

Mehler

James Mehler

Statement Of Faith

I believe in stories.

True stories. Your stories. My stories. Our mutual stories. Allegorical stories. Metaphorical stories. Stories that sing. Stories that dance. Dog stories. Cat stories. Sheep stories. More sheep stories. 99 sheep stories. 1 sheep stories. Good stories. Bad stories. Sad stories. Happy stories. Fish stories. Really big fish stories. Gone fishing and caught nothing stories. Gone fishing and got caught stories. People stories. Person stories. Power stories. Weakness stories. Healing stories. Dying stories. Rising stories. Old life stories. New life stories. Hopeful stories. Hopeless stories. It can't happen stories. It did happen stories. It will happen stories. Ghost stories. Holy Ghost stories. Lost stories. Found stories. Lost and found stories. Leaving home stories. Coming back home stories. There's something wrong stories. There's something right stories. I'm empty stories. I'm filled up stories (those might be more Holy Ghost stories ... not sure). Shepherd stories. Farmer stories. Travel with happy endings stories. Travel ending in jail stories. Putting on armor stories. Putting on airs stories. Being made right stories. Being put right stories. Being put down stories. Being lifted up stories. Turn the world upside down and inside out stories. Reversal stories. Greatest and least stories. Master and servant stories. Divine yes stories. Divine no stories. Captive stories. Release stories. Captured stories. The way we were stories. The way we are stories. The way we can be stories. And stories about the one through whom we can be the way we can be.

I'm not sophisticated enough for soteriological stories, hermeneutical stories, double predestination stories, pre - post- or any dispensation stories, comensuality stories (sorry Dr. Crossan), eschatological stories (unless they are realized).

I don't cater to stories that don't connect with the human condition, the human spirit, the human family; stories that leave out the mysterious, the divine (because the divine is always, always involved in the story somewhere, somehow); stories that claim privilege; stories that divide and demean.

I believe in "working out your salvation with fear and trembling before the Lord". "Fear and trembling" are, for me, awe and excitement. In awe of the desire of God to see humanity restored to goodness, I tremble with excitement at the opportunity to join with others (the body of Christ and with story believers through time and space) to add my energy, ideas, imagination and love to this holy purpose. And I remember in deep gratitude the one who through breathing gives life to life's dry bones moments. I believe in stories so infused with divinity, that I dare not neglect the needs of other children of God. I believe in stories of the power of community of faith with its story to tell and live to reshape the world.

I believe in stories. I believe, most especially, in the profound story of grace and the power of God's love.

(This is what I believe. It may be an unconventional statement of faith, but through the years, and more so in these later years, it is the stories we tell and the stories we live which reveal what we believe.)