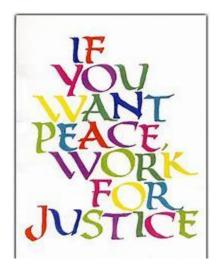
TUMC Worshiping Together on Sunday June 7, 2020 Rev. Amy Overton-Harris Peace with Justice Sunday



Good Morning Dear Ones, I have always loved the prayer of St. Francis. I commend it to you today.

Prayer of Saint Francis

Lord, make me an instrument of thy Peace. Where there is hatred, **let me sow Love**. Where there is injury, thy Pardon, Lord. Where there is doubt, let there be Faith. Oh Lord, make me an instrument of thy Peace. Where there is despair, **let me bring Hope**. Where there is darkness, let there be Light.

Song Make Me a Channel of your Peace

Community Prayer of Confession

God of justice and peace, we know that you created us in the diversity of your image. But still we refuse to see you reflected in the face of our neighbor who lacks adequate health care, experiences hunger, doesn't have a home. We don't see your image in the face of our neighbor who has a different skin tone, worships in a different tradition, speaks in a language we don't understand. Forgive us for lashing out from our sense of scarcity and greed, ignorance and fear. Amen

(Peace with Justice Sunday resources)

Joys and Concerns

As always, please keep one another in your thoughts and prayers.

- All who are suffering with the Covid 19 virus.
- Renee Dubarko's niece and baby.
- George and Patt Bowlsby and Family as George's son David (58) is now on hospice.



- For heartfelt, persistent and peaceful protest in the face of injustice.
- For George Floyd, Treyvon Martin, Tony McDade, Michael Brown, Tamir Rice, Tanisha Anderson, Philando Castille, Alton Sterling, Breonna Taylor.....

Song of prayer | Lift My Eyes Up Hal Filiar-Aguilera

<u>Prayer</u>

"I saw a new Heaven and a new earth, for the former things had passed away" (Rev 21:1) Racial strife is still insidiously present in our world. For the peoples we pray. For all those who are discriminated against because of the color of their skin, we pray. For all people to see that every color, race, culture, are created in the image of God. What a day it will be when people can truly respect, live, stand up and work every day for justice, peace and love, as did Jesus. We give thanks for those places in the world where people speak up, march, protest for every act of injustice. God has promised us a new day of justice and peace. Thanks be to God. Amen

All these things we lift up to you as we pray together, The Lord's Prayer:



Our Father, who art in Heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen

<u>Song</u> <u>Open the Eyes of My Heart</u> THANKS to: Kathy Níguídula, Hal Fílíar-Aguílera, Selínda Smíth, Bríanna Ballentí, Karen Míglíoretto.

Social Principle (From The Book of Discipline of The UMC, Copyright 2016 by The UM Publishing House. Used by permission.) Today is the day God embraces all hues of humanity, delights in diversity and difference, favors solidarity transforming strangers into friends. And, so shall we. Today is the day God cries with the masses of starving people, despises growing disparity between rich and poor, demands justice for workers in the marketplace. And, so shall we. Today is the day God deplores violence in our homes and streets, rebukes the world's warring madness, humbles the powerful and lifts up the lowly. And, so shall we. Today is the day God calls for nations and peoples to live in peace, celebrates where justice and mercy embrace, exults when the wolf grazes with the lamb. And, so shall we. Today is the day God brings good news to the poor, proclaims release to the captives, gives sight to the blind, and sets the oppressed free. And, so shall we.

Scripture Readings:

<u>Genesis 1:26</u> "Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness" <u>Matthew 28:20</u> "And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age" <u>2 Corinthians 13:13</u> "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with all of you."

Song O For a Thousand Tongues to Sing

Reflections for June 7 2020

I started writing this about 20 times already. The events of these days are simply overwhelming and catastrophic. The systemic and forever increasing murder of black people, the ardent going 'back to normal' wish of many, the suffocating weight of COVID-19 with its many arms of destruction has the upper hand. Would I give anything for all of these things to disappear?? YES! Maybe if we close our eyes and click our heels together, we can journey back in time?

