



1 September 2019

Thinking Allowed – Thinking Aloud Allowed

Worship Leader: Rev Dr Robyn McPhail

Musicians: Marie Cannon (KK) Clyde Foster (Kaeo)

Readers: Michelle Tupou (KK) tba (Kaeo)

Here each Sunday we pray God's blessing over our buildings: thanks for the good that has happened through the week and cleansing for anything troublesome. May the Spirit touch all who come into our church and into our homes.

Being family, we watch out for, and care for, one another.



Tātou tātou e

Settling in

Gathering with all the Saints – a pause in memory and thankfulness for fathers and those who have been like fathers

Like a father, you protect me,
teach me the discerning eye,
hoist me up upon your shoulder,
let me see the world from high.

Shirley Murray, *Loving Spirit* v.4

Hymn *In the bulb there is a flower*

Settling

You wait for us
until we are open to you.

We wait for your word
to make us receptive.

Attune us to your voice,
to your silence.

Speak and bring your Son to us –
Jesus, the word of your peace.

Huib Oosterhuis, in *be our Freedom Lord*, ed Terry C. Falla

Symbol of God's Presence

Hymn *Sometimes it takes a mountain* [Michelle's choice]

I faced a mountain,
That I never faced before
That's why I'm calling on the Lord
I know it's been awhile,
Lord please hear my prayer
I need you like I never have before.

*Sometimes it takes a mountain
Sometimes a troubled sea
Sometimes it takes a desert
To get a hold of me
Your Love is so much stronger
Than whatever troubles me*

*Sometimes it takes a mountain
To trust you and believe*

Forgive me, Jesus
I thought I could control
Whatever life would throw my way
But this I will admit
Has brought me to my knees
I need you Lord and I'm not ashamed to say

*Sometimes it takes a mountain
Sometimes a troubled sea
Sometimes it takes a desert
To get a hold of me*

Your Love is so much stronger
Than whatever troubles me

Sometimes it takes a mountain
To trust you and believe

Songwriters: Gloria L. Gaither / Mark Mathes © Life Gate Music, Hanna Street Music Used by permission CCLI Number 78945

Clarifying our Purpose

Conversation with the Word

Reading Luke 14:1,7-14

Prayer

Yesterday, God of our days,
when our hunger for hope
had so weakened us
we could barely speak,
YOU FED US WITH
THE BREAD OF LIFE,
SPREAD WITH THE SWEET HONEY OF
YOUR GRACE.

Today, Host to the poor,
when we look for you
in the powerful and the rich,
among the superstar and celebrity,
WE WILL FIND YOU
SEATED WITH THE CHILDREN, YOUR KNEES
SQUEEZED PAINFULLY

UNDER THE TABLE,
ENTERTAINING THEM
WITH YOUR STORIES.

Tomorrow, Spirit of Service,
when we will be scrambling
for the seats of honour,
YOU WILL BE IN THE KITCHEN COOKING
DINNER FOR THE PRISONERS;
MAKING UP THE GUEST ROOM FOR THE
IMMIGRANTS;
SINGING LULLABIES OF LOVE TO THE LOST
CHILDREN
OF OUR WORLD.

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Reflection

An overarching theme in the narrative of the Bible is unrequited love: God's unrequited love for the people as part of God's love for the whole creation. The human part of creation seems to have a problem with reciprocating, with receiving what is given and giving in return.

God cares, but the people the story begins with – the people of Israel – settle down and don't care about God. Which means they don't care about living God's way, i.e. community focused living based on ethical, neighbourly relationships and care for environment without which they have no livelihood. Instead they do it their own way, which ends up with a society of rich exploiting the poor and the land.

As Jeremiah 2 puts it:

for my people have committed two evils:
they have forsaken me,
the fountain of living water,
and dug out cisterns for themselves,
cracked cisterns
that can hold no water.

Forgetting is the problem. Forgetting that life is a gift and good life together in community is an even bigger gift that needs treasuring and maintaining. In biblical terms, forgetting that the creator loves the whole creation and that, as human beings having the capacity to respond, we need to reciprocate. Receiving love, giving love. Receiving life, enabling life for others (all species).

This is hospitality.

Hospitality is not primarily about dishes, delicacies, and décor. These too easily entrap the host and guest in the cultural practices of honour and duty. Jesus reminds the disciples that such practices are tied to ego, of wanting to be repaid, of wanting to be noticed.

"A life of hospitality begins in worship," Christine Pohl reminds us, "with a recognition of God's grace and generosity. Hospitality is not first a duty and responsibility; it is first a response of love and gratitude for God's love and welcome to us." Hospitality is ultimately a matter of the heart. Is the ego or God directing your heart? There's not space for both.



Jesus' two vignettes in Luke 14 point to a couple of important aspects of this genuine hospitality. The first one is about places of honour at table. It looks like it's about playing the humility card in order to get the ego boost of being invited closer to the centre of honour. But it wouldn't work that way. Most often in Jesus' time, and in ours, if you go to the lowest place you'll be left there. Worse still in Jesus' time, people knew where they supposed to sit – the pecking order was always obvious. To do something different is disruption. You're upsetting the applecart, flouting the social system that determines some people are more important than others. The exalting that Jesus promises is in God's eyes, so to speak. That is, by rejecting the human social system, we take on God's social system where I am worth everything always, as are all others.

