

2nd Sunday in Lent
March 16 2025
Compassion
From Hostility to Hospitality



Image by Gerd Altman - Pixabay

Prelude

More than two thirds of the world's population struggles for survival. Three out of six people (3 billion) on the planet try to live on \$2 a day. One in six (1 billion) eke out a living on \$1 a day.

Maureen O'Connell, Compassion



Photo by [Muhammad Muzamil](#) on [Unsplash](#)

Land Acknowledgement: We acknowledge that we are gathered on the unceded land of the Huron-Wendat, Anishaanabe and the territory of the Mississaugas of the Credit peoples.



We honor the interconnectedness of all beings, including the cosmos, Earth, Indigenous Peoples, our ancestors, and all of creation.

We are grateful to all who came before us as caretakers of our planet.

We regret and apologize for any injustices we have caused; we are actively working to address and correct them.

We recognize, as stewards of the Earth, our responsibility to care for the land, gifts, and relationships that sustain us.

We commit to approaching every interaction with reverence, reciprocity, harmony, and compassion.

In healing ourselves we heal the world!

(Adapted from Charter of Compassion)

Photo by [Wexor Tmg](#) on [Unsplash](#)

Greeting

It is not always easy to find love at the centre. Today, we celebrate our Oneness with Christ, which invites us to take deep breaths of fresh air into the newness of every day, so our minds, hearts, and spirits will be continually nourished. Today we gather together to celebrate the reality that love is at the core of our beings and that love will guide us if we open ourselves to the challenges which love requires of us. May we accept this challenge with dignity and grace.

Esther Hulbert (adapted)



Image: John Hain Pixabay

A close-up photograph of a person's legs and feet standing in tall, green grass. The person is wearing blue jeans and white sneakers. The background is slightly blurred, showing more grass and a hint of a white object in the distance. The lighting is warm, suggesting late afternoon or early morning.

Gathering Hymn: Where the Love of God is Guiding

Where the love of God is guiding, there is now another way,
New awareness of compassion learned from one another.
Love, the face of God in Jesus, new creation's thrust;
Love transforming tears and terror into health and trust.

Where the truth of God is driving, there is another way,
shining through our time's confusion, sharp with revelation.
Words that stifle sense or spirit, changed and redefined;
Crosses raised to teach division, lowered, left behind

Photo by [Stas Ostrikov](#) on [Unsplash](#)

A close-up photograph of a person's bare feet standing on a dark, flat rock. The person is wearing denim jeans that are rolled up at the ankles. The feet are positioned in the center-right of the frame. The surrounding area is filled with tall, thin blades of grass, some of which are in sharp focus in the foreground, while others are blurred in the background. The lighting is warm and golden, suggesting late afternoon or early morning. The overall mood is peaceful and grounded.

Gathering Hymn: Where the Love of God is Guiding p.2

Where the life of Earth is cherished, there is now another way,
where a child may grow in safety, where there's peace and shelter.
When we hold the fragile planet in our conscious care.
When we see again as sacred all we are and share.

Photo by [Stas Ostrikov](#) on [Unsplash](#)

Gathering Prayer

Join with the Earth and each other to bring new life to the land,
to restore the waters, to refresh the air, to renew the forests,
to care for the plants, to protect the creature, to celebrate the seas,
to rejoice in the sunlight, to sing the song of the stars,
to recall our destiny, to renew our spirits, to reinvigorate our bodies,
to recreate the human community,
to promote justice and peace,
to love our children and love one another,
to join together as many and diverse expressions
of one loving mystery for the healing of the Earth
and the renewal of all life. Amen

