



First Congregational United Church of Christ

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Second Sunday of Epiphany

January 16, 2022

Due to the current high number of covid cases in Black Hawk County, we are recommending that folks join worship by viewing it on our Facebook page at 10:30 a.m. The service will also be available for viewing after the service. We hope to resume in-person worship soon.

We are delighted that you joined us today! We hope you will find us an affirming, uplifting, and committed family of faith. Here we work to make everyone, without any exceptions, to feel accepted, inspired, and encouraged in their spiritual journey. In dialogue, we seek to understand. In encouragement, we seek to heal. In all things we yearn to live by love, for peace, with joy. This is a place where your intellect will be challenged, your heart will be nurtured, and your spirit refreshed. Varying beliefs are expressed openly and freely, and your doubts will not be suppressed. We trust that we are all, every person and part of creation, continuing to be blessed by God's grace; and that in community we can help each other to see this grace alive in our lives and relationships. We hope to share our gifts with you, even as we pray that you will want to share your gifts with us. Whoever you are and wherever you may be in your life's journey, we invite you to be a part of our lives and our spiritual home. Welcome!

POINTS TO PONDER

“Thus says the Lord: Act with justice and righteousness,
and deliver from the hand of the oppressor anyone who has been robbed.
And do no wrong or violence to the alien, the orphan, and the widow,
nor shed innocent blood in this place.”

— *Jeremiah 22.3*

“Justice is said to be the public display of love. And this is why the prophets were so adamant in declaring the importance of justice. For a society or faith that does not pursue justice for oneself and others is not one which is loving. Justice requires laws, societal systems, and the citizenry itself to work for the liberation of those who

have been oppressed. Those who claim to love others yet do not provide or work for their justice are hypocrites and liars. Justice is not about sentimentality of what we feel towards others; it is how we behave towards and for others – especially the least powerful among us.”
— *Rev. Bret S. Myers, 1/12/2021*

“You must not distort justice; you must not show partiality; and you must not accept bribes, for a bribe blinds the eyes of the wise and subverts the cause of those who are in the right. Justice, and only justice, you shall pursue.” — *Deuteronomy 16.19-20*

“No other Biblical ethic is more pronounced than that of justice. It is not a value just for God to display, but for God’s people to reveal by how they behave towards one another. To not grant full justice is to distort justice. To not show partiality is to pervert justice. To accept bribes, or even show favoritism, is to abandon justice entirely. Here we see that justice is regarded the cardinal virtue and ethical principle among all of the virtues; superseding even compassion. Compassion is, of course, esteemed highly as well; sometimes itself being considered the cardinal virtue. But there is an ancient wisdom in believing that if we truly have justice for all people, then there is no need for compassion; for the needs of each and every person will be fulfilled. Are we as adamant about justice as the prophets and sages of old? Are we willing to work for it with every fiber of our being?” — *Rev. Bret S. Myers, 1/12/2021*

“Cursed be anyone who deprives the alien, the orphan, and the widow of justice.”
— *Deuteronomy 27.19*

“To speak of justice only for one’s own people is not to be sincere about justice itself. Justice is for all. It is not to discriminate between people based on their ethnicity, nationality, religion, country, family, friendships, or any other category by which people justify to themselves their differing treatment of some people over others. Aliens, orphans, and widows, those most oppressed in Ancient times, are to be given the same justice you would mete out to your parents, children, spouses, or other loved ones. We are all born in the image of God, and so to act preferentially towards any is to deny the image of God in those people – which is a dereliction of respect and love for the One who created them as well. — *Rev. Bret S. Myers, 1/12/2021*

“He has told you, O mortal, what is good;
and what does God require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness,
and to walk humbly with your God?”
— *Micah 6.8*

“How often do people convince themselves of reasons for why they should follow other values than genuine justice? Micah knows their excuses and tells them in no uncertain terms that rationalizations and self-justifications are all in vain. God requires of us to do justice for our neighbors near and far, to love kindness in how we look out for those in need as if they are our dearest loved ones, and to walk humbly with God in not thinking ourselves or our people as superior to anyone else. God will not honor our excuses in doing less than God requires us to act as God’s followers.” — *Rev. Bret S. Myers, 1/12/2021*

