

The next two items are the results of some new approaches to worship used by Iglesia del Buen Pastor in addressing needs perceived in the congregation.

Old Testament Time Line

1. The need was twofold:
 - a. Since the Old Testament is used in church in isolated sections and usually not in order, the congregation learns the stories of Adam and Daniel and Moses and Abraham, but not in any particular order so each story has its own meaning that is not part of any perceived sequence or overall purpose.
 - b. The Old Testament is usually seen in contrast with the New Testament so there is little sense of God working for the same goals in both the Old and New Testaments.
2. Nylon line was hung along one wall of the sanctuary marked every 200 years with large markers.
 - a. Prehistory: 2000 1800 1600 1400 1200 1000 800 600 400 200 1BC
 - b. Each Sunday the major event or events since the prior Sunday were hung under the dates.
 - c. Loose-leaf booklets were distributed at the beginning of the series and a page was handed out each Sunday with an out line of the events for that period.
3. The focus of the sermons was not chronology per se but an emphasis on what God was trying to do through Biblical history. The emphases were:
 - a. Calling a people to know and follow God.
 - b. Molding this people to live out God's purposes.
 - c. Forming this people into witnesses to the world.

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Annual Covenant Renewal

1. The need was that church membership is seen as beginning with baptism and continuing until death, sin, or the moving van do us apart.
2. An acrostic was used based on the theme PACTO (Covenant) for the focus of each sermon. This was placed in large letters at the front of the church with the word for the day added each Sunday.
 - a. Pueblo (people).
 - b. Accion (action).
 - c. Compromiso (commitment).
 - d. Testimonio (testimony).
 - e. Obediencia (obedience).
3. A copy of the Covenant was distributed on the first Sunday for each to read and study.
4. On the last Sunday of the series we had a public signing of the Pact.
5. This reaffirmation will be an annual event.
 - a. It is a time for those who no longer participate to be removed.
 - b. It is the stimulus for present members to reaffirm their identity and mission.
 - c. It is the opportunity for new persons to be added to the congregation.

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Readers' Theatre of Ecclesiastes 3:1-14

Reader 1: There is a time for everything.
Reader 2: And a season for every activity under heaven.
Reader 3: A time to be born—
Reader 1: And a time to die.
Reader 2: A time to plant—
Reader 1: And a time to uproot.
Reader 3: A time to kill—
Reader 2: And a time to heal.
Reader 1: A time to tear down and a time to build.
Reader 2: A time to weep and a time to laugh.
Reader 3: A time to mourn and a time to dance.
Reader 2: A time to scatter stones—
Reader 1: And a time to gather them.
Reader 3: A time to embrace and a time to refrain.
Reader 1: A time to search—
Reader 2: And a time to give up.
Reader 3: A time to keep and a time to throw away.
Reader 2: A time to tear and a time to mend.
Reader 3: A time to be silent...

PAUSE

Reader 1: And a time to speak.
Reader 3: A time to love and a time to hate.
Reader 2: A time for war and a time for peace.
Reader 3: What do the workers gain from their toil?
I have seen the burden God has laid on people.
God has made everything beautiful in its time.
God has also set eternity in the hearts of people.

Reader 1: Yet they cannot fathom what God has done from beginning to end.
Reader 2: I know that there is nothing better for people than to be happy
and do good while they live.

Reader 1: That everyone may eat and drink and find satisfaction in all their toil—
All: This is a gift of God!
Reader 3: I know that everything God does will endure forever.
Nothing can be added to it and nothing taken from it.
This is done so we will revere God.

Arranged by Nancy Nussbaum, copyright 2000

Who Begat Whom

I was always rather bored
with who begat whom
when I read the first
chapter of Matthew.
I'd bound down
the page the way
I hurdle myself down
a long staircase,
three steps at a time
and then I've arrived.

