

# **Brian's Sermon Text for Sunday Worshiping at Brentwood**

**Sunday, Sept 6, 2020**

## **Paul's Confidence in Christ** (Psalm 149 and 1 Corinthians 11:17-34)

**For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup,  
you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.  
(1 Cor 11:26)**



### **Word to Ponder = Proclaiming**

**Congregational Wisdom = announcing, declare publicly, claim, stating with authority, anticipate future ownership of good, claiming what we believe is true and trustworthy, done with humility, making yourself vulnerable, announce with righteousness, a prophetic focus, the kernel of the words of God**

I think I have mentioned before  
that I have been developing a new devotional discipline  
during these pandemic times.

At 7am each morning, I write a one-page prayer  
in conversation with the Holy Trinity.

At 7:30am, I choose a phrase from that prayer  
and meditate on it for 20-25 minutes.

Here's a passage from my prayer this morning:

*When we ingest, digest, and process  
the nourishment you provide at this table  
- the embrace, the conversation, the bread, the wine, the purpose -  
we flourish ever more fruitfully in you for your world.*

I've never formulated my understanding of Holy Communion  
- the Lord's Supper, the Eucharist –  
in those words before.

And, as we've noted a couple of times already  
in our explorations of Paul's conversations with the Corinthians,  
that's what Paul seems to be up to  
in proclaiming his confidence in Jesus Christ.  
He's inviting people into conversation to discover together  
the forgiveness and reconciliation their Creator  
has gifted them in Jesus Christ  
and what that means as the Holy Spirit  
leads them into a new way  
of aligning with God's love for God's world.

There's an interesting connotation of our text this morning  
that I had never seen before this week.

This proclamation Paul is encouraging them to practice  
is not preaching in the streets,  
though it might lead to some form of that kind of conversation.  
It's coming together around the Lord's table  
to be nourished for the Lord's work in the Lord's world.

That act of coming together,  
with all of our diversities of attitudes and behaviours,  
welcomed into conversation by our common Creator,  
reminded of what that God did for that God's world,  
and fed by the very being of that God,  
is a proclamation of a new way of being together.

This act of communal gathering  
is a positive and public expression  
of the new possibilities opened up by Jesus Christ.

This week,  
in the context of the continuing peaceful protests around God's world,  
I thought of Abraham Lincoln's *Emancipation Proclamation*.

It was proclaimed in September of 1862.

It declared that people held as slaves would be forever free  
and pledged that the US government would

“recognize and maintain the freedom of such persons,  
and will do no act or acts to repress such persons ...  
in any efforts they may make for their actual freedom.”

That how Lincoln, in the midst of a worsening Civil War,  
acted to be true to the purpose of forming one nation,  
under God, indivisible,  
with liberty and justice for all.

That's a proclamation worthy of Paul at his most faithful.

God has united us all in Christ, along with the rest of the world.

We are ambassadors of that message of forgiving and reconciling love.

When we gather at this table, that is the truth we proclaim in God's world

often to those who do not yet see that truth  
or understand the nourishment for flourishing in it.

And at the beginning of our proclamation

is an invitation to join us in growing into this truth.

Come, sit with us, talk with us, eat with us, work with us.

That's how Paul remembered his confidence in Christ,  
in community, in conversation, nourishing each other  
with the gifts Jesus Christ had given his people.

Let's discover in that dialogical relationship

what positive possibilities our Creator is opening up for us.

Let's imagine how we can participate with each other  
in a greater realization of God's grace and truth.

Let's rejoice as all mortal flesh keeps silence  
before such forgiving and reconciling love.

Let's proclaim God's kin-dom

by the ways we live together in justice and peace.

**My Notes**



**My Prayers**

**[Prayers of the People are expressed in the prayers during Holy Communion]**