As tempting as that sounds, it assumes that going back in time will erase the injustices facing us: killing people of color, caging refugees and building internment camps, and so much more. It won't. I wish it could, but it simply won't. Ominous sounding, I know. Quite different from my typical demeanor and message and at the same time, it is 100% in line with what the gospels teach us. It is times and places such as these when we have an opportunity to embody the message of Jesus. And as inviting and good "churchy" as that seems, we must also remember the brutal story of his life. The people around him abandoned him, the leaders in charge condemned him for not following the "right" rules, and the Roman Empire crushed every uprising in the name of 'keeping the peace'. Evident in scripture, evident in our world, there is no peace without justice.

All the millions... every person in the world, I believe that God is in solidarity with them, every single creature on the earth included. Every color, religion, gender, you name it. That is God's way, that is God's justice, that is God's heaven. I know, that there are those who proclaim that only some people will go to heaven and be with God.... Nope, I don't believe that! Who made that rule? Maybe the people who believe that they get a ticket over and above all the others? And when you single out a group of God's favorites going to heaven of course that means there must be people on the top who get the prize, and people on the bottom who are left out. What if in fact, we read Gen 1:26 again... "Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness. In the image of God, they were created, male and female". I read that to be all humankind, every color, every ability.... all. And I read that all gender is created in the image of God, male... female. Somewhere along the way, people forgot this part about humankind being created in God's image. People set aside the reality that all are created equal. We have lost our path of community, and God's inclusivity. We have fallen under the impression that some are more important than others. Gender, Race, Religion, Income, have become a pecking order in our city, our country, our world. What is the royal flush that most often wins the game of life?? straight male, caucasian, conservative christian, wealthy.

Right now, our priority is to embrace a new way of life. For me, it is about relationships. Real, honest, equal, 'I am gonna stand up for you' relationships. People we know, people on the other side of the planet. People right next door. Everyone that we can reach. There must be room, respect and reform. Room, respect and reform with people who are not like you, who speak another language, who's skin color isn't the same as yours, who believe differently than you do. Some are not more equal than others. There must be room for protests when injustice keeps smacking us in the face. There must be ears willing to hear God's call for the common good, resounding with justice and equality. Eyes to see the beauty of every person. Hearts to can reach out with genuine compassion when needed. Minds to see our own contribution to the problems at hand and realize there is no top down in God's kingdom, only side by side. We cannot let any type of personal comfort or privilege blind us to the reality others face.

There is no double standard in the kingdom of God. Our country is painfully fractured. Have you ever noticed that there is an endless string of words that demand conformity to a system of exclusion and power? "Just be a nice girl", "no hand-outs, get a job!", "you must have asked for it", "Your hair is too black", "Don't be uppity", "queers don't belong". Yes... it is not lost on me that the United Methodist Church is in a war over who belongs and who doesn't. Shameful. Our denomination doesn't decide who is in and who is out. God is in charge, everyone belongs. Where do these words of conformity come from? Lots of places for sure, but here is what I see: money speaks, caucasian speaks, straight maleness speaks, and conservative christianity speaks. There are millions of voices out there begin dismissed, condemned, and ignored. That must stop. God's love is for everyone, not just some.

Think about the apostle Paul, the churches he started, he made it clear "there is neither Jew nor Greek, neither slave nor free, nor male and female" (Gal 3:28) And off he went to start the next church community only to find that at the last church community, suddenly there was a pecking order: wealth, status, religion, gender, citizenship suddenly decided your worth. (sigh). Globally, it is repeated endlessly. Right now, the voice of protest is loud and clear. And we all need step up and speak up.

As long as dominant voices of wealth, religion, gender, and race make all the rules, protests and the demand for justice will and should continue.... and until there is justice, love, full inclusion, there will be no peace. There is no peace with subjugation, degradation, racial inequalities, gay bashing, glass ceilings, or special rights for "some".

I just read an article that says, right now, as I write this, there is a national effort to hold up legislation that would make lynching a federal hate crime punishable by up to life in prison. Seriously?? There's a hold up?? Apparently, there is a request to make changes so that there is "qualified immunity" to shield certain people from prosecution. Last night there was a news item: "US Billionaires have become 565 billion dollars richer during the pandemic." While people go under financially?? What? Wealth, religion, gender, race, determine power and privilege, over and over. The country is crying out in pain, let's listen, let's join hands, let's live God's call for the common good. And if the lights are being turned off and the White House has gone dark..... it is time for someone new to light it again. And no, this is not "a great day for George Floyd, a great day for Americans". On the day of George Floyd's memorial, it is not "a great day for him, a great day for everybody" and because the unemployment rate has gone down a bit, this is not a "great day in terms of equality".

