19th Annual IBSC Conference
Unearthing Creativity
Scotch College, Melbourne, 2012

Drew Berry, WEHI, Melbourne: Animations of unseeable biology from TED.com

Chapel Service
Littlejohn Memorial Chapel
Unearthing Creativity

Call to Worship

Hymn
The Old Hundredth
All people that on earth do dwell
Sing to the Lord with cheerful voice
Him serve with mirth, his praise forth
tell
come ye before him and rejoice.

Know that the Lord is God indeed
without our aid he did us make
We are his flock, he doth us feed
and for his sheep he doth us take.

O enter then his gates with praise
Approach with joy his courts unto;
Praise, laud and bless his name alway
for it is seemly so to do.

For why, the Lord our God is good
his mercy is for ever sure
his truth at all times firmly stood
and shall from age to age endure.

Prayer of Adoration
- Psalm 8 (MSG)

Responsive Reading
- ALL

North side South side

ALL: God, brilliant Lord, yours is a household name.

N: Nursing infants gurgle choruses about you;
toddlers shout the songs
That drown out enemy talk,
and silence atheist babble.

S: I look up at your macro-skies, dark and enormous,
your handmade sky-jewelry,
Moon and stars mounted in their settings.
Then I look at my micro-self and wonder,
Why do you bother with us?
Why take a second look our way?
N: Yet we’ve so narrowly missed being gods, bright with Eden’s dawn light.

S: You put us in charge of your handcrafted world,
   repeated to us your Genesis-charge,
   Made us lords of sheep and cattle,
   even animals out in the wild,
   Birds flying and fish swimming,
   whales singing in the ocean deeps.

ALL: God, brilliant Lord, your name echoes around the world.

The Lord’s Prayer

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name.
Your Kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours. Now and for ever.
Amen.

Scripture Lessons

from
Hosea 11 and Matthew 13

How can I give you up, Israel?
How can I abandon you?
Could I ever destroy you as I did Admah,
or treat you as I did Zeboiim?
My heart will not let me do it!
My love for you is too strong.

I will not punish you in my anger;
I will not destroy Israel again.
For I am God and not a mere human being.
I, the Holy One, am with you.
I will not come to you in anger.

Hosea 11:8-9, GNB
"God’s kingdom is like a treasure hidden in a field for years and then accidentally found by a trespasser. The finder is ecstatic - what a find! - and he proceeds to sell everything he owns to raise money and buy that field.

"Or, God’s kingdom is like a jewel merchant on the hunt for excellent pearls. Finding one that is flawless, he immediately sells everything and buys it.

"Or, God’s kingdom is like a fishnet cast into the sea, catching all kinds of fish. When it is full, it is hauled onto the beach. The good fish are picked out and put in a tub; those unfit to eat are thrown away. That’s how it will be when the curtain comes down on history. The angels will come and cull the bad fish and throw them in the garbage. There will be a lot of desperate complaining, but it won’t do any good.”

Jesus asked, “Are you starting to get a handle on all this?”
They answered, “Yes.”
He said, “Then you see how every student well-trained in God’s kingdom is like the owner of a general store who can put his hands on anything you need, old or new, exactly when you need it.”

Matthew 13:44-52 MSG
O Son of Man, our hero strong and tender
Whose servants are the brave in all the earth,
Our living sacrifice to thee we render,
Who sharest all our sorrows, all our mirth.

O feet so strong to climb the path of duty,
O lips divine, that taught the word of truth,
Kind eyes that marked the lilies in their beauty and heart that kindled at the zeal of youth.

Lover of children, boyhood's inspiration,
of all mankind the servant and the king;
O lord of joy and hope and consolation,
To thee our fears and joys and hopes we bring.

Not in our failures only, and our sadness
we seek thy presence, comforter and friend.
O rich man's guest be with us in our gladness,
O poor man's mate, our lowliest tasks.

God's Kingdom:
crucible of creativity
“Treasures New and Old”

"Then you see how every student well-trained in God's kingdom is like the owner of a general store who can put his hands on anything you need, old or new, exactly when you need it."

The Law of Moses

- The Burning Bush or God's Problem with Pharaoh
- God's question to Moses
- identity, income, influence
- Pharaoh dealt in 'commodities' not 'fidelities'
- justice and freedom were missing
George Orwell’s 1984

The Prophetic Imagination
- Challenging Israel’s Kings
- Fidelity to Moses - justice and freedom
- King’s lacked fidelity, valued commodity
- And they stifled dialogue and created monologue
- Prophets creatively using poetry, song, drama to create dialogue
- Summoning an ‘alternative community’

Jesus
- His message was an alternative community, a ‘kingdom of God’
- His entire ministry pointed this way
- ‘I will not come to you in anger’ where did God’s anger go?
- Love must be sacrificial - Jesus laid all claims aside. (Phil 2) He took our grief for his own.

