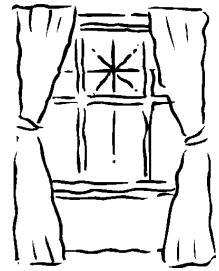


Looking Out My Window, December 10, 2021



The language of *The Book of Common Prayer* exhibits theological depth, literary grace, and spiritual profundity. One phrase at the beginning of Eucharistic Prayer A has captured my attention and haunted my awareness for the last few years. “Holy and gracious Father: in your infinite mercy you made us for yourself.” (*BCP*, 362). That phrase calls to mind the sublime mythic story of the Garden in Genesis 2, especially that scene where God, in human form, walks with Adam and Eve in the evening coolness.

Scripture consistently reveals God as one seeking us, one grieving our absence, and ultimately releasing the divine Son into human existence in Jesus, thus entering the pale of human suffering and struggle and gathering it into the divine Being. Hebrews 4 says that Jesus continues to be touched by the feeling of our weakness as a result. In Jesus our humanity has been integrated into the triune Being.

“You made us for yourself.” Can I believe that God desires to relate to me, to experience my being, to have me present to the divine? Could we even take the risk of saying that God “needs” us? Lutheran bishop and New Testament scholar Krister Stendahl once said, “God created the world—cosmos out of chaos. We do not know why God did so. We may humbly guess. God was lonely. Or, in other words, there is something in the very heart of God that longs for communion, for company.” \* Space precludes discussing how God can be independent of us and the creation and yet still need us.

“You made us for yourself.” I am finding motivation for more quiet time, more time in prayer in response to what I experience as the divine desire to commune with me/with us. How can I not block out daily time for prayer? I am framing prayer now more in terms of being present to God. Jesus’ friends had a chance to be present to him in the Garden but slept through the moment, evoking his lament, “Could you not watch with me one hour?”

Do we not want our answer to be, “Yes, we can order our lives to be more fully present to you.” If you made us for yourself, how can we not seek to be present to you, to spend time communing?

God’s peace,

*David*

David W Perkins+  
Interim Rector

\*Krister Stendahl, “Christ’s Lordship and Religious Pluralism,” in *Meanings: The Bible as Document and as Guide*, (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984), p. 234.