



February 19, 2020

### ***OUR SHARED VOCATION***

One of my most valuable books in the past twenty years is a one-volume systematic theology by Clark M. Williamson titled *Way of Blessing, Way of Life*. Systematic theology is a term for describing all aspects of the Christian faith in a comprehensive and consistent way. It is theology because it seeks to understand God, and interpret the scriptures, traditions, and experiences of faith in a way that is comprehensible in our era. It is systematic because it seeks to address all of the important questions: the nature of God, creation, humanity, revelation, the life and resurrection of Jesus, sin and atonement, the Holy Spirit, the purpose of the church, and so on. You get the idea.

While a professor of theology at Christian Theological Seminary in Indianapolis, Williamson wrote his systematic theology from the perspective of the Protestant faith and the particular influence of Paul Tillich, one of the prominent theologians of the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century. Williamson also emphasized the close relationship of Christianity and Judaism, seeking to correct the sinful history of Christian chauvinism against our Jewish siblings.

But I'm not writing today to give a book report. What I want to share with you is what Williamson wrote about the Christian vocation that we share:

*"Every Christian is called and claimed by God to live a life that will be one of blessing and well-being to others. There is a teaching in Judaism that to do a deed of loving kindness is to 'mend the world' (tikkun olam)."*

*"The Christian vocation is to be a light to the world, to let people see by our deeds, as well as hear by our words, that freedom, justice, and love can take root in human life."*

(Williamson, 1999, page 249.)

I'll see you in church.

Peace,

Rev. Dr. Matthew Wooster  
Senior Minister