



January 16, 2019

BUILDING THE KINGDOM OF GOD...

Each weekday morning I drop my younger two children off at their schools. Each morning I go through the routine of sitting in a long line of cars filled with young children and their parents, and wait as the crossing guard stops traffic to let children cross the street. As the children cross at the cross walk, many of them stop to wrap their little arms around the waist of the teacher who serves as the crossing guard. If you are stopped at the crosswalk, you have a front row seat to observe the beautiful ways in which a simple exchange of a hug can easily soften a heart, affirm goodness, and bring joy to a gray winter day. As the younger children hug the crossing guard, my car always falls silent – for I believe that both my children and I are very aware that we are witnessing something holy.

The traffic on these mornings always moves at a snail's pace and the process is time consuming. I am sure many of the parents sitting in their cars have a schedule to keep, a job to get to, other children to care for. One would think that the minutes that tick by as we sit at a standstill in our cars would be frustrating – but they are not. For they are the most precious twenty minutes of my day – I consider this time in my car with my children a sacred time. I know I am not alone in this.

I believe that each morning at this crosswalk we are truly witnessing the in breaking of the Kingdom of God – as found in a simple act of kindness. How I rejoice in the Kingdom builders among us, reminding us all that even our simple gestures matter. Even our simple gestures have a positive impact on the world around us.

We are all called by Jesus to live in a way that asks us to be active builders of the Kingdom of God in the here and the now. Being actively involved in the building of God's Kingdom may sound like a daunting task. Some of us, including the inspirational Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., set a high bar for doing the work of God here on Earth. They call for us to push ourselves out of our comfort zones, to do the unusual and seemingly impossible, and to take risks in the name of love. For, the greatest risk of all, it seems -- is not to risk anything at all -- simply because we are afraid to lose.

Jesus wants his followers – his disciples-- to fearlessly live out the Gospel. Jesus calls for us to love one another and to love God. In this call, Jesus invites us to take risks, to love indiscriminately, to invest ourselves, to help the poor, to care for the sick, and to do something with the abilities we have been blessed with.

This weekend our community will gather together to serve in honor of the memory of the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. There will be opportunities to live out our faith and serve others in both simple and grand ways!

On Saturday, we will be sending out volunteers to serve with Habitat for Humanity.

On Sunday, you are invited to join us for our service of worship and praise. Following worship we extend to you the invitation to gather in community for a light meal and prayer prior to participating in the many service opportunities that will be made available to our entire community. We hope you will join us as we build furniture, collect donations of home goods and gently used towels and sheets for the needy. We will also be making meals, baking cookies, writing letters, and stitching together scarves.

All are called to join us as we use our gifts to serve as builders of God's Kingdom. I believe our gestures (both big and small) of kindness to one another matter a great deal to God.

So what will you choose? I pray that we will have the courage each day to live our faith out fully, intentionally, in gratitude and joy. May we never underestimate the power found in a hug – and may everything we do be done with love, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Peace and joy,



Rev. Anne Marie Holloway
Associate Minister for Children and Youth