

## 07-02-23 FOR THE JOURNEY THIS WEEK

“There are people and organizations that diminish and destroy people and other living things, often in pursuit of wealth or power for themselves. Jesus opposes these powers that bring death instead of life. He is on the side of justice, of truth, of liberation, of freedom. This is reason enough for us to embrace his cause and follow him.”

- David Vryhof



Deuteronomy 10:17-21 ✠ Matthew 5:43-48

### Questions for Reflection —

- What is your definition of Christian hospitality? What does it mean to be welcoming to all people? How can we welcome everyone who comes to or through our doors in a way that honors the sacred worth and importance to God of every human being? What can we do better as a congregation to make space for all no matter their nationality, language, culture, race, socioeconomic status or gender identity? How can we welcome and nurture new arrivals among us in a way that enables all of us to grow together as a community of faith that reflects God’s love?
  
- What is your individual role and responsibility in reflecting God’s compassion and justice to all whom you encounter, whether neighbor, stranger, and even “enemy”? What does it mean to strive for justice and peace among all people? How can we as a congregation, through our programs and ministries, more fully embrace causes of justice, truth, liberation, and freedom, especially for those who are marginalized and oppressed? How can we be agents of God’s power on behalf of the vulnerable and weak?
  
- What histories, cultures, communities, places, and people have contributed to your identity? In what ways do you feel connected to people around the globe? What does it mean to embrace diverse voices, cultures beyond your own? What might a global perspective require of the church in general and our congregation in particular in matters of social and environmental justice? What does it mean for us collectively as a congregation to serve as disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world?

### Daily Household Prayer

God of all nations, we thank you for the life and history of our country, for its vast beauty, its wilderness, and wealth of forest, mine, and sea. We praise you for its people, the people whose ancestors have been here for thousands of years, and those who have just arrived. We thank you for the variety of our traditions and our cultures, the riches of our spiritual and religious heritage, the strength of our democratic institutions. We pray for our nation, for our citizens, residents, and governments that working together we may face the future with confident hope and faith in your purpose for our world. In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.