Luke 7:1-9 (New Indigenous Version)

After this, Creator Sets Free (Jesus) chose seventy men from the ones who walked the road with him. He sent them out, two by two, to prepare the way for the villages he was . about to visit on his way to the Sacred village of Peace (Jerusalem).

He said to them, "There is a great harvest before us, but there are not enough helpers. Pray to the harvest Chief, so he will send more helpers. Go and represent me. You will be like lambs walking among wolves. Waste no time greeting others on the way.

When you lodge with someone, say to them first, 'Peace be to this house.' If people of peace live there, you will be welcomed. If not, your blessing of peace will return to you as you leave. Stay with the ones who welcome you. There is no need to move around from house to house. Share their food and drink with them, for the ones who work hard are worth feeding.

In any village that welcomes you, eat whatever they set before you. Offer healing prayers for any who are sick and say to them, 'Creator's good road has come close to you.'

Luke 6:27-38

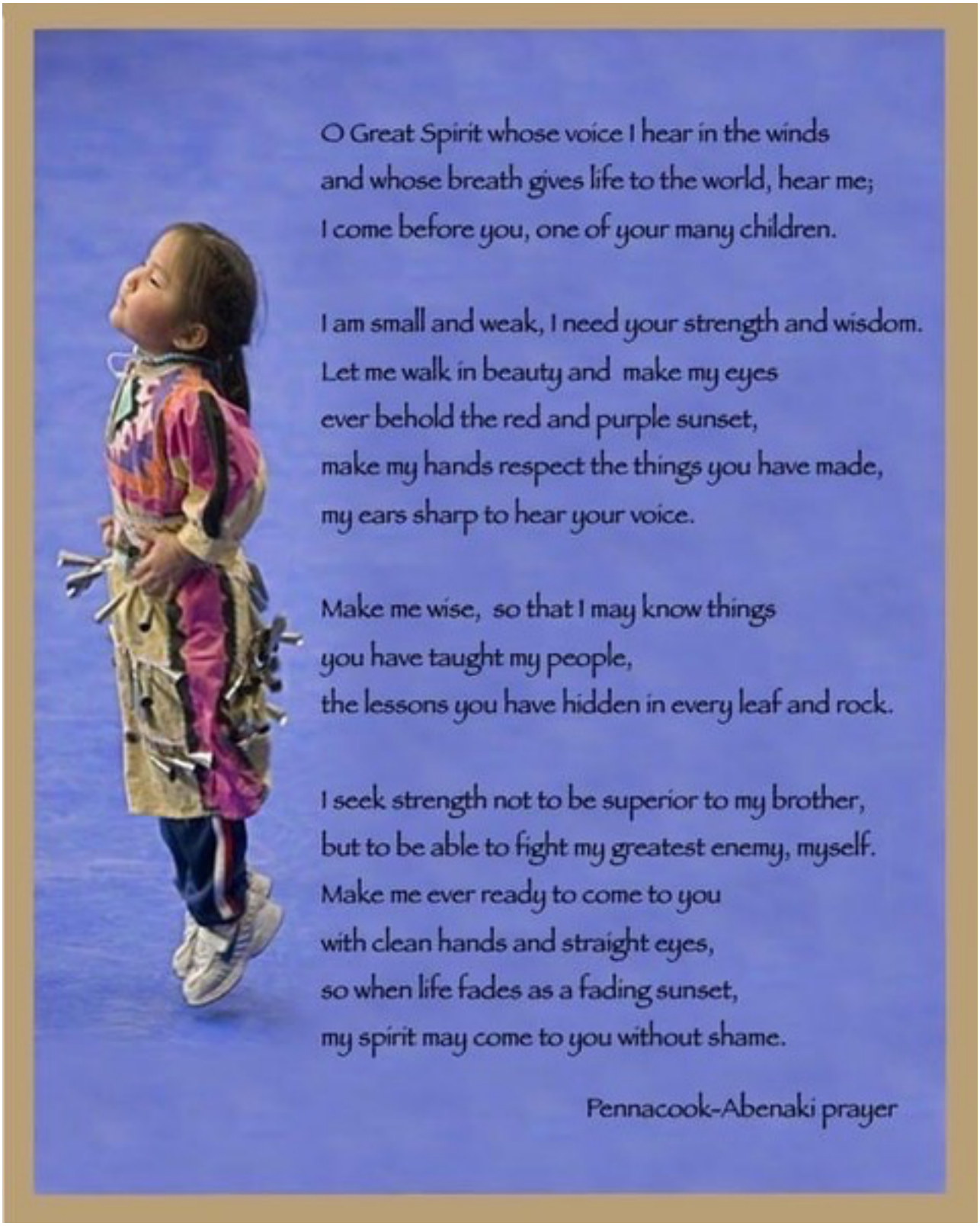
Love for Enemies

'But I say to you that listen, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you. If anyone strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also; and from anyone who takes away your coat do not withhold even your shirt. Give to everyone who begs from you; and if anyone takes away your goods, do not ask for them again. Do to others as you would have them do to you.

'If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. If you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. If you lend to those from whom you hope to receive, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, to receive as much again. But love your enemies, do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return. Your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High; for he is kind to the ungrateful and the wicked. Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.

Judging Others

'Do not judge, and you will not be judged; do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven; give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap; for the measure you give will be the measure you get back.'


O Great Spirit whose voice I hear in the winds
and whose breath gives life to the world, hear me;
I come before you, one of your many children.
I am small and weak, I need your strength and wisdom.
Let me walk in beauty and make my eyes
ever behold the red and purple sunset,
make my hands respect the things you have made,
my ears sharp to hear your voice.
Make me wise, so that I may know things
you have taught my people,
the lessons you have hidden in every leaf and rock.
I seek strength not to be superior to my brother,
but to be able to fight my greatest enemy, myself.
Make me ever ready to come to you
with clean hands and straight eyes,
so when life fades as a fading sunset,
my spirit may come to you without shame.
Pennacook-Abenaki prayer

Lord, Make Me a Channel of Disturbance: The "Reverse St. Francis Prayer"

parsoncarson 6 years ago