“Ah, you that turn justice to wormwood, and bring righteousness to the ground...!
They hate the one who reproves in the gate, and they abhor the one who speaks the truth.
You trample on the poor.... How great are your sins – you who afflict the righteous,
who take a bribe, and push aside the needy in the gate.”
— *Amos 5.7, 10-11a, 12b-d*

“When people turn from justice, they can make it sound like they are doing the greatest thing in the world. Wormwood is so filled with holes that it is not structurally sound. It will not support anything. In other words, there is no integrity in it. Those who act with no integrity accost the righteous and make their lives miserable. They hate those who reprove their unethical actions, for they don’t want to be called out for their

disingenuousness and corruption. They abhor truth-speakers, and call them antagonizers, trouble-makers, and other names simply because they call people and systems to task for their injustices. Amos lists an assortment of ways that the unjust act unrighteously. He most certainly, as a prophet, experienced these tactics he lists by those who tried to quiet him for asking them to be fair to others. Are we more like Amos, or those who abhor him?”

— *Rev. Bret S. Myers, 1/12/2021*

“Take away from me the noise of your songs; I will not listen to the melody of your harps.
But let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.”

— *Amos 5.23-24*

“Amos also recognized that people hid their evil actions behind their supposed religiosity. Has nothing changed in the history of humanity? He sees such actions as a mockery of God’s will for us in how we should live with and treat one another. God does not care for top notch music programs in our churches, but cares about justice. God doesn’t relish the beauty of well-played instruments Amos tells us, but rather sees genuine righteousness as that which should fill our lives. When we become more concerned in our churches about the aesthetics of worship than the carrying out of justice in our world, then we have missed the whole point of who God has called us to be. What matters most to us in our church? How would God judge where our priorities lie, and the things in which we expend our budgets? If justice is not prominent among those things, how is it that we have failed to understand the clear message of the prophets, and of Jesus himself?”

— *Rev. Bret S. Myers, 1/12/2021*

“If anyone loves righteousness, her labors are virtues;
for she teaches self-control and prudence, justice and courage;
nothing in life is more profitable for mortals than these.”

— *Wisdom of Solomon 8.7*

“Too many people associate religious piety with righteousness. Nothing could be further from the case for the prophets and the wisdom writers. Cultivating virtuous character traits is, and always has been, what matters most. If our lives and conduct do not reflect the virtues of God manifested in our own lives, then we cannot profit spiritually. Being virtuous is more important than all other matters in life. Wealth, power, prestige, influence, and so many other values people seek to acquire are for those who have rejected God’s values. If we are to be on God’s side, we must inculcate and habituate the values and virtues which represent the character of God.”

— *Rev. Bret S. Myers, 1/13/2021*

“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint, dill, and cummin,
and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faith.
It is these you ought to have practiced without neglecting the others.” — *Matthew 23.23*

“Hypocrisy is commonplace among the religious. This is not to say that religion itself is negative, but rather than scrupulous people will use religious identity as a means of deflecting the very unreligious and ungodlike things that they do. It is not those who give the most to the church that are most righteous, for if they have garnered their incomes on the backs of others then they have neglected the law to love our neighbors as our self. How many churches acquiesce to the influence of those who give much to the church or who threaten to withdraw their monies if they are not assuaged? It is not these who we should esteem, but rather the ones who do justice, love mercy, and act in accordance with their professed faith in helping ‘the least of these’ in their society. These are the more important characteristics for us to exhibit – not how much we are able to give. How do these values accord with the way we treat different people in our church? Will we pay more heed to a rich donor, or a poor person who constantly tries to better the world by their service?”