In the second vignette, hospitality has got hooked into calculated reciprocity. I receive from those I can do similar to in return. I invite those I won't embarrass because they can't invite me back. The kind of reciprocity Jesus is teaching is different from this. It is a spontaneous reciprocity, an act of giving because we have received, and because we know that giving and receiving are what makes the world go round.

Hospitality is a way of living, a way of relating. It's for all of life, from the mundane to the spontaneous to the traumatic. Hospitality is having an open heart, a heart that is content and trusts God/the source of life is present always, so there's no need to fear not having enough for oneself.

It is the fear of scarce supply of what we'll need that holds us back from hospitality. Confronting our fear of scarcity unlocks the secret of the Christian ethos.

We can share with those in need, because we have leaned into our fear of running out of resources. (Martin L. Smith, *Sojourners*)

We lean into it, we push against it, so we can own the fear and therefore gain the power to reject it. We remember (recall we started with the problem of forgetting), we remember that what we really need – love, connections with others, and our basic needs – will always be given.

Let mutual love continue. ²Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it.

Hebrews 13:1-2

Hymn *Behold! The mountain of the Lord* WOV366

Conversations around the Table

Continuing the Conversation

Hospitality, writes Henri Nouwen, "means primarily the creation of a free space where the stranger can enter and become a friend instead of an enemy. Hospitality is not to change people, but to offer them space where change can take place. It is not to bring men and women over to our side, but to offer freedom not disturbed by dividing lines."

How do you imagine the Great Feast? What will it look like and feel like?

What does hospitality mean to you? To our church?

Who is missing from the table of your church? From whom do we "avert our eyes"?

The World: Our Prayers

Ecumenical Prayer Cycle: Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, Togo

prayer book prayers...

Lord's Prayer

Loving the World as God Loves

Serving in the Week Ahead

Offering Hymn *Community of Christ* tune: Leoni WOV7

Dedication

Yesterday, today, and tomorrow, we are offered opportunities to reach out to those who are in need of hope, healing, and friendship.

This is why you pour out your blessings upon us, trusting that we will share from our abundance to bless others, even as we have been blessed.

Receive the gifts we offer, multiply them, and use them in the work of grace and justice. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Sending

Having listened to God's words, we are sent to serve others.

TODAY AND TOMORROW, WE WILL FOLLOW WHERE GOD LEADS.

Having joined in songs of praise and hope, we will carry these gifts into the world.

TODAY AND TOMORROW, WE WILL SERVE BESIDE JESUS.

Having been filled with the Spirit of justice, we will go to be with all who struggle.

TODAY AND TOMORROW, WE WILL BRING JUSTICE AND PEACE TO THOSE AROUND US.

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Kia tau ki a tātou katoa
te atawhai o tō tātou Ariki a Ihu Karaiti me te aroha o te Atua
me te whiwhi-nga-tahi-tanga ki te Wairua Tapu
Āke āke, āke, Āmine.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit
be with us all. Evermore, Amen.

Robyn McPhail, 01.09.2019

NOTICES FOR TODAY – 1 September 2019

Parish email: admin@kkup.org.nz **Church Office:** 09 407 8250

Find us at www.kkup.org.nz and on Facebook

Minister: Robyn McPhail (DD) 09 283 4802, 021 0247 6280

minister@kkup.org.nz

Ministry Leadership Team: Bev Tayler, Alan Robinson, and Robyn

Notices: Jenny Phillips 09 407 8883 jenny.jane@xtra.co.nz

KK Pastoral: Jessica Scott 09 407 5555 jomscott2@gmail.com

Bookings for the buildings (hire or church use): phone office or cornerstone@kkup.org.nz or wesleydale@kkup.org.nz

NEXT SUNDAY 8 SEPTEMBER 2019

Musicians: Dave Hallam (KK) Clyde Foster (Kaeo)

Readers: Jessica Scott (KK) tba (Kaeo)

Door and Tea: Bev and Bob

Communion Preparation: Michelle and Akisi

LECTIONARY READINGS FOR THE COMING WEEK:

Jeremiah 18:1-11, Psalm 139:1-6,13-18, Philemon 1:1-21, Luke 14:25-33

SINGING PRACTICE: Sundays (after church morning tea) at 23 Hall Road. Those who would like to join the singing group are welcome.

CORNERSTONE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE: Monday 2 September at 10.00am at Cornerstone

BIBLE STUDY: Monday 2 September at 1.15-2.45pm at Cornerstone

HOME GROUP: Friday 6 September 6.30pm at Neville's. Enquiries 02041686931

CAR BOOT SALES: next sale on 14 September at 7.30am-12noon at Cornerstone. Contact: Mary 021 722 938 or carboot@kkup.org.nz

MORNING TEA: The Kerikeri Pastoral Team invite you to morning tea on Wednesday 4 September at 10.30am at Cornerstone. If you would like to bring a friend along, they would be most welcome. This will now include all who would normally go to Women's Fellowship on Thursday.

SPRING FLOWER AND GOLDEN HARVEST

Sunday Services 15 September.

Produce will be donated to the Food Bank.