

LIVING THE LITURGY: EQUIP 2018

TERRITORY OF THE PEOPLE

MAY 25-27, 2018

LIVING THE LITURGY: THE WORK OF GOD'S PEOPLE IN THE WORLD

He has shown you, O mortal, what is good.

And what does the LORD require of you?

**To act justly and to love mercy
and to walk humbly with your God.**

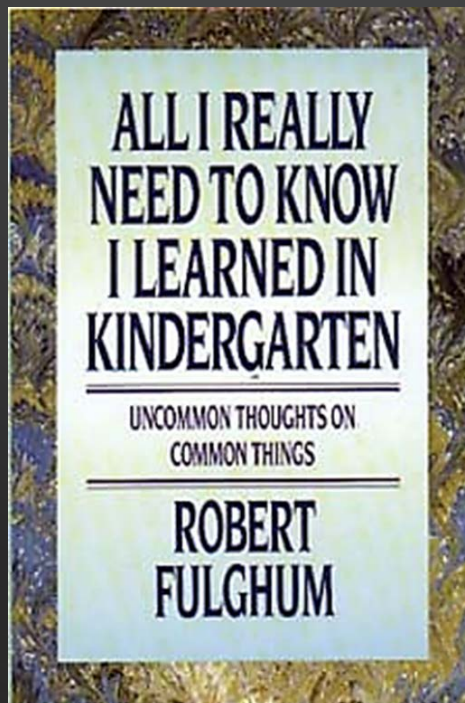
Micah 6:8 (NIV)

LIVING THE LITURGY: THE CHALLENGE

- Worship of any kind of flavor, from anywhere on the spectrum of what is often referred to as “contemporary” or “traditional”, or from any variety of types or cultural backgrounds can be seen as a self-contained whole with only limited connection to the rest of life.

(Stubbs, "The Ending of Worship/Ethics" in *A More Profound Alleluia* 135)

LIVING THE LITURGY: THE CALL



- Simply put – all I really need to know about the Christian life, I learned in the liturgy

LIVING THE LITURGY AND FORMATION

- In the liturgy, in our worship, we are not simply being presented with information, much less simply being entertained; rather, **we are being made into Christians** – our actions and lives are being linked to the life of the world, our hearts to the heart of God, our minds to the Truth. The liturgy is the embodiment of the patterns of the kingdom of God in summary fashion. (Stubbs, "The Ending of Worship/Ethics", in *A More Profound Alleluia* 137)

LIVING THE LITURGY: FULLNESS OF THE LITURGY

- “The prayer of Christian liturgy faces the world’s ambiguity and evil. But it is precisely in the world that God is to be glorified by doing the works of Christ. Worship ascribes glory to God alone; but unless the glorification is shown in works of justice, mercy, and love faithful to God’s commands, Christ’s liturgy is not fully enacted. (Donald Saliers, “Liturgy and Ethics: Some New Beginnings”, 25)

LIVING THE LITURGY: THE WORK OF GOD'S PEOPLE IN THE WORLD

- Worthily magnify your holy name: **What God Requires**
- Delight in your will: **Loving Mercy**
- He won for you a holy people: **Acting Justly**
- Go forth in peace: **Walking Humbly**

WHAT IS LITURGY?

- All of our worship is “liturgical” in a number of ways:
- Liturgy is the “work of the people”
 - *Leitourgia*
- Liturgy is the structure of a service
 - Every worshipping tradition has a preferred form for conducting a worship service
- Liturgy tells the story of God (content) in movements (structure) in a specific setting (style)

**LIVING LITURGY EXERCISE:
“ALL I NEED TO KNOW ABOUT CHRISTIAN
LIFE, I LEARNED IN THE LITURGY”**

- **Examine your own liturgy, listing all aspects of the liturgy**
- **Brainstorm how these aspects connect to ethics and what we can learn about Christian living through the liturgy**

LIVING LITURGY: LESSONS

- “there is a particular set of habits, a polity, embedded in the practices of worship” (Dyrness, *A Primer on Christian Worship*, 120)
- liturgy teaches hospitality
- liturgy teaches reconciliation and love
- liturgy allows us to lament
- liturgy joins us into a new community
- in the liturgy we honour God’s material creation

WORTHILY MAGNIFY YOUR HOLY NAME: WHAT GOD REQUIRES

- The Gathering enables us to:
 - Unite our spirits in God's presence
 - To prepare us to hear the Word of God
- The Spirit of the Gathering
 - Hospitality – we reflect the hospitality of God
 - Welcome – we also are part of the invitation
 - Celebration and Joy – not necessarily “happy-clappy”, but warm and sincere

WORTHILY MAGNIFY YOUR HOLY NAME: WHAT GOD REQUIRES

- **Assembling as Gathering**
 - subversion that challenges the outer world, our inner world and the spiritual world.
- **Assembling as Connecting**
 - Church local
 - Church universal
- **Assembling as Building**
 - building of character
 - building of community

LIVING THE LITURGY

Liturgy, the worship of our God, is the work of the people, our primary work all week, which culminates on Sunday when we gather.

We sign ourselves with the cross and welcome one another with peace and begin by telling the stories of the presence of Jesus the Christ with us, risen and glorious, and of the great acts the Spirit continues to do in those who believe.

We break open the word and break open our lives, break open our communities in reflection, song, and exhortation.

We ask for forgiveness and recommit ourselves to the word of hope, the good news, as the substance of our living alone and together.

Then we stand on our words of belief in the creed and offer our words, lives, bodies, and souls, hearts and dreams, communities, resources and even our lacks and sins as gifts to be transformed and given back to us by God.

Then we tell the story again, the story of what the Father has done for us in Jesus through the power of the Spirit, and we call down that Spirit on our gifts of bread and wine and our offering for the poor.

We break our bread and share our wine, and we break open our lives so that God can rush in with forgiveness, peace, hope, and life. . .



Then the doors are broken open, and we rush out to be word to others, to tell the story and let it come true in us, to be the bread, to be the wine, to be the body of Christ for a hungry, yearning word – to do justice and walk humbly with our God.

We “do this and remember.”

We remember God, who we are, what we promised in our baptism, and God’s covenant with us.

We remember and make Jesus present in the community that gathers, in the words that is proclaimed, in the offerings and gifts for the needy, in the bread and wine and eucharist, which is the gift returned to us.

The liturgy overflows with the presence of the risen Lord, and we seep out into the world like leaven in bread, like balm for all pain and sorrow, like abiding peace with justice, like glory’s radiant reflection. (McKenna, *Rites of Justice*, 234)

SHAPED BY THE LITURGY

- . . . So, if ethics is understood as speaking about a pattern of human life that fulfills the designs for humanity which God intended, then there is no better place to start this discussion than with the liturgy. For in the liturgy, kingdom patterns are described and embodied. It is in this way that liturgy is ethics for participation in the liturgy helps us to see and guides us into the true ends of human life. (Stubbs, "The Ending of Worship/Ethics", 143)