Jesus’ community
- His alternative community - his ‘kingdom of God’ is animated by ‘Holy Spirit’.
- This is the creative, redeeming and restoring Spirit of God.
- Jesus himself offers all the resources we need, old or new, through his Spirit.
Notice how empire and Gnosticism go together. Gnosticism arises under empire, because when you are powerless to change anything about your world you are tempted to turn inwards and suppose that a spiritual, inner reality is all that matters. Carl Jung put it nicely if chillingly: who looks outside, dreams; who looks inside, awakens. Welcome to the world of navel-gazing. That’s why second-century gnosticism arose when it did, following the collapse of the final Jewish revolt in 135 AD. And the empires of the world are delighted when people embrace gnosticism. Again in the second century the people who were reading the Gospel of Thomas and other books of the same sort were not burnt at the stake or thrown to the lions. That was reserved for the people who were reading Matthew, Mark, Luke, John and the rest. There is a massive lie out there at the moment, which is that the canon of scripture colludes with imperial power while the gnostic literature subverts it. That is the exact opposite of the truth. Caesar couldn’t care less if someone wants to pursue a private spirituality. But if they go around saying that all authority in heaven and on earth is given to the crucified and risen Jesus, Caesar shivers in his shoes. And going around saying that is at the heart of Christian mission, which is sustained and energised by scripture itself, the book that will keep not only individual Christians but whole churches steadfast and cheerful in that mission when everything seems bent on blowing them off course.

NT Wright, St Andrew’s University, Scotland
Bono meets with US Senator Jesse Helms

$500M to combat AIDS in Africa

consider the impact of one meeting
We have created a paradoxical world in which the pursuit of happiness leads to resentment, unhappiness and a proliferation of mental illness. We pursue and celebrate freedom, yet once achieved seek to create rules that strangle that freedom.

We monitor and control everything. We have more information available to us yet create systems in our work that prevent us the time to truly use that information. We jump on the treadmill every day that values reason, rationale and productivity over emotion, creativity and thought.

Things have become more valued than ideas. System has become more valued than humans. We need balance to return.

Albert Einstein observed “The intuitive mind is a sacred gift and the rational mind is a faithful servant.” We have created a society that honours the servant but has forgotten the gift.

Iain McGilchrist

While the mission of the institutional church is to preach the Word and produce disciples, the church must disciple Christians in such a way that they live justly and integrate their faith with their work. So the church doesn’t directly change culture, but it discipless and supports people who do.

Tim Keller
Redeemer Presbyterian Church
New York

Jesus
exalts fidelity over commodity.
- His Spirit is the source of creativity
- Everything we need new or old

Hymn
Be Thou My Vision
Be thou my vision, o Lord of my heart. 
Naught be all else to me save that thou art. 
Thou my best thought by day or by night. 
Waking or sleeping, thy presence my light.

Be thou my wisdom and thou my true word 
I ever with thee and thou with me Lord. 
Thou my great father and I thy true son, 
Thou in me dwelling and I with thee one.

Be thou my battle-shield, sword for the fight 
Be thou my dignity thou my delight. 
Thou my soul’s shelter, thou my high tower, 
Raise thou me heavenward, O power of my power.

Riches I heed not, nor man’s empty praise. 
Thou mine inheritance, now and always. 
Thou and thou only, first in my heart. 
High king of heaven, my treasure thou art.

High king of heaven after victory won, 
may I reach heaven’s joys, O bright heaven’s sun! 
Heart of my own heart, whatever befall, 
still be my vision O ruler of all.

(Please remain standing for the benediction)
29 ways to stay creative

- make lists
- carry a notebook everywhere
- try free writing
get away from the computer
quit beating yourself up
take breaks
sing in the shower
- drink coffee
- listen to new music
- be open
- surround yourself with creative people
get feedback

collaborate

don’t give up

practice
allow yourself to make mistakes

go somewhere new

count your blessings

get lots of rest
take risks  break the rules

don’t force it  read a page of the dictionary
create a framework

stop trying to be someone else’s perfect

got an idea write it down

clean your workspace
have fun

finish something

now over to you!

God bless you in this week of conference