— *Rev. Bret S. Myers, 1/13/2021*

CALLED TOGETHER AS SPIRITUAL FAMILY

Prelude

Improvisation on "Great is Thy Faithfulness"

Hudson Lourenço

Welcome and Announcements

John Mardis

Affirming God's Presence in Us All

Welcoming the Light of Love in Our Midst

John Mardis

We prepare ourselves for communing with the sacred as love's light is brought into our awareness. The light of love burns within and among each of us, and we carry that light into our sanctuary; visually reminding us of the image of the divine that lives in our hearts, minds, and souls – and that we nourish through our faith-filled fellowship.

***Centering Our Souls**

John Mardis

"Prophetic Politics: Selected Quotes of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr."

L1: Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter.

P: **History will have to record that the greatest tragedy of this period of social transition was not the strident clamor of the bad people, but the appalling silence of the good people.**

L1: He who passively accepts evil is as much involved in it as he who helps to perpetrate it. He who accepts evil without protesting against it is really cooperating with it.

P: **In the end, we will remember not the words of our enemies, but the silence of our friends.**

L2: Human progress is neither automatic nor inevitable... Every step toward the goal of justice requires sacrifice, suffering, and struggle; the tireless exertions and passionate concern of dedicated individuals.

P: **Freedom is never voluntarily given by the oppressor; it must be demanded by the oppressed.**

L2: The hope of a secure and livable world lies with disciplined nonconformists who are dedicated to justice, peace and brotherhood.

L1: Nonviolence is the answer to the crucial political and moral questions of our time; the need for (humanity) to overcome oppression and violence without resorting to oppression and violence. (We) must evolve for all human conflict a method which rejects revenge, aggression, and retaliation. The foundation of such a method is love.

P: **Returning violence for violence multiplies violence, adding deeper darkness to a night already devoid of stars.**

L2: Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that. Hate multiplies hate, violence multiplies violence, and toughness multiplies toughness in a descending spiral of destruction....The chain reaction of evil--hate begetting hate, wars producing more wars--must be broken, or we shall be plunged into the dark abyss of annihilation.

Men: **Nonviolence means avoiding not only external physical violence but also internal violence of spirit. You not only refuse to shoot a man, but you refuse to hate him.**

Women: **Nonviolence is a powerful and just weapon which cuts without wounding and ennoble the (one) who wields it. It is a sword that heals.**

Men: **We must learn to live together as (family) or perish together as fools.**

Women: **An individual has not started living until he can rise above the narrow confines of his individualistic concerns to the broader concerns of all humanity.**

L1: Life's most persistent and urgent question is, 'What are you doing for others?'

L2: The first question which the priest and the Levite asked was: "If I stop to help this man, what will happen to me?" But the Good Samaritan reversed the question: "If I do not stop to help this man, what will happen to him?"

P: **The good neighbor looks beyond the external accidents and discerns those inner qualities that make all (people) human and, therefore, brothers (and sisters).**

L1: Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly. I can never be what I ought to be until you are what you ought to be. This is the interrelated structure of reality.

P: **Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.**

L2: Every (person) must decide whether he will walk in the light of creative altruism or in the darkness of destructive selfishness.

L1: I submit to you that if a (person) hasn't discovered something (she) will die for, (she) isn't fit to live.

P: **The ultimate measure of (any of us) is not where (we) stand in moments of comfort and convenience, but where (we) stand at times of challenge and controversy.**

L2: The church was not merely a thermometer that recorded the ideas and principles of popular opinion; it was a thermostat that transformed the mores of society.

L1: The church must be reminded that it is not the master or the servant of the state, but rather the conscience of the state. It must be the guide and the critic of the state, and never its tool. If the church does not recapture its prophetic zeal, it will become an irrelevant social club without moral or spiritual authority.

Women: **A nation that continues year after year to spend more money on military defense than on programs of social uplift is approaching spiritual doom.**

Men: **It is not enough to say we must not wage war. It is necessary to love peace and sacrifice for it.**

L2: We must concentrate not merely on the negative expulsion of war but the positive affirmation of peace.

L1: I refuse to accept the view that mankind is so tragically bound to the starless midnight of racism and war that the bright daybreak of peace and brotherhood can never become a reality.