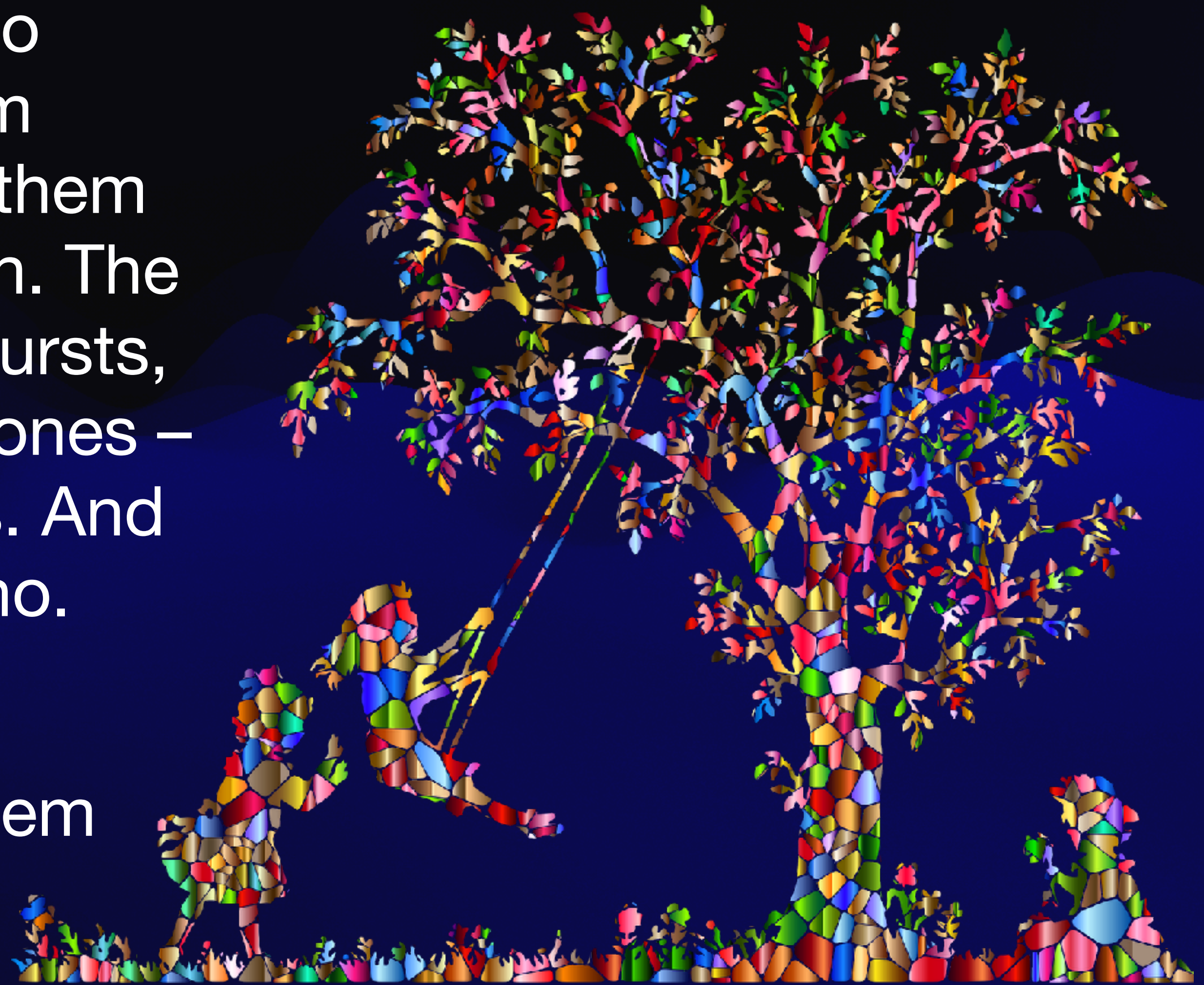
Martin Luther King

Image: Kanha Tor Pixabay

First Reading by Mary Oliver

Teach the children. We don't matter so much, but the children do. Show them daisies and the pale hepatica. Teach them the taste of sassafras and wintergreen. The lives of the blue sailors, mallow, sunbursts, the moccasin flowers. And the frisky ones – inkberry, lamb's-quarters, blueberries. And the aromatic ones – rosemary, oregano.

Give them peppermint to put in their pockets as they go to school. Give them the fields and the woods and the possibility of the world salvaged from the lords of profit.



Stand them in the stream,
head them upstream,
rejoice as they learn
to love this space they live in,
its sticks and leaves
and then the silent,
beautiful blossoms.

Attention is the beginning of devotion.

Mary Oliver
From Upstream: Collected Essays



Image: Gordon Johnson Pixabay

Acclamation

Show us the way of compassion, the way of joy and peace.
Show us the way of compassion, the way of joy and peace.

Show us the way of compassion,
the way of joy and peace.
Show us the way of compassion,
the way of joy and peace.

Show us the way, show us the way,
show us the way of life.
Show us the way, show us the way,
show us the way of life.

Show us the way of compassion,
the way of joy and peace.
Show us the way of compassion,
the way of joy and peace.



