Intergenerational Worship

Bible Reading – Luke 1:46b-55

Year A – Advent 3 Dec 11 2016 Luke 1:46b-55

What is this: Intergenerational Bible Reading and art observation

Where it’s used: In any intergenerational gathering, but specifically Lectionary based gatherings.

Time: 5 minutes

Bible Focus/theme: Luke 1:46b-55

What’s needed:

• ‘Magnificat’ Artwork by Chris Booth, displayed as a large poster or on screen.
• Hard hats (toy ones are ok too)
• Text of Luke 1:46b-55 with ‘Bulldozer icons’
**Introduction**

Our reading from the Gospel of Luke today is a passionate protest poem prayer song. And it’s sung by Mary. You might remember Mary from the Christmas story – she’s the mother of Jesus, just a young teenage girl and yet, when she finds out she’s pregnant and she goes to meet her older relative, who is also pregnant she breaks into this radical song about justice for those who are low, and, even though she admits she’s no better than a slave girl to God, and comes from a country that are no better than slaves, she talks of bringing down the proud and powerful. We are going to read that passionate protest poem prayer song in our Bible reading form The Gospel of Luke today.

Melbourne artist, Chris Booth has created a picture of pregnant Mary meeting pregnant Elizabeth.

**What unusual kind of hat are the women wearing?** (Yellow Hard hat)

The artist knows that women in the middle east, 2000 years ago, when this story happened, didn’t wear hardhats! He is using that as a symbol to show us something else about the women Mary and Elizabeth.

**There is something else in the picture that goes with the hard hat, but doesn’t really belong in the middle east in the first century – what is it?** (Bulldozers)

The artist wants us to pay attention to the idea that the women, Mary and Elizabeth are part of the work that God is doing, getting rid of injustice and evil, and building the kingdom of God.

Look at the babies growing in the tummies of the women.

**What will the names of these children be?** (Jesus and John)

**What story can you tell from looking at them?**

**Why is the Baby John – surrounded by fire?** (John has met Jesus, even before he is born; and so he is full of the Holy Spirit. Later, John says ‘I baptise you with water, but he (Jesus) will baptise you with fire and the Holy Spirit. This has already happened to John as a not even born yet baby.)

**Why has the artist drawn such big mouths on Mary and Elizabeth?**

**What else do you notice about the way he’s drawn the mouths?** (They have wide open throats, suggesting that they are singing or speaking out loudly.)

Sometimes in the Bible, God chooses men to speak out his message. But this is a story in which the men are silent, and the women do the God-talking.

**Can you see the character of Elizabeth’s husband Zechariah in the picture?**

**Does anyone know why he isn’t saying anything?** (He has been made speechless by God until his son is born, as he didn’t believe God’s message.)
There are two things the artist has included in this picture from another picture. (display picture of Genesis 3)

This picture shows a story way back close to the beginning of the Bible, a story in which humans are tricked and deceived and choose ways that aren’t God’s ways – they eat a fruit that means they know what evil is. Not just knowing God, and God’s goodness, now they know evil too. That makes things complicated. Bad complicated.

What are the two things he has included - you have to have really good eyes to see one of them? (Tree and Snake)

What do you think the artist is meaning by including the tree and the snake that brought knowing evil to humans in the background of this picture of Mary and Elizabeth, pregnant and singing out their songs of God’s work?

In our Bible reading, the song that Mary sings includes lots of things being turned upside down, people of things not being the way we are used to, but being upset and switched around by God. Things that are wrong, unjust, and unfair. Things that we have just gotten used to being the way things are, that should not be.

So as we read the Bible together, we are going to join Mary and Elizabeth in celebrating and joining in God’s work of the kingdom. Maybe you want to put on a yellow hard hat to identify with them!
  - Have some helpers offer these around.
As we read together I’m hoping that some of us can help us keep the vibe of God’s demolishing evil, knocking down proud power mongers and building peace and justice with some great bulldozer noises.
Anyone think that’s a role they could do?
  - Allow some demonstrations of Bulldozer noises.

The time for those sounds are marked in our text with pictures of the bulldozer from Chris Booth’s art.

Let’s read this passionate protest poem prayer song together and with Mary celebrate, welcome and join in God’s work in building his Kingdom.
Luke 1:46-55

"My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his slave-girl. Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed; for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name.

His mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation. He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts. He has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly; he has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty.
He has helped his slave Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, according to the promise he made to our ancestors, to Abraham and to his descendants forever."