

God's Wisdom Song

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Community Presbyterian Church - Rochester, Minnesota

Trinity Sunday - June 12, 2022

Texts: Proverbs 8:1-4, 22-31; John 16:12-15

SCRIPTURE READING Proverbs 8:1-4, 22-31

Does not wisdom call, and does not understanding raise her voice?

On the heights, beside the way, at the crossroads she takes her stand;

beside the gates in front of the town, at the entrance of the portals she cries out:

“To you, O people, I call, and my cry is to all that live.

God created me at the beginning, the first of the divine acts of long ago.

“Ages ago I had my origin, at the start, before the dawning of the earth.

When there were no depths I was brought forth,

when there were no springs abounding with water.

Before the mountains had been shaped, before the hills, I was born—

when earth and fields did not exist, or the world's first bits of soil.

“When the Creator established the heavens, I was there,

when the eternal Artist drew a circle on the face of the deep,

making firm the skies above, establishing the fountains of the deep,

assigning to the sea its limit, so that its waters might not overflow;

“When the Founder marked out the foundations of the earth,

there I was, as well, like a confidant, a master worker, giving delight;

rejoicing before the Lifegiver always, enchanted as a child at play,

reveling in the inhabited world and delighting in the human race.”

John 16:12-15 - *The paths to God are many; and most of them we have to discover on our own.*

*[That's where the Holy Spirit helps out.] But they appear when we are ready, and when our faithfulness has shown that we are **able to bear** the consequences of further growth.*

Jesus told his disciples the night before he died: “I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. When the Spirit of truth comes, that One will guide you into all the truth; for she will not speak on her own, but will speak whatever she hears, and she will declare to you the things that are to come. She will glorify me, because she will take what is mine and declare it to you. All that the Father has is mine. For this reason I said that she will take what is mine and declare it to you.”



One night last week, I woke up at 3:30. Outside the window, a robin started to sing. Quick liquid clusters; pause; repeat. Over and over. “Robin,” I wanted to say, “What’s the rush? Dawn isn’t for hours!” But I wasn’t annoyed. Instead I felt this overpowering joy; as though I suddenly remembered something precious and essential that I had forgotten for so long it was like it didn’t exist. Was the bird waking the day, or waking my soul? Or waking God in my soul?

It made me think of Aslan, the lion of Narnia, waking and creating a world. A few people (and one horse) from our world, and another one, are magically transported to a world of absolute nothingness, a world that hasn’t been created yet. And then they hear a song, a song so deep, so beautiful, they can’t hardly bear to listen to it. Other voices, high and sharp and tingling, join the song, and the sky suddenly blazes with stars.

The song goes on; the sky brightens. “The eastern sky changed from white to pink and from pink to gold. The voice rose and rose until all the air was shaking with it. And just as it swelled to the mightiest and most glorious sound it had yet produced, the sun rose.... You could imagine it laughing for joy as it came up.” Hills, valleys, a river appear, sung into being by the Voice. Now they see; it’s the lion singing. Trees bristle out of the ground, and the turf bubbles; from the humps come creatures of every kind, shaking off the dirt. The trees fill with birds, and the air is crowded with hooting, warbling, barking, grunting, neighing. A new world is born, born from song. Creation.



Where Genesis 1, the first biblical creation story, is slow, measured, and orderly in its beauty; the creation of Narnia is a circus of color, sound, movement. Today, Trinity Sunday, we glimpse another creation story slipped into the book of Proverbs. God shows up as Woman Wisdom and the earth is born—in the original Hebrew, literally pushed like a baby out of the birth canal. Is Wisdom a midwife? A master builder? Is she

just singing and dancing the world into life? Hear Woman Wisdom speak:

“When the Creator established the heavens, I was there; when the eternal Artist drew a circle on the face of the deep, making firm the skies above, establishing the fountains of the deep; when the Founder marked out the foundations of the earth, there I was, as well, like a confidant, a master worker, giving delight; rejoicing before the Lifegiver always, enchanted as a child at play, reveling in the inhabited world and delighting in the human race.” God in relationship; the song of creation is not solo, but harmony, dance.

If you've ever known a child I guarantee you've seen this—totally unselfconscious, joyful, twirling delight. Kids love to dance! They don't even need music! You probably did it yourself, once upon a time; have you forgotten? But God dancing? Can you imagine it? Creation is the dance of God, the wisdom song of God, wild, crackling with energy, bubbling with laughter, spraying light and joy like fountains. That's the creation story here.



And—did you catch this?—delighting! Delighting in the human race. The song and dance of God that gives birth to the world ends with sheer utter unbounded love for *people*. Yes, love for this checkered collection of pain and confusion and good intentions gone wrong. Humankind is not always kind. I look around and I don't always feel that great about my species. I see the damage we inflict on each other, the hurt we can't seem to avoid spreading around. And, yes, evil somehow got into Narnia too, in spite of Aslan's song. But evil was not the last word in that story, or ours.



And we were not created wrong, either. God smiled on you when you were born, the master architect beamed at the infant universe. God danced the day you were born! God danced the day the earth came bursting out of nothing. God sang the Wisdom song of creation. God's still singing it. You've heard it. But do you remember it?

Before Jesus left this earth and his poor earnest, bumbling disciples, he told them: "Guys, I know you can't bear to hear this yet, but you've got a lot to learn. I love you, but you're really just serious, self-important idiots in a world that's going to hurt a lot really soon. And things will get worse before they get better. But I promise," Jesus told them, "I will send one who'll help you remember, who'll remind you of everything precious and essential you were born knowing, everything I've been trying to show you, everything you still aren't ready for. She's the same one who did the happy dance at creation. Call her the Holy Spirit, or the Helper, or just the one next to you when you need a friend. And she (or who knows? Maybe he, maybe or they) will show up when the night is darkest, singing that song. Waking the dawn. Waking your soul. Waking God within you. Again. When you are able to bear it."

"The paths to God are many, and most of them we have to discover on our own. But they appear when we are ready for them, and when our faithfulness has shown that we can bear the consequences of further growth." Friends, Spirit has so much to remind us, so much to teach. Are we ready? Can we bear the consequences?

Indebtedness:

To John Punshon, English Quaker writer, *Encounters with Silence*, 1987, for the quote about “The paths to God are many...”

And to C.S. Lewis, author of the Narnia books that have enriched so many children’s lives, and accompanied so many of us through our adulthood, as well.

Prayers

Great Creator, the sun rises every day to praise you - Jesus the Christ, whose love infuses every leaf, every tree, every stone - Spirit, friend who helps us remember what we have forgotten - Holy Trinity, dance of God, smile on us today as we worship you.

God, our God, we know you did not create evil, nor does evil have the last word; and it is only with great cost to yourself that evil has been overcome in our world. Help us bear what you have to teach us, and then carry it to your hurting world.

You have made all things in beauty; and we have spoiled so much of it with our greed; give us the will and the wisdom to restore what we have damaged. May we seek to cure the social and spiritual ills that erupt in deadly violence; may we partner with those who share our goals, no matter what creed they profess.

Thank you for giving us each friends and family to know and love: we lift them to you and entrust them to your healing love. Comfort all who mourn.

You know our needs and our desires better than we know them ourselves: hear our prayers, spoken, unspoken, and too deep for words, and help us remember to pray: Our Father in heaven,