Women: **We must build dikes of courage to hold back the flood of fear.**

Men: **We must accept finite disappointment, but never lose infinite hope.**

L2: I believe that unarmed truth and unconditional love will have the final word in reality. That is why right, temporarily defeated, is stronger than evil triumphant.

P: **Law and order exist for the purpose of establishing justice and when they fail in this purpose they become the dangerously structured dams that block the flow of social progress.**

L1: Never forget that everything Hitler did in Germany was legal.

L2: I submit that an individual who breaks a law that conscience tells him is unjust, and who willingly accepts the penalty of imprisonment in order to arouse the conscience of the community over its injustice, is in reality expressing the highest respect for the law.

P: **Power at its best is love implementing the demands of justice. Justice at its best is love correcting everything that stands against love.**

-- compiled, arranged, & adapted by Bret S. Myers, 1/15-16/2009

WE LISTEN FOR THE SACRED IN THE MIDST OF OUR LIVES

***Hymn for Peace with Justice**

“Lead Us from Death to Life”

#581

A Time for All God’s Children

Abbie Chronister

Prayers

Sharing Our Joys and Concerns, and Acts of Compassion or Kindness

Silent Meditation: The Prayers of the People

Pastoral Prayer

The Prayer Jesus Taught (unison) *Please feel free to do the version you know, or the one below:*

“Our heavenly Creator, sacred be your name: your kin-dom* come, your will be done, on earth as if in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For yours is the kin-dom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen”

*“Kin-dom” is an inclusive, non-authoritarian, and egalitarian term that reminds us that we are all “kin” as the children of God.

Scripture Lesson

Amos 5.21-24

John Mardis

5.21 I hate, I despise your festivals, and I take no delight in your solemn assemblies.

22 Even though you offer me your burnt-offerings and grain-offerings, I will not accept them; and the offerings of well-being of your fatted animals I will not look upon.

23 Take away from me the noise of your songs; I will not listen to the melody of your harps.

24 But let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.

Message

“M.L. King, Jr. and the Prophetic Legacy of Justice”

***Hymn for Solidarity**

“We Shall Overcome”

#570, vs. 1-2, 5-6

**WE DEDICATE OURSELVES TO GOD’S SERVICE
THROUGH FAITHFULNESS**

Giving of Our Tithes and Offerings

Special Music

Lauren Leman & Joley Seitz

***Unison Prayer of Dedication**

John Mardis

O God of Prophets and Peacemakers: We are thankful for your blessings of encouragement as we seek to correct injustices and come to the defense of those without voice. May these tithes and offerings be instrumental in nurturing equality, promoting peace, and establishing harmony between all your peoples and all your creation. Help us to be generous not only with our monetary-giving, but also with our truth-giving, life-giving and soul-giving – for the betterment of your world. May it be so, now and always.

***Encouragement for the Journey**

May God give you the grace never to sell yourself short;
grace to risk something big for something good;
grace to remember that the world is too dangerous for anything but truth
and too small for anything but love.

So, may God take your minds and think through them;
may God take your lips and speak through them;
may God take your hearts and set them on fire.

Rev. William Sloane Coffin

Postlude

Improvisation on the tune “Dix”

Hudson Lourenço

Get In Touch with Us!

Questions?

**Call 319-234-8927 or email us at
fcuccoffice@gmail.com**

(Messages will be checked periodically)

Pastor Bret Myers: revbmyers@yahoo.com

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Custodian Kyle: fcuccbuilding@gmail.com

*Please make an appointment with Rev. Myers if you would like to meet with the pastor.
You may email him at revbmyers@yahoo.com, or call/text his cell at 608-370-9472.
Video talking is also available via Skype or Zoom.*

