

others and towards all living things requires love, justice and hospitality. Applying this wholesome threesome in our daily lives will assure that Abraham's tent is a home for all - a *JUST* home for all.

Micah 6.8 is a fitting call to God's three-way package:

He has told you, O Mortal, what is good:
And what does the Lord require of you
But to do justice and to love kindness
And to walk humbly with your God?
Amen.

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NAMBUCCAVALLEY ANGLICANS WORSHIP at HOME

05.09.2021

SUPPLEMENT

SENTENCE, COLLECT, READINGS & HOMILY
for today 5 September 2021
FIFTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Sentence

So speak and so act as those who are
to be judged by the law of liberty.

James 2.13

Collect

Prayer of the Day

Almighty and everlasting God,
increase our faith, hope, and love,
and, that we may receive all you promise,
make us love what you command;
through Jesus Christ our Lord,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

COLLECT for The Season Of Creation

Creator God,

to whom the earth and all that is in it belongs;
guide us and gift us with open hearts and minds

during our Season of Creation services,

So that we can match our beliefs of

your presence in the natural realm,

With our behaviours as caretakers of your creation's
diversity and abundance.

Through Jesus we pray.

Amen.

by Lesle Cropp

THE MINISTRY OF THE WORD

Reading from the Old Testament: Prov 22: 1-2, 8-9, 22-23

¹ A good name is more desirable than great riches;
to be esteemed is better than silver or gold.

² Rich and poor have this in common:

The Lord is the Maker of them all.

⁸ Whoever sows injustice reaps calamity,
and the rod they wield in fury will be broken.

⁹ The generous will themselves be blessed,
for they share their food with the poor.

²² Do not exploit the poor because they are poor and
do not crush the needy in court,

²³ for the Lord will take up their case and
will exact life for life.

To be genuinely hospitable means to offer ourselves and to risk getting hurt in the process. Hospitality can be uncomfortable. A fear of being vulnerable can often stop us from truly committing to our neighbour and to our environment in justice and love.

WHAT CAN WE DO?

When we give to the needy and to nature, perhaps by contributing to a food bank or sending a donation to a charity or being mindful of where our food comes from or clearing plastics on the beach, we transfer some of what we have to others. We seek to balance our enjoyment of God's bounty with the needs of those less fortunate. Love, justice and hospitality are raised up for God's purposes.

Within our parish, we have food hubs at Bowraville and Nambucca Heads. We operate Jimmy's Kitchen. We have the two Op Shops. We sponsor children overseas and a Smith Family lad in Sydney. These endeavours have been set up to fulfill God's covenant of a just home for all. Yet at times, they languish for the lack of resources and volunteers. Perhaps there is more that we can achieve as a parish?

As we give, we also gain - caring is sharing and sharing is sanctifying. Our giving connects us with God. We bolster the cords that bind the unbreakable trio – God, humanity and all living creatures.

CONCLUSION

And thus, just as triangles are resilient and reliable, so too is God's three-pronged model of care. Our response towards him, towards

Love and justice “talk” to each other and hospitality is their conversation – the expression of their merging. We give because we love; we love because God has created. His compassion and mercy wash over all his creation.

When we think of hospitality, we think of inviting guests to a meal or having people stay overnight. Biblical hospitality however is repeatedly distributed to strangers (often called “aliens” in scripture). It is about much more than hosting dinner parties. Biblical hospitality is giving what is needed, not just physically, but more significantly, relationally. Hospitality becomes more than offering a home-cooked meal to a friend – it is offering enduring friendship to a stranger.

“Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it.” Hebrews 13.2

Hospitality is not only person to person in God’s kingdom. It asks us also to be hospitable, grace-filled and generous to all God’s creation. Animal welfare, plant biodiversity and security, land protection – these all come under God’s audit. Upholding an hospitable planet is a matter of faith and action that draws from love and justice.