Image Helga Kattinger. Pixabay

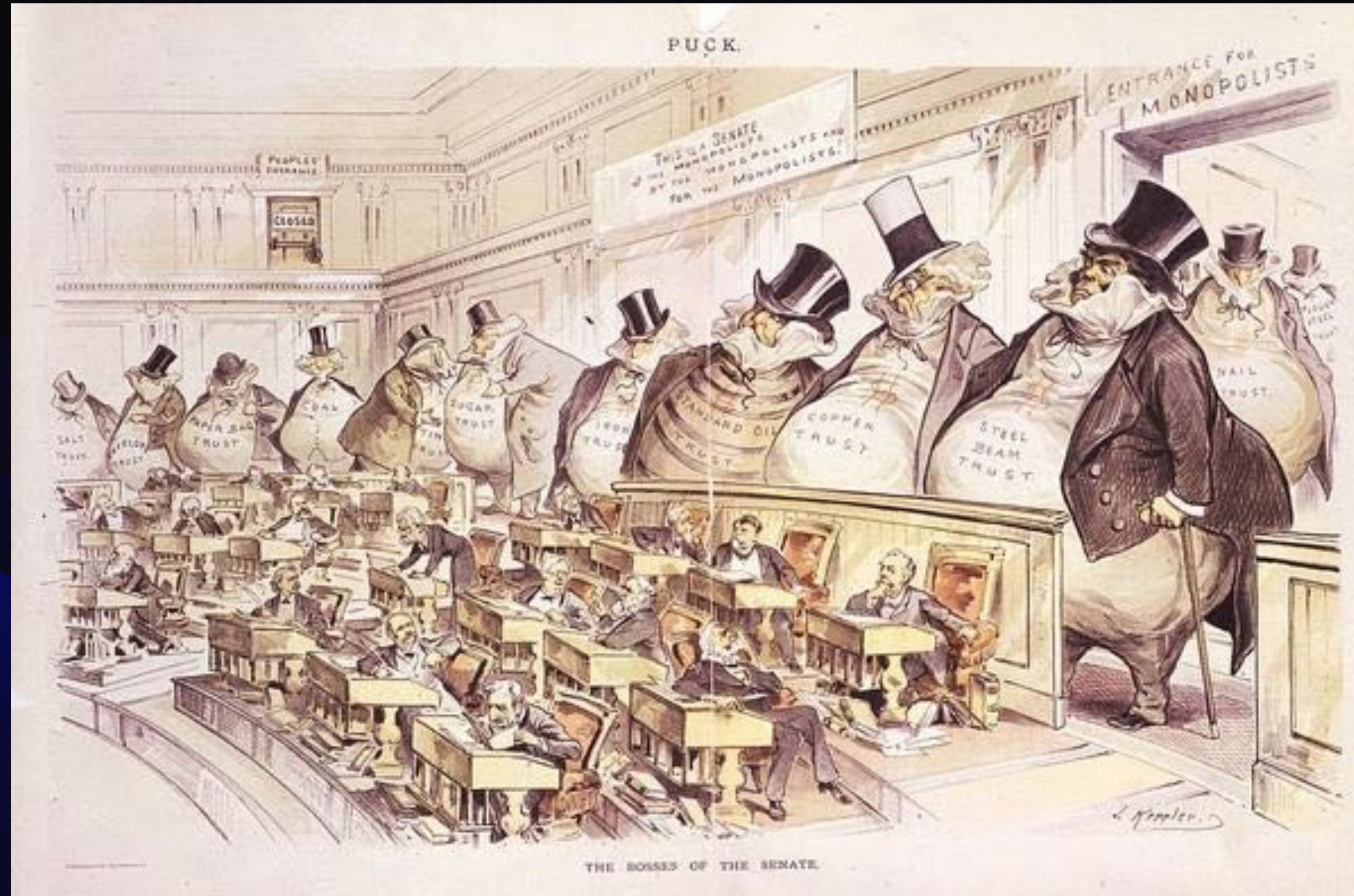
Second Reading

What does it take for a privileged person to turn toward compassionate action? Statistics provide information about the immense economic disparity on the planet, but that is not enough. Guilt also rarely achieves compassionate action in this regard. Neither will constant haranguing. One of the most effective ways of shaking loose indifference and ignorance about the wide chasm between wealth and poverty comes from viewing it up close and personal.

Constricted self-interest keeps the “haves” from recognizing and doing something to lessen the situation of the “have nots.” Removing this obstacle of self-orientation takes great determination to not succumb to our culture’s addiction to consumerism.

Rupp, Joyce. Boundless Compassion: Creating a Way of Life

Sermon



“The Bosses of the Senate.” Cartoon by Joseph Keppler, published in *Puck* on 1/23/1889. Corporate interests are shown as giant money bags looming over tiny senators. “This is the Senate of the Monopolists, by the Monopolists and for the Monopolists!”

Hymn of the Day: Come Touch and Bless

Come touch our hearts that we may know compassion,
from failing embers build a blazing fire,
love strong enough to overturn injustice,
To seek a world more gracious. Come touch and bless our hearts.

Come touch our souls that we may know and love you.
Your quiet presence all our fears dispel;
Create a space for Spirit to grow in us,
Let life and beauty fill us. Come, touch and bless our souls.

Come touch our minds and teach us how to reason,
Set free our thoughts to wonder and to dream;
Help us to open doors of understanding
To welcome truth and wisdom. Come touch and bless our minds.

Come touch us in the moments we are fragile
And in our weakness your great strength reveal
That we may rise to follow and to serve.
Steady now our nerve. Come touch and bless our wills.

Come touch us now, this people who are gathered
To break the bread and share the cup of peace;
That we may love you with our heart our soul
Our mind our strength, our all. Come, touch us with your grace.