Nourishment for the Journey

“The prophets, including Jesus, make clear that true worship consists not of offering praise, ritualistic offerings, and singing to God, but rather establishing and living out justice for God’s people. Hosea, Micah, and Amos particularly come down hard on those who offer to God praise but take advantage of others or let the innocent be victimized. Hosea refers to the economic and political “whoredom” of Israel that has taken more interest in gaining profits and power than living justly. *“They have broken my covenant and transgressed my law”* (Hosea 8.1), and this even was evidenced by the supposedly most “holy ones” who were so concerned about atoning for their sins: *“When Ephraim multiplied altars to expiate sin, they became to him altars for sinning”* (Hosea 8.11). Micah makes clear that God is not pleased by bowing before God, making offerings, or sacrificing others but rather *“to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God”* (Micah 6.6-8). Amos portrays God as hating and despising their religious celebrations and worship, including their sacrificial offerings that do no one any good. Instead God wants from the people relationships of justice and righteousness (see Amos 5.21-24).

Jesus also is not impressed by those who have all the right words but not the right actions when he flatly states, *“Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only one who does the will of my Father in heaven”* (Mt. 7.21). False praise, that is praise that does not result in one acting justly on behalf of others, is empty. Thus pious platitudes and beliefs without corresponding works of goodness is not only hypocritical, but spiritually detrimental. James, too, couldn’t make this more clear: *“What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if you say you have faith but do not have works? Can faith save you? If a brother or sister is naked and lacks daily food, and one of you says to them, ‘Go in peace; keep warm and eat your fill’, and yet you do not supply their bodily needs, what is the good of that? So faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead. But someone will say, ‘You have faith and I have works.’ Show me your faith without works, and I by my works will show you my faith”* (James 2.14-18).

Doing the will of God is clearly to do justice and not to engage in religious rituals that allow one to pretend to be pious while not caring for others. Jesus focused much of his preaching to enlighten those who knew the law, but were not compassionate or apathetic to the needs of others.

Living by the Golden Rule and the Great Commandment was evidence of righteousness for all of these prophets. It is the heart of what it means to really be just and righteous, and not a pretender. What person does not want justice for themselves...to be treated fairly...to not be oppressed, taken advantage of, or conned? What person wants to be poor, especially when the rules of society are posed against oneself? If we wouldn’t want this for ourselves, then we should not allow this to happen to others. This is justice – making it fair for everyone, and giving no one a preference over another.

Prophets of every age, as well as Jesus, have pointed out that the wealthy and powerful are prone to make a show of their praise of God and their religious practices while turning a blind eye to the oppressed. But Jesus saw through them, knowing that many had gotten their positions on the backs of the weak and poor. Instead of making the rules so that all was distributed equally as each had need, they bent them towards their own benefit and against those who had little. Jesus said we should care for “the least of these” and that not helping those most in need is an abandonment of the true worship of God which culminates in living as God lives – justly and compassionately. Our objective is not to aggrandize God as if God needs our approval and praise, but rather to live mercifully like God: i.e., to *“go and do likewise”* (Mt. 10.37).

Still today, many who are “religious” think that their faith is more about what they believe than what they do. How do they make sense of the prophets and of Jesus who make it abundantly clear that justice and compassion are what God desires from us? Is it not odd that those who often proclaim their faith the loudest are the ones more concerned about praising God rather than living out the values of God? What is the substance of your faith: praise and belief, or justice and action? — Rev. Bret S. Myers, 1/15-16/2014

M.L. King, Jr. Quotations

The time is always right to do what's right.

--- *Speech at Oberlin College (1964)*

How does one determine whether a law is just or unjust? A just law is a man-made code that squares with the moral law or the law of God. An unjust law is a code that is out of harmony with the moral law. To put it in terms of St. Thomas Aquinas: An unjust law is a human law that is not rooted in eternal law and natural law. Any law that uplifts the human personality is just. Any law that degrades human personality is unjust. All segregation statutes are unjust because segregation distorts the soul and damages the personality. It gives the segregator a false sense of superiority and the segregated a false sense of inferiority.