Is the world becoming less hospitable? Let’s look to Jesus for the ultimate example. His response to the Syro-Phoenician woman (Mark 7.25-30) displayed deep kindness and overflowing generosity. In Jewish society, this woman was definitely a foreigner and an outcast – a Gentile AND a woman. Contrast Jesus’ loving hospitality with the disciples’ reaction to the needy woman – *“And his disciples came and urged him to send the woman away”* because her loud cries were bothering them. (Matthew 15.23)

Psalm 125

- ¹ Those who put their trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Zion:
which cannot be shaken, but endures for ever.
- ² As the mountains stand about Jerusalem,
so stands the Lord about his people:
from this time forward for evermore.
- ³ For the sceptre of wickedness shall have no sway
over the land apportioned to the righteous:
lest the righteous set their hands to do evil.
- ⁴ Do good, O Lord, to those who are good:
to those that are upright in heart.
- ⁵ As for those who turn aside to crooked ways,
let the Lord lead them away with the evildoers:
and in Israel let there be peace.

New Testament Reading: James 2: 1-10, 14-17

- ¹ My brothers and sisters, believers in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ must not show favouritism.
- ² Suppose a man comes into your meeting wearing a gold ring and fine clothes, and a poor man in filthy old clothes also comes in.
- ³ If you show special attention to the man wearing fine clothes and say,
‘Here’s a good seat for you,’
but say to the poor man,
‘You stand there’ or
‘Sit on the floor by my feet,’
- ⁴ have you not discriminated among yourselves and

become judges with evil thoughts?

- ⁵ Listen, my dear brothers and sisters:
has not God chosen those who are poor
in the eyes of the world to be rich in faith and
to inherit the kingdom he promised those who love him?
- ⁶ But you have dishonoured the poor.
Is it not the rich who are exploiting you?
Are they not the ones who are dragging you into court?
- ⁷ Are they not the ones who are blaspheming the noble name
of him to whom you belong?
- ⁸ If you really keep the royal law found in Scripture,
‘Love your neighbour as yourself,’
you are doing right.
- ⁹ But if you show favouritism, you sin and are
convicted by the law as law-breakers.
- ¹⁰ For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles
at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it.
- ¹⁴ What good is it, my brothers and sisters,
if someone claims to have faith but has no deeds?
Can such faith save them?
- ¹⁵ Suppose a brother or a sister is without clothes and
daily food.
- ¹⁶ If one of you says to them,
‘Go in peace; keep warm and well fed,’
but does nothing about their physical needs, what good is it?
- ¹⁷ In the same way, faith by itself,
if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.

Stephen Jurovics in his book **Hospitable Planet** writes:

*I believe people of faith can strengthen their connection to God,
for I believe it has been weakened by ignoring teachings about
creation care.* (Page xiv)

JUSTICE

Justice is understood as the consequence and expression of Love. Justice itself simply means fairness; to give to another what is their due because equals should be treated equally. In Hebrew thought, justice and righteousness mean the same thing: to be in a right relationship. To love God rightly and love others generously as ourselves will naturally lead to the equitable care of *all* creation. This is God's intent.

Proverbs 22 and James 2 (today's readings) make clear that God will champion the cause of the oppressed, and that poverty and injustice are deeply linked. Rich and poor have God as their Maker in common. (Proverbs 22.22) Human and non-human have this divine life-giving connection as well. All life requires a charitable, just and open-handed communal spirit that comes from love – God's love.

In the world of climate injustice, careless use of the world's resources leads to insecurity, disaster and suffering for the world's poor and marginalised. Where is the gospel – the good news – in that scenario?

HOSPITALITY

How is hospitality linked with justice and underpinned with love in Christianity?

In addition, God's covenant to love establishes a non-negotiable *three-way package* – love, justice and hospitality. This is what is required of us. These three relational skills are not only to be applied person to person but also, person to creation. God pledges with **all forms of life equally**, not just with humans.