Lord, make me a channel of disturbance.
Where there is apathy, let me provoke;

Where there is compliance, let me bring questioning;

Where there is silence, may I be a voice.
Where there is too much comfort and too little action, grant disruption;
Where there are doors closed and hearts locked,
Grant the willingness to listen.
When laws dictate and pain is overlooked...
When tradition speaks louder than need...
Grant that I may seek rather to do justice than to talk about it;
Disturb us, O Lord.
To be with, as well as for, the alienated;
To love the unlovable as well as the lovely;
Lord, make me a channel of disturbance.
~ Author unknown

Inculturation

Since the beginning, the church has participated in a gospel transaction between the particularities of local cultures and the universal message of Christ. This is called inculturation. At its most basic level, inculturation is understood as the "Word becoming flesh" in and through the life of the local Christian community—the Word becomes living and real in a particular context, a particular people and a particular place. This has always been at the heart of the Christian movement.

Inculturation recognizes that in every culture there are life-giving elements that are a gift from God. The gospel celebrates these, affirming and strengthening their presence in Christian identity. It is perhaps easiest to see this in the pre-Christian traditions that have become a celebrated part of Christian practice: many Christmas traditions and the observance of Lent are examples. The living Word of God—present in creation, alive in the proclamation of the gospel—appears to seek inculturation at all times and all places, permeating every aspect of human life. We should always look for the ways that this is happening in our local context and community.

The other side of inculturation is the challenge that the gospel brings to local cultures. Though the gospel affirms aspects of culture, it confronts others with the radical truth of God. For example, local traditions of hospitality might be adopted into the life of a Christian community; local prejudice may be confronted. In all cases, the gospel's message and power operate to the glory of God and the benefit of the people.

Inculturation allows insight and participation into the grace and love of God within a unique context. Life is sanctified and celebrated. It is in this process that people, inside and outside of the churches, clearly witness the teaching and proclamation of Jesus. Though it is something people do, we believe inculturation is the grace-filled work of the Spirit. It is something that we should expect, something that we have all, at one time or another, witnessed in the life of the church.

But inculturation was stunted in the Western churches' outreach to Indigenous Peoples. Instead of inculturation, Indigenous culture was condemned in total, allowing only a foreign culture to carry the message of the gospel. The gospel was heard, but the attempt to limit the gospel's impact to those who aggressively adopted Western culture was, and remains, a severe stumbling block.

