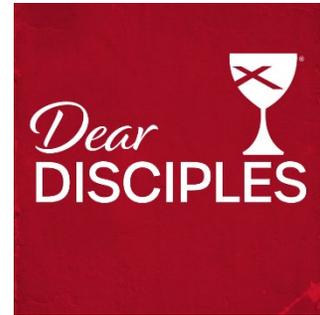


Dear Disciples

October 1, 2021

Transcript



Hello, Disciples. As we imagine who we are to be as a new church for this changing and new world, I'm reminded that we have a powerful identity statement that says, "We are a movement for wholeness in a fragmented world. As part of the one body of Christ, we welcome all to the Lord's table as God has welcomed us." And we say that, and I'm convinced that the power of that statement can only come to fruition when we choose to be the church that we say we are. For me, wholeness is what the whole world can look like if we are committed to living into Jesus's command to love our neighbor, and to the prophet's call in Micah 6:8 to love, to do justice, love mercy, walk humbly with God. And the command in Isaiah 56:1, to maintain justice and do what is right.

It will take more than thoughts and prayers to make this all happen. And as much as we can help through food pantries and other services in our congregations, if we want to change the systems and structures that perpetuate social and economic inequities, it will take collective action from all of us to support policies that serve the human good in the United States. Our federal legislators are poised, right at this moment, to vote on bills that can help us do what is morally and humanely right - to do what Jesus calls us to do - to preach the good news to the poor, to lift people out of poverty, to bind up the brokenhearted, to set at liberty those who are oppressed.

We can lift children out of poverty. We can provide support for child care, decent and affordable housing, investments and bridges and roads to ensure our safe and efficient travel, as well as provide needed jobs. We can invest in protecting our climate and stemming the tide of rapid climate change.

This pro-family reconciliation bill, which goes by many names, contains provisions that will have a significant impact on the lives of so many families.

So, here's what I'm asking, Disciples.

This is about doing what is right, about making justice happen, about loving our neighbor enough to want for them what we want for ourselves. It is possible for us to change our society and align it with these values that we say ground who we are.

It is possible. Across the US, faith leaders are standing together to encourage people of faith - people of all faiths - to speak up to their legislators on these important matters, and particularly on these bills. Jesus reminds us that when we serve the poor, when we meet human needs, when we care for one another, we are ministering to him. So, call, tweet, post - however you speak, let your US representative and senators know that you

support these pro-family bills. It's not about politics. This is about a moral vision, a prophetic imagination, of who we can be - what Dr. Kelly Brown Douglas calls a "moral imagination" that she says simply has the faith to believe that the world of justice we imagine can come to be.

I believe God's limitless love and imagination hold endless possibilities for our church, and also for our society and our world. The kingdom of God is what Jesus teaches us to be about. It is what God's love on earth can look like. It is what wholeness looks like.

So let's get inside God's imagination and let's see this call to love and all the possibilities of what our world, what our society can look like as we work together to bring this vision of justice and love to pass for all of creation. I hope that you will contact your legislators to say that, as a person of faith, you want our nation, you want the United States to be that place where the values that we say we lift up are actually observed and supported throughout our American society.

God bless you, Disciples. May this be so and remember that God loves you and so do I.