"This is the sign of the covenant (with Noah) that I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all future generations: I have set my bow in the clouds and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth." Genesis 9.12-13

To address the ravages to Creation in a Godly way and to ensure a home for all in Abraham's tent (God's world), we need to intentionally participate in all three – **love, justice and hospitality**.

LOVE

Love we mostly understand. Much has been broadcast about the nature of love. Our Anglican Prayer Book sums it up:

*Love with all your heart, and with all your soul,
and with all your mind, and with all your strength.* (p120)

Even if it is difficult to rise to such love on occasions, we are mostly under no illusion as to what is required of us. Multiple scripture passages outline the course of Godly love and its impact on our lives, for example 1 Corinthians 13.

God's love is given impartially to all his Creation. Consequently, as God loves, we love. We love all that he has made – animal, vegetable or mineral! Under such an edict, we are more than stewards of the natural realm – we are its "lovers". As we love God's creation, we deepen the love we have for God and for others. We encounter God in our passion for his world.

Gospel of Mark 7:24-37

- ²⁴ Jesus left that place and went to the vicinity of Tyre. He entered a house and did not want anyone to know it; yet he could not keep his presence secret.
- ²⁵ In fact, as soon as she heard about him, a woman whose little daughter was possessed by an impure spirit came and fell at his feet.
- ²⁶ The woman was a Greek, born in Syrian Phoenicia. She begged Jesus to drive the demon out of her daughter.
- ²⁷ 'First let the children eat all they want,' he told her, 'for it is not right to take the children's bread and toss it to the dogs.'
- ²⁸ 'Lord,' she replied, 'even the dogs under the table eat the children's crumbs.'
- ²⁹ Then he told her, 'For such a reply, you may go; the demon has left your daughter.'
- ³⁰ She went home and found her child lying on the bed, and the demon gone.
- ³¹ Then Jesus left the vicinity of Tyre and went through Sidon, down to the Sea of Galilee and into the region of the Decapolis.
- ³² There some people brought to him a man who was deaf and could hardly talk, and they begged Jesus to place his hand on him.
- ³³ After he took him aside, away from the crowd, Jesus put his fingers into the man's ears. Then he spat and touched the man's tongue.

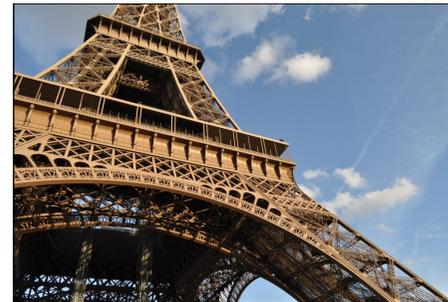
- 34 He looked up to heaven and with a deep sigh said to him,
 'Ephphatha!' (which means 'Be opened!').
- 35 At this, the man's ears were opened, his tongue was
 loosed and he began to speak plainly.
- 36 Jesus commanded them not to tell anyone.
 But the more he did so, the more they kept talking about it.
- 37 People were overwhelmed with amazement.
 'He has done everything well,' they said.
 'He even makes the deaf hear and the mute speak.'

Homily Season of Creation by Lesle Cropp

Theme: *Abraham's tent: a home for all - a JUST home for all?*

Three is a common grouping –
 three flying ceramic ducks on a wall;
 three stooges bringing us slapstick comedy;
 three bears encountering Goldilocks in their home.
 Three is a feature of triangles too.

Because triangles are strong and stable, they are a favourite among architects and engineers. No matter the amount of pressure applied, a triangle will hold its shape and remain rigid. Use a triangle if you want structural support and integrity!



Consider the Eiffel Tower or the Macksville Bridge.
 See also on our website on the EXTRA RESOURCES section:
[Triangles: The Strongest Shape \(sciencemadefun.net\)](http://sciencemadefun.net)

What has the analysis of triangles got to do with today's theme:
Abraham's tent: a home for all - a JUST home for all?

Well ... "three" is also significant to our faith – our triune God is the Trinity of Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Furthermore, in obedience to God's command, we embrace a *three-way* relationship to **'love God, love others and love ourselves'**.