



Raquette Lake Chapel Sunday Blast August 16, 2020

At this Sunday's Chapel worship, we will focus on Psalm 133 and other "Psalms of Orientation."

Sunday Readings (11th Sunday After Pentecost-"Proper 14" Year A)

Genesis 45:1-15: Joseph has risen to a position of importance in Egypt and is reunited with his brothers.

Psalm 133: A Psalm of happiness and thankfulness (a Psalm of "Orientation")

Romans 11:1-2a, 29-32: Paul stresses God has not rejected Israel, but has mercy for all nations.

Matthew 15:21-28: A Canaanite woman of great faith pleads with Jesus to help her possessed daughter.

Not a sermon... As promised in last week's "Blast" we're going to look at "Psalms of Orientation," or

When Life is Good



Psalms of orientation reflect the "normalcy" of life, usually happy and smooth sailing. Remember the sentiment from Robert Browning's poem Pippa Passes? "God's in His heaven, and all's right in the world." Things are settled, and life makes sense for the most part. We have confidence in the regularity of life and God's creation. A number of psalms express this outlook, articulating a faith in an orderly world due to God's wisdom built into the world at the time of Creation. Here is Psalm 133 in its entirety from today's scripture readings:

Oh, how good and pleasant it is, when brethren live together in unity!
It is like fine oil upon the head that runs down upon the beard,
Upon the beard of Aaron, and runs down upon the collar of his robe.
It is like the dew of Hermon that falls upon the hills of Zion.
For there the Lord has ordained the blessing: life for evermore.

While beautiful in its own right, some of us might not relate to oil running down our heads into our beards. Or "Mt. Hermon" or "Aaron's robe." If we reword this Psalm for our own times, can we capture the Psalm's message?

How wonderful it is when brothers and sisters and neighbors get along!
It's like a gathering at a big outdoor picnic with BBQ with homemade pies!
We share stories and tell each other how good we look!
It makes us feel like we've had a refreshing canoe paddle or swim in the lake.
That's the blessing from God we feel, a hint of God's Kingdom!

We can understand these Psalms to make sense of the world OUTSIDE of us and the world INSIDE of us. Here are some other Psalms that we turn to in "normal times": 1, 8, 14, 24, 33, 37, 104, 111, 112, 119, 131, 133, 145. And if we don't feel like we're in normal times, they can be a reminder. Blessings! - Vance

Prayers for Chris starting chemo treatments; Richard, Ann, and Cynthia living with a cancer diagnosis; the good health of residents and visitors to Raquette Lake; thanks for Vance's recovery; our leaders to make wise decisions about COVID-19. Many thanks to the summer guest ministers at the Chapel!