But on the morning
you called and your
groggy voice
pronounced me
a grandmother,
I suddenly leaped
out of nowhere
to assume
a significant branch
in the long list of begats
hanging from
my family tree.

As lower branches
began to sprout
through me will come
other generations
rising up to
call me blessed,
as time surges
through pulsing
historical veins
and on to the next,
and the next...

On the day
when I first held
the precious warmth
of one so recently begotten,
I sang no sweet lullabies,
nor did I recite
age-old nursery rhymes.
Instead, I reached
for the tattered treasure
passed down from
great-grandmother Salina,
and opening the fragile book
while thumbing torn pages,
I arrived at Matthew
Chapter One,
and quietly chanted:

“Abraham begat Isaac,
Issac begat Jacob
Jacob begat Juday....”

Shirley Bustos
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That Woman

“That woman!”
Moral depravity.
Stones in clenched fists,
Shoving her along
I nudge her to face The Teacher.
He ignores my accusation
and with His fingers
writes in the sand –
-- **MY SIN!**
“He without sin throw the first stone.”
Ashamedly, I drop my stone.
As I slither away
I heard Him say,
*“Woman, where is your accuser?
...Your sins are forgiven.”*
And then I knew
I am *“that woman”* too.
Is His grace sufficient for me?

David Livingstone Haarer, copyright 2000

Psalm Journal

1

I lift my voice to God,
to the creator of all I cry.
When my body aches,
you know where healing lies;
the virus seems to know every cell of my body.
O God my throat hurts!
No amount of medicine seems to help;
my joints ache and I am hot, no, cold!
So I cry to you, O Lord of creation,
"You are my healer."
Heal me, O Lord, from this wicked disease.
Save me from further suffering.
Lift me up, so that I may give you thanks,
and tell everyone of the grace you afforded me.
Then I will be well,
and praise your name forever.

2

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?
Why are you so far from my pain?
When I call to you, I do not hear your answer.
Day and night, I look for you.
Yet I know that you are near;
in the midst of my loss you are here.
My father put his trust in you.
He trusted you when he found the cancer.
And you called him home.
But as for me, I am still in pain.
The pain of losing him is too great!
Yet I also know that you hear me;
in the midst of my crying, you hear me.
You created my father
and were with him throughout life.
Now you are with him in heaven also.
Be not far from me, O God,
for I still have pain.
Save me, Lord from the despair of loss.
From mental trauma, deliver me.
I will declare your healing power
to all my siblings;
in the midst of my family will I praise you.
Praise the Lord, you that have experienced loss!
Stand in awe of God, O offspring of mine!
The bereaved will find rest
and the orphaned will find solace,
in the bosom of the Lord.
And all the ends of the Earth shall praise God,
and my father's soul shall live with you forever,
as shall I.

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Psalm composition

1

How joyous they are who have not listened
to the words of the heathen,
or tarried long with those who are deceitful,
or lived with the sarcastic and reproachful!
Their joy is in the instruction of the Lord,
and they take God's law to heart all the day long.
They are like well cared-for babies,
growing up to be prosperous, which do not die;
everything they do shall be for the benefit of God.
It is not so for those who are deceitful,
and who do not listen to the instruction of the Lord.
They are like dry wood when thrown into a fire.
Because of this, the deceitful shall not abide
the coming of the Just God.
For the Lord knows what all do,
both the upright and the deceitful,
And the way of the heathen is doomed.

2

How fortunate are those that take refuge in God,
for good trees are well grounded.
How fortunate are those who have regard for the weak,
for good trees are recognized by their fruit.
How fortunate are those who dwell in your house,
and whose strength is in you,
for good trees are well grounded.
How fortunate are those who maintain justice,
for good trees are recognized by their fruit.
How fortunate are those that come
in the name of the Lord,
for good trees are well grounded.
How fortunate are those who seek to do God's will,
for good trees are recognized by their fruit.
Thank you O God, for allowing me to ground myself
in you, so that I might bear good fruit.

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