Prayers of the People

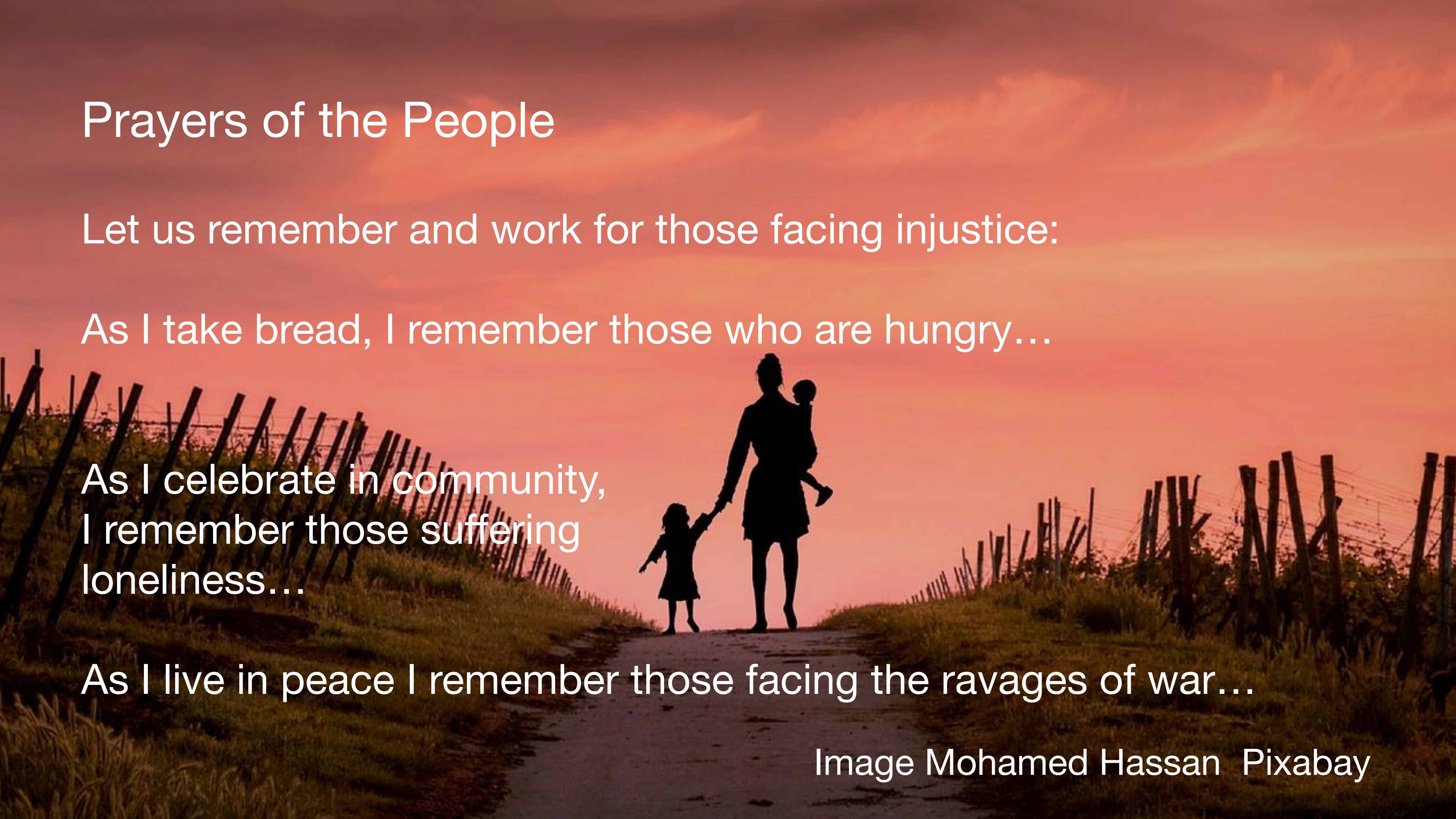
Let us remember and work for those facing injustice:

