

Shadow Rock UCC

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One of the major questions asked in theological discussions has to do with the reality of God; “What reality can we point to when we use the word “God?” The hymn writer, Brian Wren, writes a beautiful hymn that poetically addresses this important theological question. The first verse reads as follows;

Bring many names, beautiful and good,
celebrate, in parable and story,
holiness in glory, living, loving God.
Hail and hosanna! Bring many names!

The hymn goes on to name God as strong mother, warm father, old aching, and young growing God. God is all of this and more than our language and imaginations can capture. I want to add to the long list of names we can bring into worship and our conversations. For a brief season in the life of Shadow Rock United Church of Christ I encourage us to explore together what it means to name God as The Economist.

God the Economist is not as poetic as the names mentioned above. Such a name may feel like nails on a chalk board because it connotes a clinical and monetary function. Conversations about God and money can be awkward. Add politics into the mix, especially in today’s emotionally charged and economically depressed environment, and we have crossed into an exasperating abyss. However, I challenge this understanding and ask that we go deeper and higher. So, let’s get started.

The word “economy” has dominated our public discussion over the past year. It is a word that immediately conjures up images of money, charts, the stock market, banks, and home foreclosures. “Economy” is defined as the system by which a society uses its goods and resources to meet its needs and wants. Let’s go deeper.

The word “economy” is an ancient word. It comes from the Greek compound word *oikonomia*. *Oikos* means household and *nomos* means law or management. Economy literally means “the law or management of the household”. When we speak of “God the Economist” we will be speaking about God’s relationship with Creation as all of creation is God’s Household.

Over the past year we have seen our economy traumatized and we are still living with the ripple effects. We forgot that people are not objects to be used for the sake of the economy. We need to remember that the economy exists for the sake of the people and we have the hearts, minds, and hands to reorder our economy for this purpose. The household of our world needs our attention and care.

The world is God's household and we are trustees of God's household. This trusteeship is all inclusive of our caretaking tasks. We are called to take care of our children, each other, our campus, our buildings and our neighbors throughout the world. We are also called to manage and order our trusteeship in line with the love, peace, and justice agenda of God; after all, it is God's household. God is the ultimate economist.

This is the theological foundation for our stewardship reflection for the next 5 weeks. To help us focus the Stewardship Fulfillment Team will help us think about our trusteeship and how Shadow Rock will continue to grow into a greater fellowship. In fact, we will be seeing a lot of a certain logo to help us; *Shadow Rock, > Today*.

We are stewards of Shadow Rock. This means we are caretakers and trustees of our buildings, the Festival Garden, each other, people in need, the Shadow Rock message, mission, and vision. All of these things and more make up our household which is part of the larger household of the world. Let us begin.

Shadow Rock, > Today