

Deep in the Word – Watch Your Rhythm!

June 11, 2017

An interactive devotional linked to Chandler First Church's June 11 Sunday morning sermon "Watch Your Rhythm!" based on Genesis 1:1-2:4a; 2 Corinthians 13:11-13; Psalm 8; Matthew 28:16-20.

If the moments of your day-to-day life were recorded as musical notes, what kind of music would they make? Would they sound like a breezy pop song or hard-driving rap music? Or would they sound like a beautiful symphony with structured pauses that give resonance to the notes?

Encounter the Word

Outline Genesis 1:1-2:4 according to the repeated pattern you observe.

- In this symmetry, what repeated words or phrases do you observe?
- What does this pattern tell you about the order of creation?
- Its author?
- Its purpose?
- Its climax?
- Its goodness?
- Its completeness?
- Why does God first form the world (on days 1-3) and then fill that world (on days 4-6)?

Now read John 1:1-3.

- How does this add to your understanding of Genesis 1:1-3 and 1:26?

Read Colossians 1:15-20.

- What is Christ's role in creation?

The firstborn has the rights of an heir.

- What rights does Jesus have here in verses 15-18?

Connect with God's Story

- For a believer's life and worship, what does it mean that God finishes his work in six days and rests on the seventh?
- Why do you think that the Bible tells **that** God created, but does not tell us exactly **how** God created?
- What does this tell us about the relative importance of the **who** and **how** of creation?

Read Romans 1:20-25 and Hebrews 11:1-3.

- What is scripture telling us is the proper response to God's revelations in creation?
- What are the consequences for refusing to praise the Creator?

Engage with the Kingdom

- What does it mean to you to be created in God's image?
- How does knowing this affect how you feel about yourself?
- How should this affect your relationship with God?
- With other people?
- How does this story of creation affect the way you treat the land, water, plants and animals in God's world?

This Sunday is the first Sunday after Pentecost, and begins the Church season of **Ordinary Time**. What "ordinary" means in the Church is a pattern. The pattern by which we **ORDER** our days. Order our lives. It is the largest season of the

Church year. Ordinary Time is called "ordinary" not because it is common but simply because the weeks of Ordinary Time are numbered. The Latin word *ordinalis*, which refers to numbers in a series, stems from the Latin word *ordo*, from which we get the English word *order*. Thus, the numbered weeks of Ordinary Time in fact represent the ordered life of the Church—the period in which we live our lives neither in feasting (as in the Christmas and Easter seasons) nor in more severe penance (as in Advent and Lent), but in watchfulness and expectation of the Second Coming of Christ.

The traditional color in the Church for **Ordinary Time** is green. Green is meant to symbolize hope, to be a symbol of life. We can do several things to use this seasonal color to remind us of God's rhythms of creation. We can imagine taking a green plant that we already have, or getting one, and placing it in a prominent place in our house to say that we are going to be hopeful in God's love for us. God's love, like the life flowing through this plant, is faithful. When we look at the plant, we can be conscious of an inner desire - perhaps expressed in a verbal prayer - that God give us hope and trust. And, when we water the plant, we are nourishing this life, as God nourishes us. A simple symbol, but it can be a very **Ordinary Time** gift for us.

During Ordinary Time, we can do something as simple as taking something we always do each day and doing it in a symbolic way. For example, we might be in the practice of putting our keys on a table when we come in the house, or putting our cell phone on the table as well. During **Ordinary Time**, we could get a simple bowl or plate and put our keys or phone on that bowl or plate and find a simple green cloth to put in the bowl or on the plate. It can be the symbol of our commitment to be faithful to the journey of these days, and to place our trust in our faithful God. A visual cue to remember. We can even offer a simple prayer, like, *"Lord, these keys represent (this phone is a symbol of) the commitments I have made and the places you have called me to be and where you have called me to serve. Let my placing them in the bowl all during this season give me a sense of taking up this mission you have given me, with hope in you."*

Think back to that first question about your life being a piece of music—knowing that you are created according to God's beautiful plan—how well are you living out the rhythm that God has created and modelled for us of work/do/plan/ and rest? What is it that you need to remove from your daily routine in order to create spaces between all the busyness in order to live a more beautiful rhythm?

Take a moment now and think of a way that you can re-order your life to beat more gracefully with God's rhythm. Blessings.