21, 2018

Life's Melody Line

Micah 6:8

*He has told you, O mortal, what is good;
and what does the Lord require of you
but to do justice, and to love kindness,
and to walk humbly with your God.*

- in our heart of hearts, what I would call our souls, I think we all want to be good – but what is good? – what do we have to pay attention to, what do we have to commit to, what do we have to support, in order to be and expand goodness in our world?
- those are tough questions, especially in our world of murdered and missing indigenous women across Canada, teens and their teachers slaughtered in schools, millions driven from their homes by sectarian violence, nationalist posturings of aggression and threats of nuclear war – this does not seem to be a 'good' world!
- there is long tradition in Judeo-Christian communities of lament – of voicing pain and sorrow to make the lack of goodness clear, and felt, and heard – it's the source of the blues in music – and the blues is a formative musical stream in jazz
- and what is crucial to remember in the traditions of lament and blues that they do not leave us stuck in pain and sorrow – in the midst of that badness, they sing out the power of goodness, the right to be treated with justice and kindness, the humble resilience that comes from walking with God into God's future
- that's what I always hear in jazz – it's love music – it's God's melody line, sometimes faintly heard beneath, between the lines of pain and sorrow – but it always resolves in a resonant harmonious healing in the end
- and the music draws you into participating in that healing – that is how you find the goodness that God gave you in your creation and how you find ways of sharing it for the goodness of the whole world

The Brentwood Declaration

How Brentwood Presbyterian Church Understands Its Faith & Mission

*In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth
and declared them to be very good.
God then created humanity, male and female,
to cultivate blessing throughout the world.*

*Rejecting the limits of their power,
our ancestors rebelled against God's vision of goodness.
By continuing to rebel against God's constraints,
we compound the pain of toil, tyranny, trauma, and death.*

*But God never gave up.
In a definitive act of reconciling forgiveness,
God became incarnate among us.*

*In the life, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus of Nazareth,
God restored the original goodness of creation
as a commonwealth enjoyed on earth as it is in heaven.
The Holy Spirit continues to work out the fulfillment of that act.*

*Through the church universal in which we participate,
the Holy Spirit nourishes us to flourish as God's friends
through worship, learning, fellowship, and service.*

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

*In the end, God's love will transform the heavens and the earth,
and bring justice, peace, and joy to every dimension of creation.*

If something in this worship service has tweaked your interest in the worldview that underlies it, you will find a purple pamphlet at the back of the church with more on the composition and intent of this declaration, along with questions to help you consider it more carefully. Please help yourself.