Today, we are the blessed witnesses of the restart of inculturation among Indigenous Peoples. It is an exciting time. It will offer new avenues of healing and new insights into the the way of Jesus. It may even cause a renewal of interest in inculturation in the larger church.

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Mark MacDonald

Archbishop Mark MacDonald is national Indigenous archbishop of the Anglican Church of Canada.

February 20th Presentation

Gary: Many thanks to Sharon for inviting Joy and I to be here this morning. First, a disclaimer:

I'm used to preaching sermons about ten to twelve minutes in length. With two of us, we want to warn you that it may be longer!

Secondly, we've written our presentation out in a script format and may read some of our conversation from it. After all, given our age, our memories, aren't what they used to be….

Joy: Gary's memory is sometimes like a camera…. Without a film or memory stick!

Gary: With thanks to Bishop MacDonald, our theme is this: In every culture there are life-giving elements that influence and shape us and are a gift from God. The gospel celebrates and challenges these, affirming and strengthening their presence in Christian identity.

Culture means the way groups of people do things. For example, the Canadian culture uses universal healthcare to care for people's health and well-being. The Anglican Church has diverse cultures depending on the country and ethnic group. Culture is the way of life shared by a group of people. According to MacDonald, the Christian gospel celebrates and challenges the way we do things.
Joy and I are going to talk, personally, about our backgrounds that have influenced and shaped us; and how the gospel affirms and strengthens our Christian identity.

Joy's and my first contact was by phone in October 1962. It took place after I saw her at a Student Christian Movement evening gathering. I saw this lovely, brown skinned woman with sparkling eyes and a wide grin engaging in conversation and wanted to get to know her. But I was too shy to introduce myself. Jill Strinna, our matchmaker, organized a small group of us to go out for cocktails one evening. This was to be our first date. Jill gave me her phone number.

I phoned the student residence on the UBC campus where she lived and asked the person answering the phone to bring Joy to the phone.

When she came to the phone she said:

Joy: "Hello"

Gary: " Hi Joy, my name is Gary Hamblin. I'm a student at The Anglican Theological College on campus and I saw you at the gathering at Professor Tom Barnett's place last Saturday. A group of mutual friends, Jill Strina, John and Heather Luccock and Bill Armstrong and myself are planning to go out on Saturday evening for cocktails at the Georgia Hotel. I'm wondering if you would like to join us?"

Joy: " I'm afraid I'm not old enough…"

Gary: " can you borrow the student card ID from someone who is 21's?

Joy: " No, I won't borrow an ID."

Gary: " are you willing to go and try, anyway?

Joy: " Ok but don't blame me if we're kicked out."

Gary: That was our first date. We did go out for cocktails with the group and we were kicked. I was the only one asked for ID and although I was 21, I'd forgotten to bring it with me! I learned, early on, that my future mate was a feisty person!

Joy: From there, we began seeing each other and after a year became engaged to be married.

Like everyone, my cultural background has influenced and shaped me.

I was born in Trinidad, West indies to parents whose ancestors were brought from India to Trinidad in 1870, as indentured labourers to work on the Sugar plantations.

- **My Grandparents and my parents were born into the Muslim faith. My extended family remained Muslin and throughout my childhood interactions with them, I absorbed some of the Muslim values.**
- **My Parents became Christian in order to take advantage of an education offered by the United Church missionaries. They thrived, through that education, became teachers and, eventually, principals of schools.**
- **The society in which I grew up in Trinidad is multicultural. Although biases do exist there, the overall values included inclusiveness and acceptance of the various cultures and religions.**
- **My schooling was under the English system and curriculum, run by white United Church Missionaries.**
- **I was raised in the Presbyterian/United Church and learned about the Christian Gospel through both school and church. At UBC I joined the Student Christian Movement**

Gary: Like Joy, my cultural background has influenced and shaped me.

- I was born and raised in Regina to a mother descended from Norwegian ancestors who emigrated to Canada in the early twentieth century and a father who descended from Irish ancestors who emigrated to Quebec in 1820 and an English Ancestor who emigrated to Manitoba in the nineteenth century.
- At that time, Regina was a mainly white society with a culture that was highly prejudiced and discriminated against indigenous peoples. As I was

growing up, I recall other children's discriminatory attitude toward Indigenous, Black and people of colour, but I don't recall that attitude being shared by my family.

