

Reflection on John 1: 1-18

When I was initially asked to deliver a reflection on the Gospel reading in today's service I was told that it wasn't supposed to be a theological sermon but rather a reflection on what the reading said to me.

After some initial hesitancy I ultimately said yes and since then have set out on a journey of reflection. A journey that took me to places I haven't visited in a long time and a journey for which I am grateful mainly because it made me aware of how my understanding of the messages in scripture has changed over the years. The reflection journey was enjoyable – putting my thoughts into a coherent message was the hard part.

I have always taken delight in John's Gospel primarily because the writer has expressed his thoughts in a literary style that is visionary and at times almost mystical. As a child I remember memorizing bible verses in Sunday School and many of them were from John's Gospel. For example if you were to say to me John 3:16 I would immediately recite the verse, "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life."

That being said, there are still many words in this Gospel that require a bit of research and The Prologue which is the reading this morning is a prime example. "In the beginning was the Word". My research of the Greek word Logos from which this translation comes yielded many different options for meaning. I had of course checked with Mr. Google and there were so many options for the translation that I was more confused than informed. Two were appealing to me though and because it seemed I had a choice I picked "More than speech – God in Action" and "reason or plan - in early Christian theology, the divine reason implicit in the cosmos, ordering it and giving it form and meaning".

Then my reflection shifted – and I was struck with the words "In The Beginning". I think I know where John was going with this, parroting the first words in Genesis "In The Beginning God Created the heaven and the earth", making a case for Jesus the Word being the long awaited Messiah and God Incarnate.

I began reflecting on Creation, the initial Creation story in Genesis and what we have learned in the thousands of years since those words were written. I remembered as a child in school being exposed for the first time to the concept of Infinity, the thought that the Universe might be infinite in its nature and that my initial belief about Creation wasn't confined to the account we read in Genesis. Through research over the centuries by a multitude of physicists and mathematicians it has been discovered that everything in the universe is composed of the same basic building blocks. This means to me that we, all of nature and the entire universe of creation are connected.

And as the research continues it has been determined that there is an invisible flow of energy moving through everything connecting the smallest fragments of matter and bringing them together in a variety of forms. This sounds to me much like what we refer to as spirit. The spirit of God the Creator moving in and through everything that is. And if we believe as I do that God is Love as defined by the Greek word agape meaning self-emptying or divine love then we have the Spirit of Love moving in and through all of Creation.

As my reflective journey continued I was overwhelmed by the magnitude and the glorious mystery of Creation; how God the Creator is continually transforming creation; how we all have been given the great gift of life on a planet full of beauty and promise.

Our connectedness, the Spirit of God and His Love have been acknowledged by people in so many ways and one way is through song. One of them is a song we used to sing at Family Camp when my children were small. Some of the words are:

We are One in The Spirit
We are One in The Lord.
We are One in The Spirit
We are One in The Lord.
And we pray that all unity may one day be restored.
And they'll know we are Christians by our love,
By our Love.
Yes they'll know we are Christians by our love.

The words of another song come to mind as I reflect on Spirit:

Spirit of the Living God
Fall afresh on me.
Melt me, Mold me
Fill me, Use me.
Spirit of the Living God
Fall afresh on me.

There is another element in this prologue to the Gospel of John which entered into my reflection and with this I will close.

The mention of John the Baptist who was termed the Introducer. He came as a witness to testify to the Light. The true Light which enlightens everyone. The Word – the Light of the World. There would be no life at all on earth without Light and the Word made flesh brought Spiritual Light into this world so that all that believe in Him might have Life.

Amen