--- *Letter from a Birmingham Jail (1963)*

In your statement you assert that our actions, even though peaceful, must be condemned because they precipitate violence. But is this a logical assertion? Isn't this like condemning a robbed man because his possession of money precipitated the evil act of robbery? Isn't this like condemning Socrates because his unswerving commitment to truth and his philosophical inquiries precipitated the act by the misguided populace in which they made him drink hemlock? Isn't this like condemning Jesus because his unique God-consciousness and never-ceasing devotion to God's will precipitated the evil act of crucifixion? We must come to see that, as the federal courts have consistently affirmed, it is wrong to urge an individual to cease his efforts to gain his basic constitutional rights because the quest may precipitate violence. Society must protect the robbed and punish the robber.

--- *Letter from a Birmingham Jail (1963)*

I'm sure that you have read that arresting little story from the pen of Washington Irving entitled *Rip Van Winkle*. The thing that we usually remember about this story is that Rip Van Winkle slept 20 years. But there is another point in that story that is almost always completely overlooked: it was a sign on the inn in the little town on the Hudson from which Rip went up into the mountain for his long sleep. When he went up, the sign had a picture of King George III of England. When he came down, years later, the sign had a picture of George Washington, the first president of the United States. When Rip looked up at the picture of George Washington, he was completely lost; he knew not who he was. This reveals to us that the most striking fact about the story of Rip Van Winkle is not that he slept 20 years, but that he slept through a revolution....

I'd like to suggest some of the things that we must do in order to remain awake and to achieve the proper mental attitudes and responses that the new situation demands. First, I'd like to say that we are challenged to achieve a world perspective. Anyone who feels that we can live in isolation today, anyone who feels that we can live without being concerned about other individuals and other nations is sleeping through a revolution. The world in which we live is geographically one.... What we are facing today is the fact that through our scientific and technological genius we've made of this world a neighborhood. And now through our moral and ethical commitment we must make of it a brotherhood. We must all learn to live together as brothers - or we will all perish together as fools. This is the great issue facing us today. No individual can live alone; no nation can live alone....

All I'm saying is simply this: that all (hu)mankind is tied together; all life is interrelated, and we are all caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly. For some strange reason I can never be what I ought to be until you are what you ought to be. And you can never be what you ought to be until I am what I ought to be - this is the interrelated structure of reality....

Let nobody give you the impression that the problem of racial injustice will work itself out. Let nobody give you the impression that only time will solve the problem. That is a myth, and it is a myth because time is neutral. It can be used either constructively or destructively. And I'm absolutely convinced that the people of ill will in our nation - the extreme rightists - the forces committed to negative ends - have used time much more effectively than the people of good will. It may well be that we will have to repent in this generation, not merely for the vitriolic words and violent actions of the bad people who bomb a church in Birmingham, Alabama, or

shoot down a civil rights worker in Selma, but for the appalling silence and indifference of the good people who sit around and say, "Wait on time." Somewhere we must come to see that human progress never rolls in on wheels of inevitability. It comes through the tireless efforts and the persistent work of dedicated individuals. Without this hard work, time becomes an ally of the primitive forces of social stagnation. So we must help time and realize that the time is always right to do right....

Now there is another problem facing us that we must deal with if we are to remain awake through a social revolution. We must get rid of violence, hatred, and war. Anyone who feels that the problems of mankind can be solved through violence is sleeping through a revolution. I've said this over and over again, and I believe it more than ever today. We know about violence. It's been the inseparable twin of Western materialism, the hallmark of its grandeur. I am convinced that violence ends up creating many more social problems than it solves. This is why I say to my people that if we succumb to the temptation of using violence in our struggle, unborn generations will be the recipients of a long and desolate night of bitterness. There is another way - a way as old as the insights of Jesus of Nazareth and as modern as the techniques of Mohandas K. Gandhi. For it is possible to stand up against an unjust system with all of your might, with all of your body, with all of your soul, and yet not stoop to hatred and violence. Something about this approach disarms the opponent. It exposes his moral defenses, weakens his morale, and at the same time, works on his conscience. He doesn't know how to handle it.... I do not wish to minimize the complexity of the problems to be faced in achieving disarmament and peace. But we shall not have the courage, the insight, to deal with such matters unless we are prepared to undergo a mental and spiritual change. It is not enough to say we must not wage war. We must love peace and sacrifice for it. We must fix our visions not merely on the negative expulsion of war, but upon the positive affirmation of peace. We must see that peace represents a sweeter music, far superior to the discords of war. Somehow we must transform the dynamics of the world power struggle from the negative nuclear arms race which no one can win to a positive contest to harness man's creative genius for the purpose of making peace and prosperity a reality for all of the nations of the world....