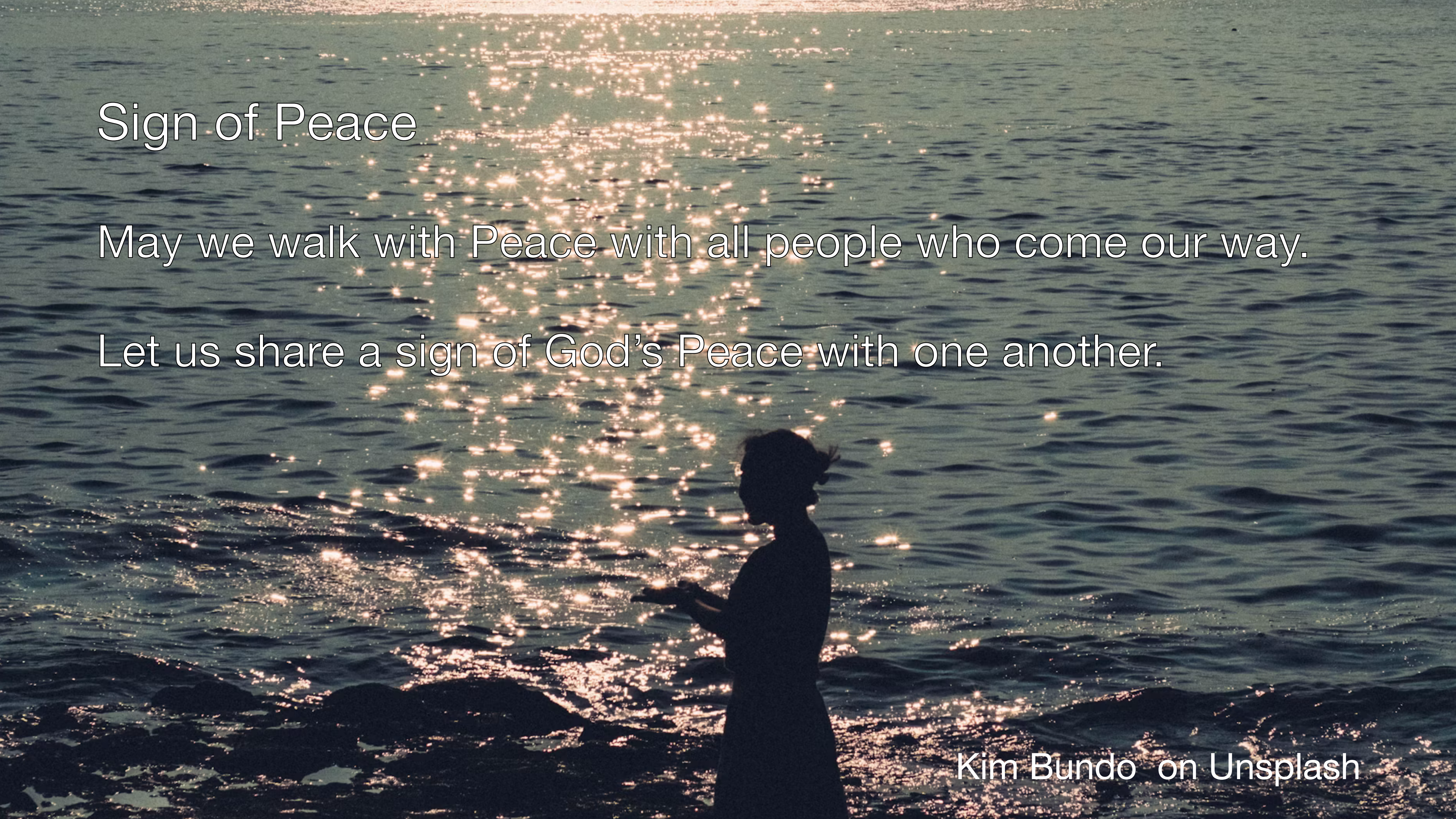
As I take bread, I remember those who are hungry...

As I celebrate in community,
I remember those suffering
loneliness...

As I live in peace I remember those facing the ravages of war...

Image Mohamed Hassan Pixabay





Sign of Peace

May we walk with Peace with all people who come our way.

Let us share a sign of God's Peace with one another.

Kim Bundo on Unsplash

Thanksgiving Prayer

In the blessed abundance of creation, we gather to celebrate the nourishing gift of life. We gather in the power of the Spirit whose breath inspires the primal waters, calling into being the variety and abundance we see around us. That same Spirit sustains and animates our every endeavour, inviting us to act in wisdom and in truth. In gratitude and joy we embrace our calling and we lift our voices to proclaim as one the ancient song of praise:

A serene sunset over a calm lake. The sky is filled with soft, glowing clouds in shades of orange, yellow, and pink. The sun is low on the horizon, casting a warm light across the scene. The dark silhouettes of trees line the shore, their forms reflected in the still water of the lake. The overall atmosphere is peaceful and contemplative.

Holy Holy: Source of Our Being

Source of our Being, Goal of our longing,.
You are the way of living true.

Source of our Being, Goal of our longing,
You are the way of living true.

Waken us from dreams of illusion,
Waken us from dreams unreal.

Source of our Being, Goal of our longing,
You are the way of living true.

Source of our Being, Goal of our longing,
You are the way of living true.

