



Wednesday Prayer

19th Sunday after Pentecost – A Love Song of Concern

Let me sing for my beloved my love-song concerning his vineyard: My beloved had a vineyard on a very fertile hill. He dug it and cleared it of stones, and planted it with choice vines; he built a watchtower in the midst of it, and hewed out a wine vat in it; he expected it to yield grapes, but it yielded wild grapes. And now, inhabitants of Jerusalem and people of Judah, judge between me and my vineyard. What more was there to do for my vineyard that I have not done in it? When I expected it to yield grapes, why did it yield wild grapes? ... For the vineyard of the LORD of hosts is the house of Israel, and the people of Judah are his pleasant planting; he expected justice, but saw bloodshed; righteousness, but heard a cry!

Isaiah 5:1-4,7

“Let me sing for my beloved...” a love song of concern. I just returned from the Women of the ELCA triennial “Just Love.” As the first gathering in six years, there was much to be done. New leaders were elected, and a new path forward was brought forth by executive director Linda Post Bushkofsky: *“The Holy Spirit is pushing and pulling us forward. Some of us are jumping on board, moving into that future. [Others] of us won’t be making that journey, resisting the reality of where we are going.”* Speakers focused on immigration, anti-racism, truth and healing, and working against human trafficking. Interconnected issues and all within the framework of “Just Love”.

As Isaiah 5 makes clear, the beloved vineyard planted for justice and righteousness has instead brought about bloodshed and cries of distress. God speaks the hard truth to us who have abused our power. We like to point the finger at others when we talk of speaking truth to power, but here God is speaking truth to us. The speakers I heard at the Women of the ELCA triennial were calling us to account as well. Rev. Dr. Kelly Sherman Conroy emotively shared,

“Immigrants are not threats or a burden but our siblings. We need to have open hearts and minds and see the face of God in all. Mitakuye Oyasin – All my relatives.”

Vance Blackfox, director of ELCA Indigenous Ministries and Tribal Relations, asked us to learn the truths of our colonizing impacts on Indigenous people in the past and present. Monday, October 9 is Indigenous People’s Day. Take time to read the ELCA’s [Repudiation of the Doctrine of Discovery](#), the [Declaration to American Indian and Alaska Native People](#) and engage in the [ELCA’s Truth and Healing Movement](#). The love of God works through these truths.

Loving God, open our hearts to seek the truth and work toward reconciliation for all the harms we have participated in whether through our complicity, denial, or actions. Help us to see what we have been unable or unwilling to see before and shift us toward healing justice and love for all our siblings. Amen.

Written by Joy McElroy, Cherish All Children Executive Director