

“Touch of the Master’s Hand on Our Lives,
Loves and Land”

B, Pentecost 7; Psalm 139: 1018, 23-24

July 8, 2018; 10:00 am

Congregational UCC, Buena Vista, CO

Rev. Rebecca K. Poos

139 ¹⁻⁶ God, investigate my life;

get all the facts firsthand.

I’m an open book to you;

even from a distance, you know what I’m thinking.

You know when I leave and when I get back;

I’m never out of your sight.

You know everything I’m going to say

before I start the first sentence.

I look behind me and you’re there,

then up ahead and you’re there, too—

your reassuring presence, coming and going.

This is too much, too wonderful—

I can’t take it all in!

⁷⁻¹² Is there anyplace I can go to avoid your Spirit?

to be out of your sight?

If I climb to the sky, you’re there!

If I go underground, you’re there!

If I flew on morning’s wings

to the far western horizon,

You’d find me in a minute—

you’re already there waiting!

Then I said to myself, “Oh, he even sees me in the dark!

At night I’m immersed in the light!”

It’s a fact: darkness isn’t dark to you;

night and day, darkness and light, they’re all the same to you.

¹³⁻¹⁶ Oh yes, you shaped me first inside, then out;

you formed me in my mother’s womb.

I thank you, High God—you’re breathtaking!

Body and soul, I am marvelously made!
I worship in adoration—what a creation!
You know me inside and out,
 you know every bone in my body;
You know exactly how I was made, bit by bit,
 how I was sculpted from nothing into something.
Like an open book, you watched me grow from conception to birth;
 all the stages of my life were spread out before you,
The days of my life all prepared
 before I'd even lived one day.
¹⁷⁻²²Your thoughts—how rare, how beautiful!
 God, I'll never comprehend them!
I couldn't even begin to count them—
 any more than I could count the sand of the sea.
Oh, let me rise in the morning and live always with you!
²³⁻²⁴Investigate my life, O God,
 find out everything about me;
Cross-examine and test me,
 get a clear picture of what I'm about;
See for yourself whether I've done anything wrong—
 then guide me on the road to eternal life.

THE OLD VIOLIN

'Twas battered and scarred,
And the auctioneer thought it
 hardly worth his while
To waste his time on the old violin,
but he held it up with a smile.

"What am I bid, good people", he cried,
 "Who starts the bidding for me?"
"One dollar, one dollar, Do I hear two?"
 "Two dollars, who makes it three?"
"Three dollars once, three dollars twice, going for three,"

But, No,
From the room far back a gray bearded man
Came forward and picked up the bow,
Then wiping the dust from the old violin

And tightening up the strings,
He played a melody, pure and sweet
As sweet as the angel sings.

The music ceased and the auctioneer
With a voice that was quiet and low,
Said "What now am I bid for this old violin?"
As he held it aloft with its' bow.

"One thousand, one thousand, Do I hear two?"
"Two thousand, Who makes it three?"
"Three thousand once, three thousand twice,
Going and gone", said he.

The audience cheered,
But some of them cried,
"We just don't understand."
"What changed its' worth?"
Swift came the reply.
"The Touch of the Masters Hand."

"And many a man with life out of tune
All battered and bruised with hardship
Is auctioned cheap to a thoughtless crowd
Much like that old violin

A mess of pottage, a glass of wine,
A game and he travels on.
He is going once, he is going twice,
He is going and almost gone.

But the Master comes,
And the foolish crowd never can quite understand,
The worth of a soul and the change that is wrought
By the Touch of the Masters' Hand.

- Myra Brooks Welch

(Background of the poem and song presented by Janet Steiner. Song shared by CUCC singers, Matthew Maloney and Dennis Fischer on violin.)

Message to follow:

What is the song that your life wants to play?
Where do you need the "touch" of the Master's Hand on your life?
What needs tuning up, blowing the dust off, taken out of storage?
Taken off the shelf and renewed, repurposed, given life again?

If we are all "knit in our mother's womb", known before we even greeted the light of day in this world, we all have a song to be played – a soul to express.

What song wants to come out of you, that perhaps, has been lying dormant? For a season or many years?

Do you need courage – to remember who and Whose you are?

To find *your* voice, your song.

Courage and encouragement to play your soul song for the rest of your days?

How will you commit, this week, to no longer ignoring that instrument that is you, sitting on the shelf and gathering dust from lack of use?

“The master has failed more times than the beginner has even tried.”

“There are poems inside you that paper can’t handle.”

This would be true of songs as well! Go and sing your song, dance your dance, live your life under the touch of the Master’s Hand.

For you are fearfully and wonderfully made – knit together in your mother’s womb by the Creator who loves you, calls you, and sings out from you the music of your soul. Amen.

