

Lord of All Hopefulness

Jan Struther (1933)

Old Orchard Church

February 5, 2012 – 10:15 to 11:50 a.m.

See print copy for music and words.

Art work is on print copy.

These all look to you, O Lord,
to give them their food at the proper time.
When you give it to them, they gather it up;
when you open your hand,
they are satisfied with good things.
When you hide your face,
they are terrified;
when you take away their breath,
they die and return to the dust.

—Psalm 104:27-29

Credits

Cover art: *The Disciples Plucking Ears of Corn*. Woodcut by Ludolphus of Saxony. Holland (1488).

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Christ Our Brother, Made Dependent Like Us: Celebrating God's Gift of Finiteness

Born as a baby, utterly dependent on others' care,
God the Son became one of us.
Dependent on food and drink for his strength,
On money for his food and clothes,
On sleep for his energy,
On his immune system for his health,
On shelter for the protection of his body,
On human companionship in times of trouble,
Christ truly became one of us.

Hungry, tired, lonely—
and, we may presume, sick at times—
Jesus endured all that we endure as physical, finite creatures.
But in becoming one of us, he sanctified our utter dependence.
So we celebrate our limitations,
We rejoice in our finiteness,
For this is what God made us to be as creatures.
We know ourselves only when we know our needs;
We find the true glory of our humanness
Only when we willingly submit to our limits,
And entrust our fragile life to our infinite God and Father.
Blessed be his high and holy Name!



Scripture Readings

Old Testament Lesson: I Kings 17:1-16
Pearl String on the humanness of Christ

Sermon

“Live With the End in Mind”
Luke 12:35-48

Jonathan Shumate, seminary intern, preaching

Jesus the Human Person

Memories from Sunday school actually detract from my efforts to picture Jesus' everyday life, for he was rendered in lifeless flannelboard scenes. There he is teaching. That's him holding a lamb. Now he's talking with a Samaritan woman and, look, another conversation with a man named Nicodemus. The closest thing to action came when the disciples in their miniature sailboats bobbed across the blue flannelboard sea. I remember one scene of Jesus standing in the temple with a whip in his hand, but it matched nothing else I had learned about him. I certainly never saw him at a party. I may have learned facts about Jesus' life in Sunday school, but as a person he remained remote and two-dimensional....

Like most of Jesus' contemporaries, no doubt I would have balked at the odd combination of extravagant claims coming from an ordinary-looking Jewish man. He claimed to be the Son of God, and yet he ate and drank like other men, and even got tired and lonely. What kind of creature was he?

In some ways Jesus seemed to feel “at home” here, and in other ways he felt unequivocally “not at home.”....

For me, one scene in the Gospels brings together the "at home" and "not at home" nature of Jesus. A storm blew up on the Sea of Galilee, nearly capsizing the boat in which Jesus lay sleeping. He stood up and yelled into the wind and spray, "Quiet! Be still!" The disciples shrank back in terror. What kind of person could shout to the weather as if correcting an unruly child?

The display of power in the midst of a storm helped convince the disciples that Jesus was unlike any other man. Yet it also hints at the depths of Incarnation. "God is vulnerable," said the philosopher Jacques Maritain. Jesus had, after all, fallen asleep from sheer fatigue. Moreover, the Son of God was, but for this one instance of miracle, one of its victims: the creator of rain clouds was rained on, the maker of stars got hot and sweaty under the Palestine sun. Jesus subjected himself to natural laws even when, at some level, they went against his desires (“**If it is possible, may this cup be taken from me**”). He would live, and die, by the rules of earth.

—Philip Yancey in *The Jesus I Never Knew*

We celebrate the Lord's Supper weekly—and in a circle, at the end of worship. A word of direction is given, and with this everyone stands and moves to the walls. The cup is passed in two forms: in a chalice and then in small individual cups. You are free to choose.

And as this is the Supper of the Lord Christ, please listen to the instructions we give as to what qualifies a visitor to participate. **But whether you intend to take communion or not, please join us in the circle.**