

Worship Committee February 12, 2021

Present: John Sampson, Bernie Webb, Susie Allen, Anne Hurd, Linda Bogardus

Susie opened the discussion by saying she appreciated the way John highlighted Epiphany as bringing light to the word. The focus was on the ministry of Jesus through his actions and his voice. We see who Jesus really is. He becomes an adult, and we hear him talk.

John said Jesus' story is like an opera in 5 (6) parts: Advent, Christmas, Lent, Epiphany, Easter, Eastertide. It is one big story but there is a different message in each piece. This gives the liturgical year a structure to tell the story through rituals and readings.

This year the time between Lent and Easter is condensed. This is due to the calendar. Easter moves each year because it is tied to the Spring (Vernal) Equinox which sets up the time backward to Ash Wednesday. We are reading from the Gospel of Mark which tells the events of Jesus' adult life and teachings and makes his case supporting the belief that Jesus was the true Messiah.

John does not preach Atonement. The Four Gospels do not have the idea of Atonement. That appears a couple of generations later. John bases his Reflections around the stories in the Bible. Jesus nailed to the Cross is an expression for our brokenness and falling away from the ideal that Jesus was putting forward. The Resurrection is God coming back with the promise of hope. Our church is a covenant church based on Christian beliefs but casts a big blanket for others who might follow a different path and not be so focused on Jesus. John's training and tradition are Christian, but he would never close door on what others believe.

John had a meeting with David Craig about Lenten/Easter Services. There will be a Zoom Ash Wednesday service, no Maundy Thursday. They are working on Good Friday and Easter Sunday Celebration. All on Zoom.

The Singing of hymns during the service was again revisited. Most felt in different ways that singing alone in our houses did not translate well on Zoom. That there was a dryness or awkwardness. The idea of simpler chants might work better. But separating the verses during different times in the service would lose the story that the hymns were conveying. Possibly the great hymns might be more engaging; those that challenge the heart. But all agreed to be in awe of what John and the staff do in all the aspects in bringing us together in a meaningful worship experience and together as a community.

Susie wanted to discuss what it would mean for our church when Jim Antal said in his book *Climate Church, Climate World*, that worship needs to change and asks us to imagine worship differently. "Because of our relationship to our Creator", the church has a specific role in "stopping humanity from running Genesis in reverse." What is the relevance of this apart from the traditions of the church?

John replied that in our discernment on becoming a Creation Justice Church we are asked to show that we are doing something. We have added things like Forest Bathing, a canoe trip, and special speakers. We have not gotten to how the structure of worship would change.

What could be so powerful that it warps what we do? Adding new things is good but not on a fundamental level. We may have to make up new words or grammar. Shift from prose to poetry. How would that manifest itself?

John said the church is not in the forefront of this work and needs to catch up. Speaking of relevance, where is the great Art in Creation Justice Church? There seems to be complacency on the Subject. Where are the opportunities for the next transformation? Transformations at the heart level not the head. It needs to be on fire for something. Moving forward we need younger people to be engaged. This discussion will be coming to this committee soon.

Next Meeting March 12, 10 AM -12 AM

Submitted by Linda Bogardus