

FALL WORSHIP SERIES

WEEK 4: LUKE 6:20-31 FAITH IS... BEING BLESSED

SERIES VISUAL ARTS

What does Pop Art have to do With the Gospel?

As we were planning for this series, "Faith is..." we noticed how frequently Jesus challenged the traditions and conventions of his culture:

- who returns to say thanks? A Samaritan!
- who makes a stubborn judge give in? A widow who won't take no for an answer!
- who is forgiven, blessed, honored and changed by Jesus? Nobody you would expect.

Obviously Jesus was working with a different set of values. The throw-aways of his day were those he chose to dine with, to heal, to bless. He turned his world upside down.

The artists of the pop art movement presented a similar challenge to the institutions of fine art by featuring styles and imagery from common advertising, comic books, and mundane cultural objects in their work. They challenged conventional ideas of beauty and opened the doors of the exclusively elite art world to pop culture and the masses using humor and irony and familiar ("common") images. This brash approach to art was at great odds with the prevailing sensibility that, by its nature, art dealt with "profound" expressions or ideas.

Furthermore, pop artists' idealization of mass-production, which theoretically would allow everyone access to their art, undermined the business model of the gallery and museum as curators of taste and brokers of quality.

THIS WEEK'S ARTIST: CORITA KENT

Born in Iowa in 1918, and raised in Hollywood, CA, Kent was an artist, educator, and advocate for social justice. At age 18 she became a nun, and lived a life of service through teaching in and then heading up the art department at Immaculate Heart College. Her work evolved from figurative and religious to iconic pop art, incorporating advertising images and slogans, popular song lyrics, biblical verses, and literature. Throughout the '60s, her work became increasingly political, urging viewers to consider poverty, racism, and injustice. In 1968 she left the order and moved to Boston where she remained active in art and social causes until her death from cancer in 1986. She may be most well known for the LOVE stamp she created in 1980, featuring broad brush strokes of color. Kent signed but refused to number her serigraphs (screen printed designs) so no hierarchy of value could ever be given to them.

The art piece featured today, inspired by Kent's colorful typography (the style, arrangement, and appearance of the letters, numbers, and symbols) and use of bright primary colors, includes the text of Luke 6: 20-31. As Jesus's lessons on blessings and woes up-ended the common notions of God's favor and displeasure with people, mirror images of the words 'blessing' and 'woe' are repeated across the poster, interlaced with the completed phrases.

NEXT SUNDAY: "FAITH IS... BEING CHANGED"

"Zacchaeus was a wee little man and a wee little man was he!"

Don't let the song fool you. This is not a cute story for children. It is a story that asserts that even the worst sinners (people like Zacchaeus; people who have colluded with foreign oppressors; people who have cheated the vulnerable for their own gain) can be changed. Even more, that Jesus sees something worth redeeming in them.

This is good news if you are the one who is being embraced, but the crowd grumbles. It does not seem fair to them. They doubt that he can really be changed.

Do you find yourself doubting?

Faith is...



The poor are rich! The hun - gry filled! God's



bles - sings all a - bound! But woe to all in



com - fort now: God's king - dom's up - side down!

Refrain



Faith is our hope; Faith is our strength; Faith per -



sists when shak - en. When we fall, faith



lifts us up; Faith in Christ's sal - va - tion.

TEXT: Amy Parker
MUSIC: Sheldon W. Sorge, 2000
Music © 2000 Sheldon W. Sorge

MY SOUL THIRSTS
CM with refrain

Fall Worship Series "Faith is..."

ART POSTERS AVAILABLE

The original art posters created for our "Faith is..." Fall Worship Series are available for purchase. In fact, because of a mix-up at the printer, we have two sets of the posters — one set is on mat paper (those hung in the sanctuary) and the other on glossy. Some have already been claimed, but there is at least one of each design available. The cost is \$40/each and proceeds will go into our worship arts program budget to fund future arts events. Contact Amy Parker to claim your poster!