



THE CHIMES

IMMANUEL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

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“Reflections”

June 2018

Now that I’ve had a week of my first non-parental care vacation since 1984, I know how much I’ve been missing. My best friend and I drove to North Carolina and spent a grand day in one little corner of the Great Smoky Mountains. It was my very first experience in a national park! Even with my foot still in the boot, the mountains brought some much-needed peace and wonder to my soul. We saw a juvenile black bear, a female elk, and some wild turkeys. I can hardly wait to get back there when I can actually walk on the trails and experience more of the grandeur of the trees and streams. I’ve never seen that much green before!

My experience in mountains has been very limited. At different points in my Baptist years in New Mexico, I spent a year in Albuquerque and lived at the foot of the San Jacinto Mountains, with its tram to the ski slopes and big horned sheep along the cliffs. Another year took me to Ruidoso and the Lincoln National Forest, the birth place of Smokey the Bear, awesome ponderosa pines, and the gentle, tinkling, gold leaves of the aspen trees. I loved those places that took me away from city lights, tourists, Baptists and into times of solitude that became very sacred to me and began to teach my heart and mind to “be still and know” who God was and who wasn’t God.

I think that all of us need to remember that right now – who God is and who isn’t God. Especially now. When infants, toddlers, young children and teens have been heartlessly separated from their parents with no plan to reunite their families, every human being of faith and non-faith alike, must rise up for restorative justice. I knew the challenges that the people on both sides of the Rio Grande River had back in the early 70’s. I was there. I knew the cardboard box homes of Juarez, right across the crossing point of El Paso. I was there, too.

Across several years and thousands of miles I never saw anything approaching the horrors of the refugee crisis across Central America of today. It doesn’t matter what side of the political debate you reside on. For the first time in my lifetime, the United States has put babies and children in detention facilities across the country. One of them is in Glen Burnie. This is anything but “God’s will.” And it’s up to us, the disciples of the Way of Jesus, to make the difference now.

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The Hebrew Scriptures and the New Testament speak truth to power and evil across the ages. *“Give justice to the weak and the orphan; maintain the right of the lowly and the destitute. Rescue the weak and the needy; deliver them from the hand of the wicked.” (Psalm 82) “But let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.” (Amos 5:24) “For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me...I was in prison and you visited me...Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.” (Matthew 25:35-40)*

There is a calling that surpasses any and all political loyalties. No one in DC or anywhere else is the God of All. No one in DC or anywhere else is the Jesus who demanded “let the children come unto me.” There is no question of what evil looks and sounds like in this crisis. There is no uncertainty about the task that God’s love and mercy is presenting to all of us. The American people have already been speaking loudly, and one change was made. But the cease and desist presidential order only lasts for 20 days. Families are still torn apart and we can’t stop now.

As much as I loved my vacation, my time of rest may be over, but my need for reflection and wholeness is far from done. We must get past the noise and even the overwhelming heartbreak of the pictures and get to the hardest of hard work. As I said in my sermon last week, “History will not forgive us and history will be right.” We can never take a vacation from doing the right thing. Too many families are counting on us to help them be together again. It’s time to pray on active feet and act with the heart of Jesus.

Rev Bev

June Birthdays

02 – Peggy Wiley
24 – Diane Resides

17 – Bryan Holley
29 – Jill Kramer

23 – Cindy Pfefferkorn
30 – Larry Dunham



Upcoming Events

Consistory – June 24

No Room for Hate: Educational Series on Combating Racism and Discrimination –

All dates: **6:30 to 8:00 pm at Immanuel UCC** - \$5 donation to assist in the costs for the forum

Friday, June 29 – Indigenous Peoples, African-Americans

Thursday, July 12 – Immigration Rights

Thursday, July 19 – Islamophobia, Anti-Semitism

Thursday, August 16 – Homophobia, LGBTQI Rights

No Room for Hate Peace and Unity Vigil and Rally – Thursday, August 30

Consistory – August 19 (no Consistory in July)

UCC Tucson pastor: Protest policies, protect people

June 20, 2018

Written by **Delle McCormick**



I have been an advocate and ally for immigrant rights for years and believe our immigration system and policies are a travesty. But Southwest Key Detention Center for minors in Tucson is NOT the football field sized holding warehouse where kids sleep on the floor in cages with Mylar blankets. Southwest Key has the Homeland Security contract to house children after they have been processed. I pastored the kids there for a year in 2016 and 2017 and do not feel these centers should be targeted for protests.

