

Incarnation and Redemption – A Natural Connection

Rev. Patrick Stephens

Fifth Week of Lent

Wednesday, April 6

Scripture

Galatians 4:4-5

But when the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, in order to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as children

Reflection

In the Fourth Century, Gregory of Nazianus, Archbishop of Constantinople, was responding to a trend in Christian thinking that downplayed the importance of Christ's human identity. He argued that faithful Christians must accept the essential humanity of Christ, saying "What has not been assumed has not been healed." He argued that in order for humanity to be redeemed through Christ, we must also recognize the divine and human essence of God in Christ.

Appreciating the divinity of Christ is to also appreciate the humanity of God in Jesus. As we connect the dots theologically, we begin to see the Creator taking part fully in the life of creation, and offering a new path for redemption. This is really big news for us as inhabitants of our planet!

In Jesus, God's presence is fully realized in human form. As Jesus lives, breathes, walks, eats and engages with the physicality of creation, he takes part in the life of the earth. In this light, when we care for creation through environmental advocacy, conservation efforts, and stewardship initiatives, we are caring for God's creation. We are also joining Christ in the divine work of healing that which God has indeed become!

Prayer

*O God of unchangeable power and eternal light,
look favourably on your whole Church,
that wonderful and sacred mystery.
By the effectual working of your providence,
carry out in tranquillity the plan of salvation.
Let the whole world see and know
that things which were cast down are being raised up,
and things which had grown old are being made new,
and that all things are being brought to their perfection
by him through whom all things were made,
your Son Jesus Christ our Lord;*

*who lives and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever. Amen.
from the Good Friday Solemn Intercession, Book of Alternative Services*

How the national church is tackling climate change

Freely received, freely given: Helping subscribers and donors understand how Anglican fundraising organizations distribute donations.

Record-breaking temperatures. Melting polar icecaps. An entire continent literally on fire. And around the world, youth-led mass movements demanding action in response.

The global climate emergency has reached a new level of public awareness in recent years, spurred by phenomena such as the Fridays for Future movement—youth climate strikes—led by Greta Thunberg. Recently, scientists cited climate change as a factor in the unprecedented intensity of bushfires in Australia in 2019-20.

In the face of this crisis, Archbishop Linda Nicholls, primate of the Anglican Church of Canada, has called on the church to take action on climate change, calling stewardship of the earth and the care of creation “a core responsibility of our faith.” The primate compares concern of young people for the future of their planet with the fear of nuclear annihilation she experienced growing up during the Cold War.

“The question,” she asks, “is how do we proclaim that vision of creation as a gift of God that we are called to steward and that we should be at the very forefront of those that are fighting for it?”

The church’s response to the climate emergency has found expression in numerous venues, through the work of Public Witness for Social and Ecological Justice (PWSEJ) and through ecumenical initiatives. But supporting all the church’s efforts at the national level to confront climate change is Resources for Mission, which is tasked with raising funds for all General Synod ministries, including PWSEJ.

As a ministry of General Synod, the work of PWSEJ to coordinate the church’s response to climate change is based to a large extent on donations made through Resources for Mission.

“The ministries of the church are supported directly by the work that Resources for Mission does, and we couldn’t do some of those ministries without the support of the people who respond to Resources for Mission,” acting general secretary the Rev. Peter Wall says.

The immediate body tasked with formulating sustainable environmental policies across the Anglican Church of Canada is the Creation Matters working group, a subgroup of the PWSEJ coordinating committee.

At their most recent meeting on Jan. 31, Creation Matters members decided to break into small groups that would determine how the church can put into practice three resolutions from General Synod 2019 related to climate change.

“With the small groups, we’re able to do more, I think, and get into...the actions that we’re asked to take and do something with them,” co-chair Gerald Giles says.

These groups will focus on three resolutions. Resolution A201 encourages Anglicans to reduce their use of single-use plastics—a major contributor to carbon emissions through their production and refining—with a goal to ending their use by parishes and dioceses no later than 2023.

Another resolution is A202, which encourages dioceses to celebrate the annual Season of Creation from Sept. 1 to Oct. 4, and directs Creation Matters to network and share resources.

Finally, Resolution A203 encourages the Anglican Church of Canada and Primate’s World Relief and Development Fund to support the UN Global Goals for Sustainable Development and produce resources for Anglican parishes and dioceses to raise awareness of the goals.

Read the whole story at

<https://www.anglicanjournal.com/in-tune-with-creation-how-the-anglican-church-of-canada-is-taking-on-climate-change/>