

On the thermals of grace: Bird prayers

NZARETSC Dunedin 2018, Tuesday, 10:30 -11:30 am

Dr Steve Taylor, @emergentkiwi_principal@knoxcentre.ac.nz

Whakarongo! Whakarongo! Whakarongo!

ki te tangi a te manu e karanga nei

Tui, tui, tuituia! - chant by Eruera Stirling, in *Tears of Rangi* by Anne Salmond

Listen, Listen, Listen

To the cry of the bird calling

Bind, join, be one!

If albatross is your conference theme, I could offer a workshop which reflected on the theology of the Spirit by looking at bird images in the Bible and then ponder NZ birds and conclude by inviting folk to write contemporary-Kiwi-Spirit-as-bird-prayers ...

Exercise - write a bird prayer from a NZ bank note

\$5 - Hoiho (yellow eyed penguin)

\$10 - Whio (Blue duck)

\$20 - Kārearea (NZ Falcon)

\$50 - Kōkako (Blue wattled crow)

\$100 - Mohua (Yellowhead)

1. Some “bird theology” - Who is God? Who are humans? How then shall we live?

1a) Spirit like a bird brooding over eggs in creation and in baptism

“She was hovering over the waters which have been made ready, asking of us only willingness and taking care of everything else for free ... who in the creation of the world, as it is written in the present reading “was hovering over the waters,” like a bird, as Jerome says, animating her eggs by her heat. Now the same one bears herself over the waters of baptism, so that, brooding all together, she might re-bear those coming under her favor into true life, spreading her wings and lifting them up, and even carrying them on her back.” (Rupert of Deutz, 178-9, in Eugene Rogers, *The Holy Spirit*, Wiley-Blackwell, 2009)

1b) Spirit like a bird flying free in mission and in baptism

“If anyone should be kept from the waters, and wanting to reach them should not be able to - as the centurion Cornelius was shut out by Jews prohibiting Gentiles from receiving, to say nothing of the many baptised who, confessing Christ under persecution, were not able to reach the waters, kept away by prisons and shackled with chains - if then it should be necessary for some reason of that sort then at length the Mother, the Grace of God, who extends her wings beyond the nest of the waters, flies

forth to her own, as the Holy Spirit swooped down upon all who were listening to the word when Peter was preaching, and were speaking in tongues and magnifying God.” (Rupert of Deutz, 179, in Eugene Rogers, *The Holy Spirit*, Wiley-Blackwell, 2009)

1c) Spirit as multi-coloured firebird

- excerpt Kirsteen Kim, *The Holy Spirit in the World*, Orbis, 2007, 180-1.

2. Some art

2.a Hanging silver dove, probably contained consecrated bread, 6th century early Byzantine, North Syria, made in Attarouthi, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, (Plate 4, Eugene Rogers, *The Holy Spirit*, Wiley-Blackwell, 2009).

2. b) Marjorie Liddy, The Day the Holy Spirit visited,

“It was as if God’s love was pouring out all over the land. My heart was filled with joy. When I was a little girl, I was taught a song about the Holy Spirit. I started dancing and singing it too.” (*Our Mob, God’s Story*, Bible Society, 2017, 200)

Interview – Spirit of Life — Marjorie Liddy 00:10:20-00:11:40
https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=5&v=JCwvxNihI_M

3. Some multisensory resources

a) To hear - scientific archive of 150,000 bird calls
<https://www.macaulaylibrary.org/>

b) To touch, to make -

<https://elijahsoftware.com/dove-origami/origami-dove-to-make-a-dove-use-a-small-square-of-paper-and-fold-dove-origami/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MHujwo6aCzU>

c) To see -



"Thousands of birds 'flown' in cathedral after nerve agent attack." <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-wiltshire-44071442>

"Thousands of origami doves have been installed at Salisbury Cathedral to signify peace following the nerve agent attack in the city. The installation comprises 2,500 messages folded into bird shapes suspended along the length of the nave. The city's community groups have also been encouraged to contribute their own thoughts and fold their own doves."

d) to taste ??

e) to smell ?

4. Some local colour

4.a) Albatross by NZ singer Luke Hurley

available at <https://www.lukehurley.co.nz/discography/the-best-of-luke-hurley/>

4.b) New Zealand and Peace and North Korea and godwits

Sunday May 27 on TVNZ 1 at 7.30pm.

"Since 2009, a team from the Miranda Shorebird Centre has been visiting the DPRK (North Korea) where they carry out a survey of birds feeding on the mudflats on the annual northern migration. The symbol of our 2017 symposium on the reunification of the Korean peninsula was the bar-tailed godwit, the bird that flies from New Zealand to the Yellow Sea area, including the Korean peninsula, on the massive migration that begins and ends in the Arctic. Thank you to the local Korean woman who designed the symposium symbol and publicity. On Trinity Sunday I reflect on the godwit as a symbol of peace." Richard Lawrence, facebook friend