We shall overcome because William Cullen Bryant is right: "Truth, crushed to earth, shall rise again." With this faith we will be able to hew out of the mountain of despair, the stone of hope. With this faith we will be able to transform the jangling discords of our nation into a beautiful symphony of brotherhood, and speed up the day when, in the words of the prophet Amos, "Justice will roll down like waters; and righteousness like a mighty stream." Let us stand up. Let us be a concerned generation. Let us remain awake through a great revolution....

--- *Remaining Awake Through a Great Revolution (1965 Commencement address at Oberlin College)*

For complete commencement address, "Remaining Awake Through a Great Revolution," delivered at Oberlin College in June 1965, go to: <http://www.oberlin.edu/external/EOG/BlackHistoryMonth/MLK/CommAddress.html>

Other M.L. King, Jr. Quotes

The church must be reminded that it is not the master or the servant of the state, but rather the conscience of the state. It must be the guide and the critic of the state, and never its tool. If the church does not recapture its prophetic zeal, it will become an irrelevant social club without moral or spiritual authority.

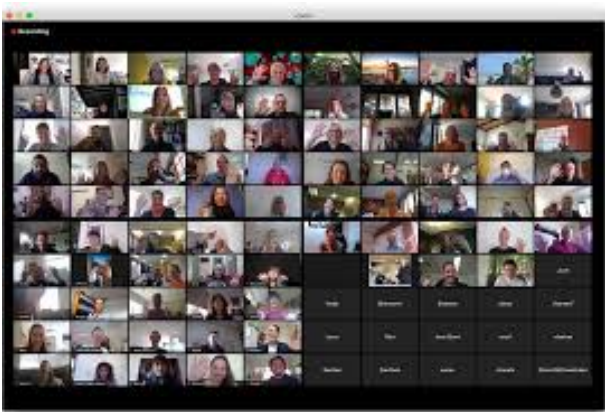
--- Strength to Love, 1963

Every man must decide whether he will walk in the light of creative altruism or in the darkness of destructive selfishness.

He who passively accepts evil is as much involved in it as he who helps to perpetrate it. He who accepts evil without protesting against it is really cooperating with it.

History will have to record that the greatest tragedy of this period of social transition was not the strident clamor of the bad people, but the appalling silence of the good people.

The first question which the priest and the Levite asked was: "If I stop to help this man, what will happen to me?" But... the good Samaritan reversed the question: "If I do not stop to help this man, what will happen to him?"



CONGREGATIONAL ANNUAL MEETING NOTICE

The annual meeting of the First Congregational UCC will be held Sunday, January 23, 2021 at 1pm via zoom. Due to the restrictions of the pandemic, the meeting will be held virtually via computer using Zoom again this year. If you are a member of First Church and would like to participate in the meeting, but do not have the equipment, internet access, and/or experience to do so, please contact the church office. We will assist you in finding a way to take part in this important meeting.

A virtual copy of the annual report will be emailed soon for your review prior to the meeting. If you would like to pick up a hard copy of the report, please contact Michelle in the office to schedule a time to pick one up. (fcuccoffice@gmail.com or 319-234-8927)



Topic: FCUCC Annual Meeting

Time: Jan 23, 2022 1:00 PM

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3192348927?pwd=SzIyY1NWRUVZKzF4MzRsbHNkSnFSUT09>

Meeting ID: 319 234 8927

Passcode: 246810

If connecting by phone:

Dial in: 312 626 6799

Meeting ID: 319 234 8927

Passcode 246810