Is detention of children wrong? Yes. And what I saw in my year there were kids in an environment where they got to be kids - going to school, getting medical treatment, playing sports, attending worship, and eating square meals while the staff worked to find safe, credible, and able sponsors who would receive them while they go through the asylum system. The staff of social workers, teachers, medical and good service workers were mostly compassionate and committed to the children's care.

Separating children who have already been seriously traumatized from their parents who are seeking asylum because life is not tenable in their own country is a violation of U.S. law and Christian ethics. Yes, as Mary Luti calls us to action in [Wednesday's UCC Daily Devotional](#), let us be wise as serpents and innocent as doves as we discern our next right steps that do not make the situation any worse for these children.

Detention of children has become big business and is commonplace. We must change this. To pray and do nothing else is obscene. If you protest, protest your elected officials' offices. Be a presence on the border. Support organizations like Kino Border Initiative and Casa Alitas that do great work with migrants and asylum seekers. Raise money for legal fees. Stand and speak and act up as people of faith. Vote. Vote. Vote. But please don't fall for demonizing those who do care within our sick system. We need good people on the inside.

Regardless of the president's actions today or yesterday, the practice of criminalizing parents who risk everything to get their children to safety from violence and persecution, and turning away asylum seekers from our borders without due process are all, at the very least, antithetical to our faith, and at most, criminal. We must continue to act as advocates and allies to our neighbors who are being crushed under the wheels of unjust immigration policy and practice. We need each other to survive. We need each other to thrive.

The Rev. Delle McCormick is senior pastor of Rincon UCC in Tucson, Ariz.

[The United Church of Christ is deeply troubled](#) by the separation of children from their parents at our borders, joining our efforts with others on the frontlines of this protest as we have on immigration concerns for decades.



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Lectionary Readings

(Day-Date; First Reading; Psalm; Second Reading; Gospel)

Second Sunday after Pentecost – June 3, 2018

1 Samuel 3:1-20; Psalm 139:1-6, 13-18; 2 Corinthians 4:5-12; Mark 2:23-3:6

Third Sunday after Pentecost – June 10, 2018

1 Samuel 8:4-20; Psalm 138; 2 Corinthians 4:13-5:1; Mark 3:20-35

Fourth Sunday after Pentecost – June 17, 2018

1 Samuel 15:34 – 16:13; Psalm 20; 2 Corinthians 5:6–10 (11-13), 14-17; Mark 4:26-34

Fifth Sunday after Pentecost – June 24, 2018

1 Samuel 17:(1a, 4-11, 19-23), 32-49; Psalm 9:9-20; 2 Corinthians 6:1-13; Mark 4:35-41

Prayer Concerns

PLEASE REMEMBER OUR HOME-BOUND MEMBERS:

PRAYER CONCERNS IN THE CHURCH FAMILY:

Joyce Stanton, impending cancer surgery; Bryan Holley, recovering from knee replacement surgery; Jill, Bell's Palsy; Richard Canter, recovering from surgery.

PRAYER CONCERNS IN THE EXTENDED CHURCH FAMILY:

Bryan Holley's brother, recovering from surgery; Sue and Steve DiPaula's extended family; Central Atlantic Conference; residents and staff of Earl's Place.

PRAYER CONCERNS IN OUR REGION:

Ellicott City and Baltimore County flooding; Dreamers facing uncertain futures and all undocumented residents; Baltimore gun violence; refugee families in Baltimore County; safety of law enforcement and first responders.

NATIONAL & INTERNATIONAL PRAYER CONCERNS:

Reunification of immigrant and refugee kids with their families; Guatemala; Puerto Rico; Hawaii volcano and our UCC churches; teachers; Southern and Midwest storm and flood victims; Syria; all UCC disaster relief projects; prayers for our country; families fearful of deportation; all U.S. military deployed and stateside; refugees seeking safety and compassionate care; North and South Korea.