Communion Prayer

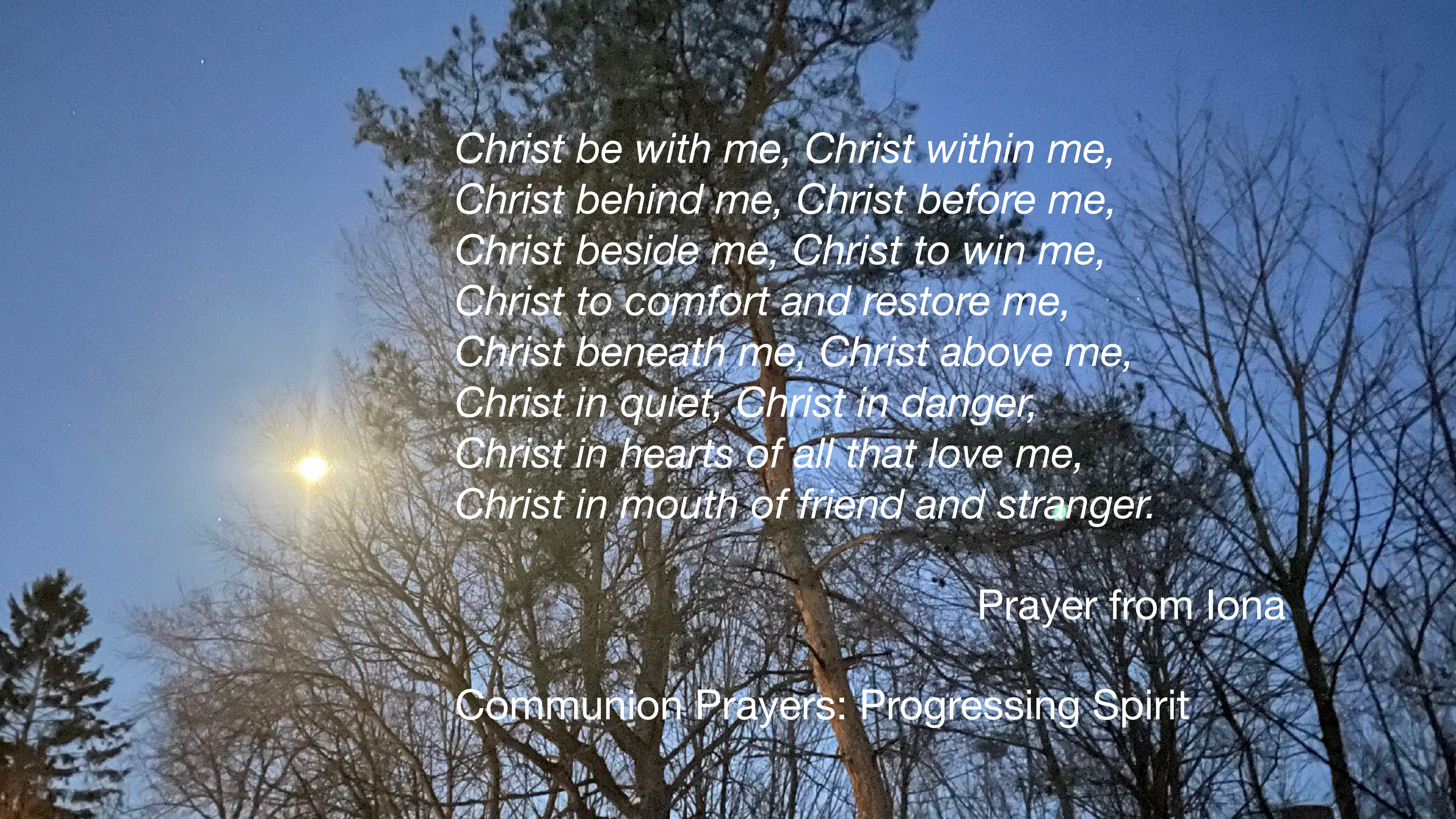
Gathering the beloved community around the table of nourishing hope, Jesus took the bread, and in grateful remembrance offered the bread to each and to all, uttering these words: Take this all of you; This bread is like is my body which is broken and shared for all.

After the meal, Jesus took a cup, poured out in a spirit of solidarity and empowerment. Jesus gave thanks and shared the cup with his friends, saying: Take this, all of you and drink from it; This cup of wine is like my life-blood, the life of an everlasting covenant. In prophetic solidarity, it is poured out for you and for all. Sustain one another in the power of sacred memory.

We invoke the Spirit upon all who are gathered here that our solidarity around the Eucharistic table may awaken in us a yearning for compassion, justice and generosity, so that all peoples can enjoy the gifts of God's abundant nourishment.

We unite our thoughts and prayers with all who yearn for new life. In our daily lives may we be blessed with wisdom and courage, with vision and resolve.

Nurtured by your Word, nourished by your food;
we proclaim the Living Christ:



*Christ be with me, Christ within me,
Christ behind me, Christ before me,
Christ beside me, Christ to win me,
Christ to comfort and restore me,
Christ beneath me, Christ above me,
Christ in quiet, Christ in danger,
Christ in hearts of all that love me,
Christ in mouth of friend and stranger.*

Prayer from Iona

Communion Prayers: Progressing Spirit

Alternative to the Prayer Attributed to Jesus

With grateful and humble hearts, we now pray:

*Most Compassionate Life-giver, may we honour and praise you;
may we work with you to establish your new order of justice,
peace and love.*

*Give us what we need for growth, and help us,
through forgiving others, to accept forgiveness.*

*Strengthen us in the time of testing,
that we may resist all evil*

*for all the tenderness, strength and love are yours,
now and forever.*

Amen.

Communion Hymn: You Satisfy the Hungry Heart

Refrain

You satisfy the hungry heart with gift of finest wheat.
Come give to us, O saving Lord, the bread of life to eat.

As when the shepherd calls his sheep,
They know and heed his voice;
So when You call Your family,
Lord, We follow and rejoice.

Photo by [Raspopova Marina](#) on [Unsplash](#)



The mystery of Your presence Lord,
No mortal tongue can tell;
Whom all the world cannot contain
Comes in our hearts to dwell.

Refrain: You satisfy the hungry heart with gift of finest wheat,
Come give to us, O saving Lord, the bread of life to eat.

You give yourself to us, O Lord,
Then selfless let us be,
To serve each other in Your name
In truth and charity.

Refrain: You satisfy the hungry heart with gift of finest wheat,
Come give to us, O saving Lord, the bread of life to eat.



