

Connected
Alan Claassen
Ezekiel 37:1-14 Acts 1:10-14, 2:1-8
May 24, 2015 Pentecost

Libby Maynard, Humboldt County artist I met years ago said,

“I see the future as I look at a work of art; I can put my thoughts into motions, I can make plans...

And I am also ready for it to take on a life of it's own and become greater than I envisioned.

Ernie Dawson said, “I don't like organized religion.”
To which I replied, “Let's disorganize it.”

Organization

structure,
administration
reduction to order
classification

Organism

life
soul
birth
vitality
breath

Christian

a member of a body
dedicated to the New Testament
conforming with Christianity

Christ

anointed one

What Ernie wanted was something with life to it,
a living breathing organism,
not a conforming, classifying structure.

And yet when we get together as community we need both.

So I suggest a model that combines the organization and the organism

A model that lets us plan for the future and be open to it as well.

Orchestra

God is the Composer

Jesus is the Conductor

The Holy Spirit is the music

and what are we?

We are the orchestra.

We perform what God has created,
what Christ has taught,

and what the Holy Spirit has placed within us

We all have a part to play.

And do we need in order to play our part?

Know your instrument and Keep it tuned

Practice your scales

Read the score, whether that be scripture, poetry or the bylaws

Follow the direction of the conductor

Enjoy with the enthusiasm the music you make even when it sounds like, mud at first.
We are made from mud.

And the minister. What is the minister?

First violin.

Gives us all an "A" and sits down and plays her part.

The story of Pentecost.

The movement from Apostles seeing Jesus leave,
waiting and praying in Jerusalem
to witnessing in Jerusalem.

Those who were there were named, including some of the women,
including some of the family of Jesus

Willing to wait and pray with one heart and mind
until filled and moved by the Holy Spirit.

And when the Holy Spirit came they were able to play their part,
speaking in a language that was universally understood.

And everyone listening, heard a message spoken directly to them,
even though it seemed to come from someone foreign to them,
a stranger, from a different tribe.

Barriers came down,

Separation was bridged.

People understood each other because they could speak and listen to each other.

People understood each other because they took the time to hear each others story

Jim Rende story of going up to a biker in his Baptist church and saying,
“You scare me. Tell me your story.”

When we hear one another’s stories we build pathways of understanding
where an empowering and compassionate community can grow.

Where has First Congregational Church in Sonoma, UCC, told its story?
Seeds of Learning
Shir Shalom
Forum
Church Ladies

Sonoma needs to hear to this church sing.

Let’s play our part, while listening to others playing their part as well.
Playing and listening, listening and playing
Chutzpah and humility builds the band.

Let's be witnesses.

Let's connect the bones with ligaments and muscles so we can move with the spirit
move with enthusiasm.

Let's connect with the creator-creating, our neighbor and ourselves.

Let us sing the song that the universe sings
Love is stronger than hate,
 light is stronger than darkness,
 hope is stronger than despair,
 and the future is going to be greater than we can imagine.

May we

“Lessen the doldrums
of our fellow bipeds
Coax their spirits
to busk and bounce
Squeeze their charkas
Ungum their works
Use any trick we know
to redeem humanity
from impotent glum
Inject with joy
inseminate with light
the wombs of humans being kind”
(by James Broughton)

May the spirit of the living god fall afresh on us.
Melt us, mold us, fill us and use us.