

“Eventually, all things merge into one, and a river runs through it.”
from *A River Runs Through It*, Norman Maclean

Perhaps you have read the novel or seen the movie *A River Runs Through It*. Some view it as a story about flyfishing. Some view it as a story about a father who had two sons, one a dutiful elder and the other a roguish but good-hearted prodigal. Both views ring true to the story, to a point. But the story deepens in its clearly Biblical mooring: the river that runs through it all.

We meet that river in Ezekiel 47, a river that gives theme to this Sunday’s celebration of the Feast and Season of Creation. In this vision given to Ezekiel, the river flows from the temple in Jerusalem. Now, visions are inherently about the not-yet. Ezekiel writes to exiles still a long way from Jerusalem. The Temple had not been rebuilt, and would not be for a generation and more. Still, for Ezekiel, hope was envisioned in this river flowing from the house of God. From that Source, Ezekiel envisions a river that brings living waters to lifeless places and lifeless ones.

Where does such watery hope come from? For Ezekiel, the past is prologue. The Genesis 2 story of Creation speaks of a river that flows out of Eden to water the garden. But it does not stop there. It streams out in four directions, watering a diversity of lands and peoples, animals and flora. Creation begins with living waters given for all.

But the past is not prologue for Ezekiel’s hope alone. The current of the river in Genesis 2 carries us to the final chapter of Revelation. *Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life . . . flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb through the middle of the streets of the city . . . and the leaves of the trees (by the river) will be for the healing of the nations.* To paraphrase the line from *Hymn of Promise*: in creation’s end is its beginning. The river of God.

The world is a well-watered creation by the grace of God. “Living waters” is more than a phrase: it is the means by which God enlivens creation. Living waters are a gift we celebrate this Sunday and season. And in this moment’s urgency: living waters are a gift to be protected in all seasons. For when all is said and done: God made us stewards, not owners, of creation’s waters.

For Reflection and Action:

*What other Biblical texts involving “waters” does this evoke; what connections do you see?
What experiences of “living waters” do you carry with you; how do they shape your faith?
Where do you see Our Saviours’ opportunities/challenges to engage the final two sentences?*