Prayer After Communion

Indwelling Spirit,
we have shared bread and wine,
the symbols of compassion, service and unity.
Encourage us in our work together,
that we may grow in love
as we serve one another.
Amen



Sending Hymn: We Can Change the World

How can we change the world we know? How can creation safely grow?
What can we do to stem the flow of evil now and long ago?
We dream of pictures bold and bright of children squealing with delight,
Of strong integrity for the right, of darkness conquered by the light.

A serene sunset scene with a bright sun low on the horizon, casting a warm orange glow across the sky. Silhouetted trees, including evergreens and bare deciduous trees, frame the scene. In the background, a small house with a snow-covered roof is visible through the trees.

Sending Hymn: We Can Change the World v.2

How can we change the world to be where everyone is safe and free?

How can we make society a kind and just community?

We dream that fear will have no place

when war will cease and leave no trace.

When all humanity, every race will greet each other and embrace.



Sending Hymn: We Can Change the World v.3

We can do more than only dream; we can enhance Love's beam
and when the torment in extreme be sources from which hope can stream.
We can refuse to bow to greed. We can speak up for those who bleed.
We can with sympathy help to feed the hungry ones and those in need.

A serene sunset scene with a bright sun low on the horizon, casting a warm orange glow across the sky. Silhouetted trees, including evergreens and bare deciduous trees, frame the scene on the left and right sides. The overall mood is peaceful and contemplative.

Sending Hymn: We Can Change the World v4

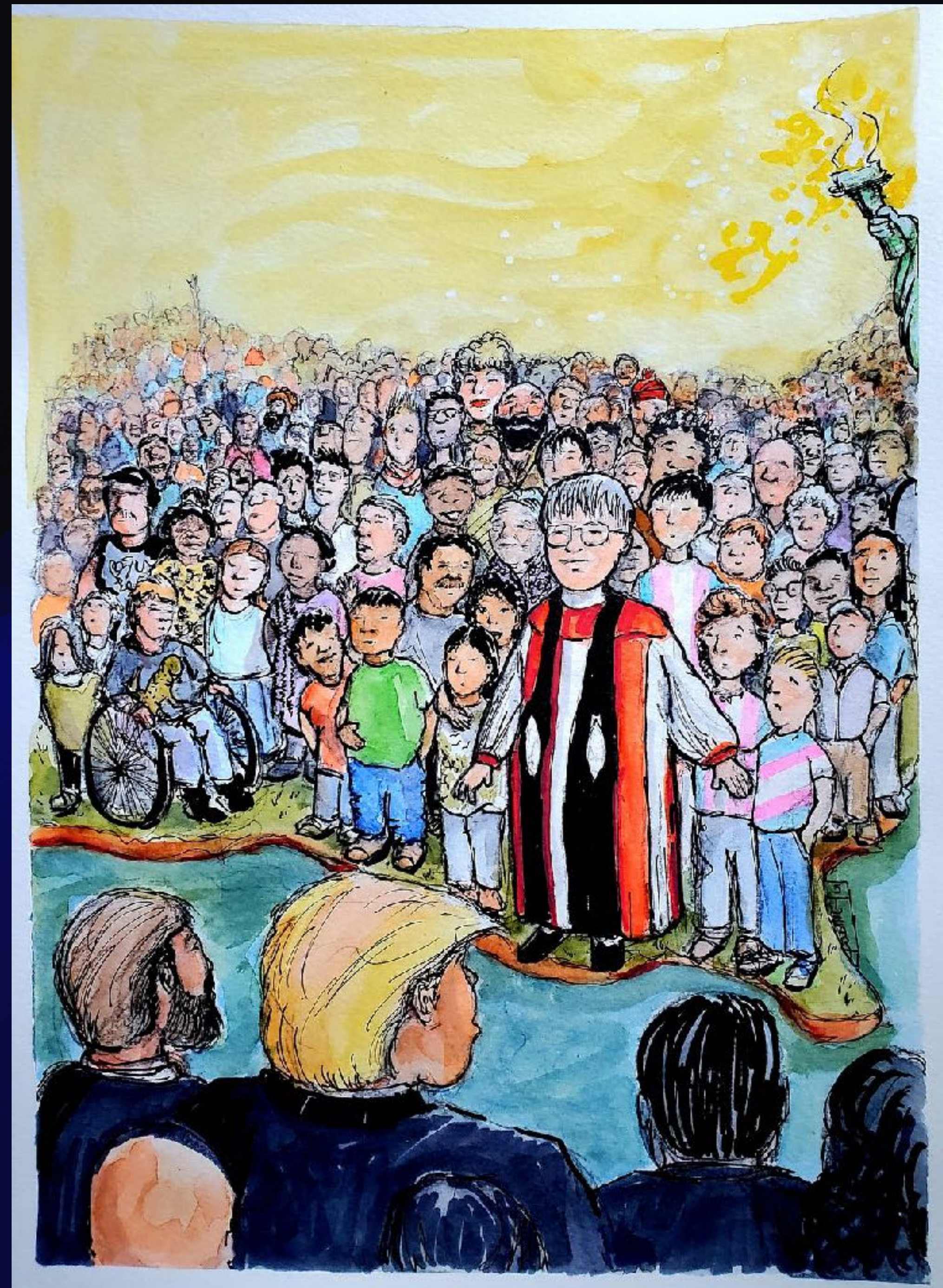
In Christ we have the way laid bare. Follow his calling if we dare.
God's love is costly so beware, God's claims can take us anywhere.
But in God's Love we can be strong and be triumphant over wrong.
And in our joy we sing a song for in God's love we all belong.

