The Obstacles of Others

A Lenten Study

During Lent this year, my sermons will be exploring the obstacles that Jesus faced in his ministry. These range from people to concepts, and not all of them are things that Jesus overcomes. No life is without its own obstacles, and hearing the obstacles that others face may allow us to be more empathetic, and also think about the challenges that we face in new ways, as well as how we might interpret scripture or faith in new ways.

This study consists of one scripture drawn from the upcoming worship service, an online video less than 20 minutes long, and a couple of questions for reflection. You are welcome to engage with this material in whatever way you would like and at any time. If you are interested in discussing anything that comes out of this process, please email me to indicate your interest and you will be included in the planning of a discussion session, likely on ZOOM, during Holy Week.

We pray that all burdens are lifted, but until that time may we hear one another with love.

—Rev. Scott

Week Four

John Maclean

“Q&A Part Three”

Link: <https://youtu.be/ql6QnC8LwwE?t=847>

Scripture: Luke 15:1-3, llb-32

[Please note that the link above will take you to the middle of the video so that you may watch the answer to the particular question described below.]

John Maclean is a Youtube “beauty guru” who is known for eccentric online “films” that, generally, review makeup. Maclean identifies as a man, but presents traditionally feminine. This situates Maclean well to answer a viewer’s question about masculinity and femininity. Maclean takes issue with the idea that being or doing something that is natural to you should be a problem to anyone, and asks that we do a better job of examining why we as a culture think the way that we do.

In the parable of the prodigal son, we see the elder brother being righteous and holier-than-thou, putting his ideas of justice and what “should be” onto his father and brother. How cleanly do masculinity and femininity map onto these two brothers in this story? How might Maclean, acting as the father in this story, speak to his elder son?