



May 8, 2023

“Let’s Talk About This”

More than once I told Rev. Bob McQuilken his tombstone should read “Let’s get together and talk about this.” Bob loved to sit down over a cup of coffee at Petals and Perks with a few of his friends to talk about everything from theology to theatre, politics to pancakes, books to building projects, music or the Maples...you name it.

In short order, our community lost both Bob and his conversation partner Rev. Russell Brandt. Today, I envision them somewhere in the great beyond going up to St. Peter and saying, “Let’s get together and talk about this.” More likely they would be questioning Saints Paul and James about the proper balance between faith and good works or asking Jesus to explain once and for all his blend of the divine and the human. Or I like to think they are joining the debate between Wesley and Calvin about predestination vs. free will.

Both Bob and Russ were more interested in asking good questions than finding simple answers. It was as much about doubt as belief, about exploring the mysteries as well as proclaiming the certainties of life. That’s not to say they didn’t have strong convictions which they held, and which held them. Underneath all their conversations were deep, bedrock beliefs about a good and gracious God who cares about his beloved creation. Sure enough, they believed the Bible, but they held it

gently in open hands, always ready to say, "Let's talk about this."

The St. Andrews family is blessed with a bevy of retired clergy which even includes a couple token Methodists! Losing Russ and Bob leaves a great empty space at our table, but we are comforted by the sure hope of Glad Reunion, the promise of a great banquet feast where once again we will share the cup and break bread together. So in the words of the communion liturgy, we will continue to "proclaim Christ's death until he comes and we feast at his heavenly banquet." And then, once again, we will get together to "talk about this."

For Bob and Russ, faith really did matter. May their witness and spirit continue to inspire us for the living of these days.

~Written by Jack Harnish



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