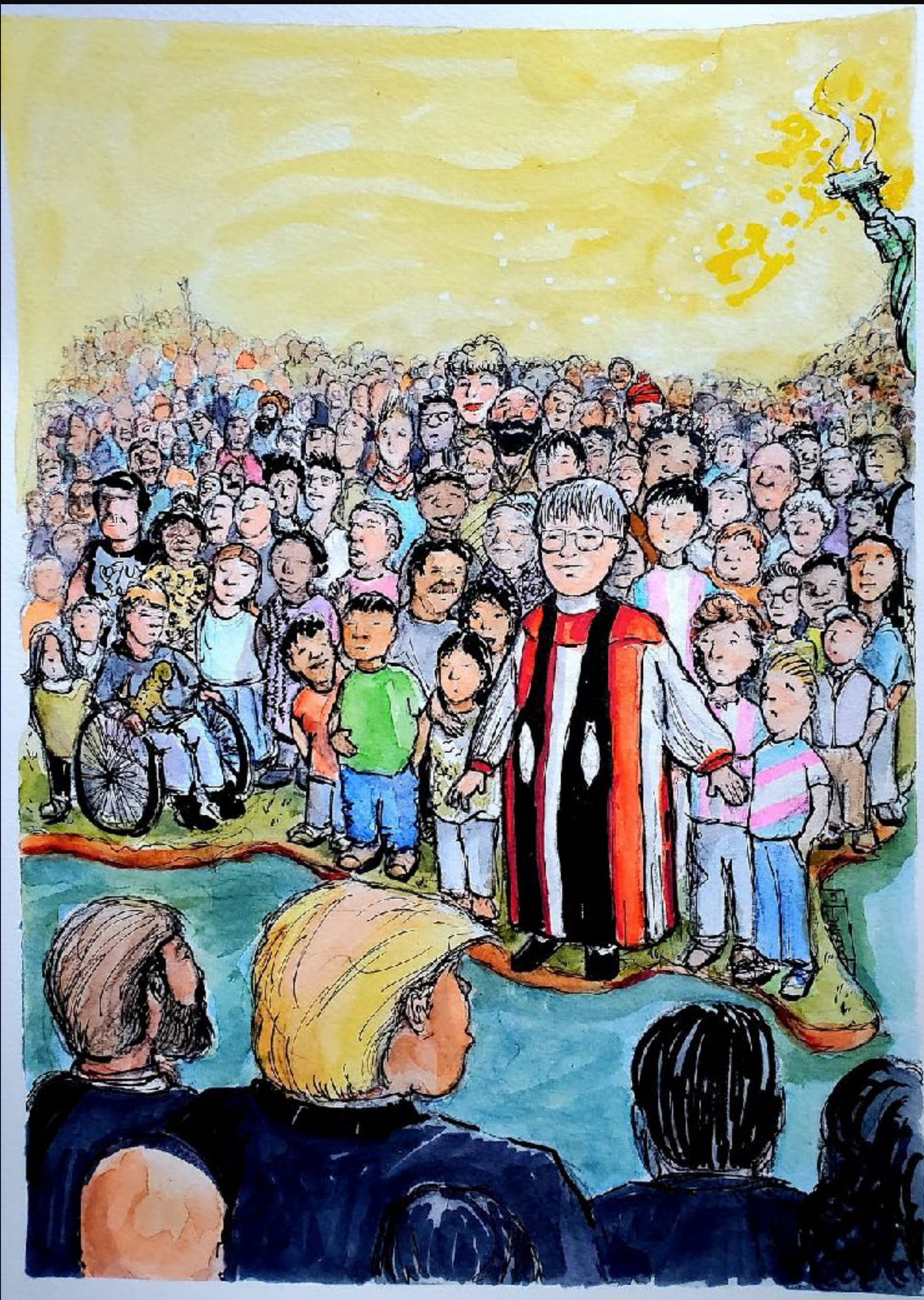
Blessing and Dismissal

God of justice, in this moment of history when society remains trapped in the ever-widening divide between 'haves' and 'have-nots', turn our hearts around and direct them towards compassion. Change the minds and hearts of those who contribute to the wide gulf separating the privileged and dispossessed.

Bless us as we draw on the courage and kind-heartedness you have planted in the depths of our beings. Amen

Joyce Rupp (adapted)





Announcements:

It is easier to say “Jesus died for my sins: than to say, “Jesus was killed for standing up to evil.” Because the latter demands us to identify falsehood and oppose systems of oppression while the former ends up purging us of the need to do justice.

Art: The Gulf of Empathy
Permission by Artist
Jerome Stueart (Canadian/American)

Prints available:

jeromestueartart.squarespace.com/store