There is no simplistic solution, so where do we start? It is in our encounter with one another that we begin. Not one of us has this all figured out, so we need to add in a bunch of humility too. Thank God, some people are and have been working on leveling the playing field over decades of pain, but ALL of us need to jump in or the fits and starts of previous generations will only continue. Amnesia can't be claimed. We need to face the truth of our past. Let's invest in living in genuine relationship, a mutual give and take. It is important that power and privilege don't just jump in and FIX it for 'those' unfortunate people. Everyone has a voice and we need to listen. Take seriously that all of us, as God's people, stand together. Together in love and respect. We can only take charge of ourselves. Change will be blisteringly difficult. It isn't like we can flip a switch and make everything 'nice' for everyone. It is an inch by inch journey, a step by step across the bridge, a person by person walk.

You may be an accepting and loving person, in fact many of us are but we live in a culture that has stacked the deck against vast numbers of people and groups. Maybe, as we have gone about life, we haven't noticed the ways 'the system' works well for some and against others, especially if we are the person it works well for. I love each and every one of you more than you know. I see the ways that you lovingly embrace folks that come into our church community. And I applaud your love and mission work for so many others.

Please hear me when I say that many of us (including me) are not yet aware of all the ways our cultural system is flawed. As a group, we aren't mean or cruel individuals, but there are simply things we must learn and talk about. I would like to continue boldly here, and recommend that we all read "White Fragility" by Robin DiAngelo. We must work to dismantle the aspects of culture that have been used to cater to wealth, caucasian, straight maleness, and the Christian religion. And right now, all lives won't matter if Black lives don't matter.

Rev. Amy



Song: : Let There Be Peace on Earth

Offering time

We invite you to continue your gracious offerings to our congregation. You can use Automatic Bill Pay, set it up with your bank and they will send it to the church. You can always send a check by USPS. If you would like to donate electronically,

Go To our website: <u>www.tualatinumc.org</u> On the opening page of the Website, you will find a blue link to donate on line.

THANK YOU so much for your generosity for the life of our church family, staff, and our ongoing ministry together. Mere words cannot express our deepest appreciation. With your help we will be able to pay our on-going bills and make employee payroll for the weeks ahead.

Prayer:

God of protest and solidarity with the least among us, be with us as we walk this bridge with others. Keep us from running back to the safety of old assumptions out of fear. Walk with us as we grasp the gift of the Holy Spirit and the new life before us that only comes through justice and peace.

Let us awake to each new day with all of its possibilities, its uncertainties, its many faces and its underlying injustices. May we be able in your strength to move through this day with hope and perseverance, so that when I meet my neighbor or encounter the stranger, I may recognize your face. Amen

Song Blessed Be Your Name

Want to sign up to <u>visit with one another</u> on Sunday morning at 11:30am?? If you have a <u>computer with a camera</u>, or <u>a phone</u> we can meet together! Send me your email if you want to visit next Sunday June 14, 2020, and I will 200M YOU! amytumc@gmail.com

<u>Special thanks</u> to our Music Director/ Pianist, Kathy Niguidula for our worship music selections for today.

<u>We NEED YOU</u>!!! If you have some time during the week, we desperately need some yard care helpers! We are down to two people doing our yard maintenance: mowing, flower bed care, bush trimming etc. email me if you can help!! <u>amytumc@gmail.com</u>

Many thanks to all the UMW women who take part in 'secret pals'. Renee Dubarko gives a special shout out of thanks to hers today.

Good for Your Soul

Feel free to make a donation to Peace with Justice Ministries in the United Methodist Church. When you support <u>Peace with Justice Sunday</u>, your gift becomes a voice for advocacy around the world. Together we are an agent of change that shifts systems of inequality to empower people and communities. <u>umcgiving.org/givePWJS</u>