

# Notes for Brian's Sermon at Brentwood Presbyterian Church

## Sun, Nov 10, 2019 – Remembrance Sunday

### Disturbing the Peace

(Ps 17 and Acts 17:1-9)



When they could not find them, they dragged Jason and some believers before the city authorities, shouting, “These people who have been turning the world upside down have come here also, and Jason has entertained them as guests. They are all acting contrary to the decrees of the emperor, saying that there is another king, Jesus.”  
(Acts 17:6-7)

#### Insights from the story within the story

I've used this picture before – a poppy painted by our granddaughter Chloe when she was 5 years old – in many ways, these reflections are for her and her generation – it's grounded in questions about what legacy of peace we're going to leave her – for me, that's the challenge of Remembrance Day – I have not talked with a veteran yet who wants to go back to war – if it becomes a necessity, yes – but not just for the sake of the glory of war – these are people who lived through the traumas – in the flesh, not on computers screens with controls in hand that let you start a new search and destroy mission every time you get killed – are there medics in video games? – nurses just behind the lines? – war is hell – and, in Christ, the forgiving and reconciling love that is the triune God has saved us from hell – so what are we doing to live into that salvation? – that, it seems to me, is what the young soldiers, not to mention the civilians, dying on real battle fields want us to remember

#### Provocative points to ponder – as always, too many to cram into one sermon

- A lot of wars are generated by a small group of people wanting to impose their idea of 'peace' on others – it happened to Christians when they disturbed the 'peace' of the Roman Empire – it happened to Indigenous peoples when they disturbed the advance of the 'peace' of the various European empires, especially in the lands that these First Nations called 'Turtle Island' – it is happening now as the complex intrigues of major powers clash in regions that contain resources needed for our industrial/military/technological forms of control – every one of those powers claims to be offering 'peace' – but it is a 'peace' that contributes to God's vision of SHALOM, of the well being of the whole of creation – for all our kin, all our relations, including the living earth that is our habitat?

- This morning's series of episodes from the life and witness of the early church offers some provocations to ponder – what was so disturbing to the 'peace' of the communities where the early Christians were witnessing that they aroused the ire of the mobs and the authorities – it's a complex picture, sometimes leading to beatings and jail, sometimes to expulsion, sometimes to simply leaving quietly, have sown the seeds of a different way of seeing things – but that's the core of the lesson here, isn't it? – a different way of seeing things – a different kind of 'peace' – one that seeks the flourishing of all peoples in a restored creation originally intended to provide for all peoples

### **How does this apply to our mission here at Brentwood?**

I got an e-mail this morning encouraging me to read a post from Richard Rohr, one of the leading *praxis* mentors of an ecumenical Christian community that seeks to reimagine the church as body faithful to the intent of its head, Jesus Christ – he offers a list of ways of thinking and acting (the integration of those two is what *praxis* means) that are imagined to bring the peace of Christ that passes understanding to a world entangled in the hell of wars – listen to them in prayerful pondering:

- *Jesus is a model for living more than an object of worship.*
- *Affirming people's potential is more important than reminding them of their brokenness.*
- *The work of reconciliation should be valued over making judgments.*
- *Gracious behavior is more important than right belief.*
- *Inviting questions is more valuable than supplying answers.*
- *Encouraging the personal search is more important than group uniformity.*
- *Meeting actual needs is more important than maintaining institutions.*
- *Peacemaking is more important than power.*
- *We should care more about love and less about sex.*
- *Life in this world is more important than the afterlife (Eternity is God's work anyway).*

This is the legacy of the peace of the triune God, themselves a model of peaceful self-giving, that I want to work on to leave for Chloe and her entire generation – I pray you will join in that kind of remembering – putting all the members of God's creation back together

### **My Notes**



### **My Prayers**