

**Brian's Sermon Text for Sunday Worshiping at Brentwood
Sunday, Nov 8, 2020**

Remembrance Sunday

**My Love Be With All of You
(Psalm 70 and 1 Corinthians 16:1-24)**



**My love be
with all of you in Christ Jesus.
(1 Cor 16:24)**

Words to Ponder = Love

Congregational Wisdom = quality of Divinity; agape; community; affection; selfless; God; active; unconditional; pure; the ground of our being; different kinds; my mother; giving; giving oneself; joy; not our idea of romantic love; a gift; peace; highest calling; sacrifice; nurturing.

Our text this morning are Paul's final words
in the records of his conversations
contained in what we have
as the first letter to the Corinthians.

It's clear this document reflects a series of conversations
that have been going on for quite some time
as the community works out
the most faithful, wise, and effective ways
to be Christ's ambassadors in the world,
stewards of the mysteries of God's mercy and grace
revealed to them in Jesus through the work of the Spirit.

As throughout the conversations,
Paul comes back to their bonds of love in Christ Jesus.
That love is the reality in which they live.
It is the reality that gives them life.
It is the reality they are called to invite others
to recognize and share.
It is the reality that encompasses all of creation,
designed to be mutual blessing.

So, where does war fit into that reality?

That's the question the Spirit posed this week for me.

Three dimensions of the wars I have known came to soul
in my considerations of this question.

They have been, in the souls of many,
wars fought for freedom.

They have been, for many,
wars that cost much.

They have been, for the triune God,
tragic events in which your with-ness
has remained faithful among all of us

in co-creating new communities
of justice, kindness, and humility.

Freedom is a core value for Presbyterians.
The core principle of our polity,
of the councils of consideration
to which we are electing new ruling elders,
comes from a time in European history
when religious wars raged.
It states that we are organized in such a way
that all occasion for tyranny is removed.
That means everyone is enabled to participate
so everyone can take responsibility
for the well-being of the realm.
That principle is worth fighting for.

But the ways in which we have had to,
or chosen to, fight in its defence
have brought horribly traumatic costs
to the well-being of God's creation.
Our participation in and responsibility for that
cannot be ignored or dismissed.
Millions have died, lands have been ravaged,
communities have been rent asunder.

And where has God been in all of this devastation?
God has been, I'm convinced,
with those we paid the price, who suffered the costs,
on both sides of the complex conflicts
that have ruptured our life together on this planet.
In that presence, God has been pleading with us,
pestering and provoking us,
to work out our conflicts in the love of Jesus Christ.

We have not yet, as a world community,
awakened sufficiently to the reality of that possibility.

We are still living into that benediction
Paul pronounced among his friends in Christ in Corinth -
“My love be with you in Christ Jesus.”
And we have miles to go.

I pray that in our various remembrances this week
the Trinity will provoke us to be visible and vocal
in our representation of God’s peace
in all our circles of inspiration and influence.

My Notes



My Prayers

Prayers of the People

Assure us deep in our souls that you have heard these prayers
spoken aloud into this worshiping or quietly within.

[common prayers for peace among us]

And help us hear again the comfort and challenge, the gift and risk,
of your prayer that has inspired your people for generations:

[singing of the Lord’s Prayer]