

Introduction

Check-in & Introductions

Music & Arts Sunday

Epistle Lesson

Ephesians 5:1-2, 18b-20 (NRSV)

¹ Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children, ² and live in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

^{18b} be filled with the Spirit, ¹⁹ as you sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs among yourselves, singing and making melody to the Lord in your hearts, ²⁰ giving thanks to God the Father at all times and for everything in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Psalm

Psalm 47 (NRSV)

¹ Clap your hands, all you peoples; shout to God with loud songs of joy.

² For the LORD, the Most High, is awesome, a great king over all the earth.

³ He subdued peoples under us, and nations under our feet.

⁴ He chose our heritage for us, the pride of Jacob whom he loves. *Selah*

⁵ God has gone up with a shout, the LORD with the sound of a trumpet.

⁶ Sing praises to God, sing praises; sing praises to our King, sing praises.

⁷ For God is the king of all the earth; sing praises with a psalm.

⁸ God is king over the nations; God sits on his holy throne.

⁹ The princes of the peoples gather as the people of the God of Abraham.
For the shields of the earth belong to God; he is highly exalted.

Sacred Reading

"The Threefold God " by Susan Cherwien

I. God the Creator

Deep down,
deep beneath the noise of human activity,
deep below the drone of doing,
if we stop,
if we listen,
we become aware of a power.

A power that gives birth to stars:
a power of light.

A power that sings the Word:
a power of song.

A power that pulses like a fire in all creation:
a power of presence.

A power that shapes life:

a power of love.

And when we finally stop
when we finally listen
when we finally look,
what we see is glory
what we hear is glory
what we become aware of is—
glory.

And all we can do
when confronted by such glory,
is drop to the knee
and proclaim from the heart
"You are God."

II. God the Redeemer

It is hard to know God
from the mountains alone.
Not impossible, but hard.
It is hard to know God
from the yearnings of the heart alone.
Not impossible, but hard.

And so there was sent among us
a person, a human being,
so open to God
so connected to God
so one with God
that God flowed through him like a river
and love incarnated in his every cell.

At such love the stars shimmered into light.
At such love demons cried out and fled.
At such love the earth quaked and stones rolled.
For in this person
love incarnate shone out with the glory of God.
Glory and humility dwelt together.
God and human dwelt together.
And there could be no more mistake in understanding:
God is love.
God is love.
And God's powerful desire
is to bring us,
like the Christ, love incarnate,
into that love.

All creation will cry
"Blessed!"

III. God the Spirit

God works in manifold ways:

God works as light to enlighten us,
God works as manna to feed us,
God works as fire to lead us,
God works as water to cleanse us.

God works as Creator,
power immense and mysterious,
forging the mountains.

God works as Christ,
love human and intimate,
healing the wounded heart.

God works as Spirit,
presence vibrant and wise,
whispering loveliness in the ear.

This Spirit pleads to us and for us.

It is a still small voice.

It is a holy fire.

It is a creative spark.

It opens our eyes to glory.

It opens our ears to God's Word.

It goads us.

It guides us.

It gifts us.

And to such a wise presence,
may we always and ever open our hearts
and softly pray
"Come."

Discussion Questions

1. What were your favorite parts about Sunday's service?
2. What role does music and art play in your personal relationship with God? Your theology? Your relationship with the church?
3. In the reading from Susan Cherwien she attempts to wrap her artistic essence and brain around the Triune God? What did you like about her interpretation? What didn't you like?
4. How is theology, art? (Theology means to think about, or study God.)

Prayer

Holy Spirit, sing! You are the breath that drops the diaphragm, fills the lungs, sets the cords vibrating, and fills the room with music. You are the creative impulse in the composer's pen, the poet's imagination, the artist's brush stroke. Divine Artist, create us anew. Holy Spirit, sing! Amen.