- When I was fourteen, I had a crush on a girl who was a member of the Anglican Young People's Association and so I joined the group and was baptized the same year.

Joy: **Gary and King Henry the eighth have something in common. They both became Anglicans for the sake of a woman!**

Gary: This was my introduction to the Christian gospel. I experience the church's acceptance of me and others, without judgement. I had lost my parents when I was eleven years old, and this was life changing for me. To repeat Bishop MacDonald's words, "the life-giving elements that are a gift from God were affirmed and strengthened in me."

- In my teens, I met the late Reverend Canon Bern Barrett, Pauline's husband who travelled across Canada as the Anglican Church of Canada' Youth consultant. He reinforced the gospel's affirmation of me, and it strengthened me.

  In 1959 I attended a conference at the University of Ohio and heard, firsthand, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. who introduced to me the gospel's challenge of an American culture that discriminated against black and coloured people.

  With these and other influences, I became inspired to go on to study theology and be ordained a priest.

Joy: **We were each raised in different cultures, Gary, in Canadian white culture and me in a West Indian culture. Intercultural marriages in Canada in 1964 were not widespread. In particular, a brown or black skinned West Indian woman marrying a white person wasn't widespread. In fact, it was an anomaly.**

Archbishop David Sommerville, Canon David Sommerville at that time, was the Dean of Residence at the Anglican Theological College. He provided support for our relationship and married us.

Gary: We are sharing this personal story of our lives as an example of God present in creation and alive in our gospel and our lives. Two people from two different ethnicities and growing up in two different cultures were nurtured by the gospel.

Joy: **we deliberately worked on instilling a culture of acceptance and sharing in our children. We also worked on preparing them to resist discrimination and prejudice from others. One example with our oldest child demonstrates this. The bathroom in our house was on the second floor, overlooking the front steps to the house. I was in it one summer afternoon, with the window open. I heard two voices coming from the steps, one of them our daughter, five-year-old Tara. I didn't hear what her friend said, but it provoked a determined response from Tara that went like this, "I'm brown skinned because I have pigment and you don't!"**

In our married life, family and ministry we strived to be guided by Bishop Mark MacDonald's definition of Inculturation: "The living Word of God appears to seek inculturation at all times and all places, permeating every aspect of human life. We should always look for the ways that this is happening in our local context and community."

Joy: **All of the readings this morning reflect our understanding of the gospel and our approach to ministry.**

Joy: **In the Penacook-Abenaki Prayer: God gives life to our world by giving us wisdom and strength as well provides as freedom of choice. This prayer provides the aboriginal understanding that people and everything are interdependent.**

Gary: We think the *Reverse St. Francis Prayer: Lord make us channels of disturbance and not complacency* speaks directly to the gospel challenging our Anglican Church culture. In particular, the sentence:

"When laws dictate and pain is overlooked…When tradition speaks louder than need, Grant that I may seek rather to do justice than to talk about it." We interpret this to say for our church: "change our culture. Stop getting stuck on doing things the way we've always done them. The need demands us to seek and experiment with new ways. The Fresh Expressions liturgy St. Catherine's is using is a good example.

Luke 6: Our gospel reading this morning tells us to love and not judge. Canon Herbert O'Driscoll summarizes this gospel by saying, "The measure we give is the measure we get." We ask, why did Jesus leave us with such challenging goals, to love others, including our enemies?

Luke 10: The passage from Luke chapter 10:1-9, our first reading this morning convinces us that Jesus was one of the original community developers by

sending members of his flock out to engage with the community. We ask, why is this so difficult for Anglicans to do?

The gospel tells us to stop waiting for people to come through the church door, but, instead to go out and engage with them where they are, sharing the stories of our lives, as Joy and I have, this morning. Accept their hospitality, rather than thinking they must come inside our four walls to accept our hospitality.

Joy: **The First Nations Version of Luke chapter 10:1-9 concludes with this:**

"In any village that welcomes you, eat whatever they set before you. Offer healing prayers for any who are sick and say to them, 'Creator's good road has come close to you.'

Gary: 'Creator's good road has come close to you." That's the bible's code for 'kingdom of God' or living as God wants us to live.

Joy: **Gary and I thank you for inviting us to be with you today!**

-The Reverend Gary & Joy Hamblin