

Questions for Reflection and Discussion

Week 3: A Vision for Justice

1. What seemed relevant or timely to you from the message this past Sunday? Was there anything that made you uncomfortable or with which you disagreed?
2. What emotions does the word “justice” convey to you? Why do you feel like this? Share a little of your own story with regards to justice issues.
3. Maya Angelou said, “Do the best you can until you know better. Then, when you know better, do better.” What have you learned recently that you think can help you “do better”?
4. Read the excerpt from our vision statement below. In what ways does this inspire you? In what ways does it make you feel uncomfortable or challenging?

Imagine that community scattered throughout the region working as agents of love, peace, and hope wherever they are; serving our neighbors and pursuing justice with the oppressed and underserved. Imagine a community of people who live simply and ethically, who share their land and resources with their neighbors; a community that treasures the Earth and reaches out beyond national, cultural, and political barriers to offer friendship and practical support. Imagine a community of people who make the world a better place.

5. Read Luke 4:16-21. Jesus is reading from Isaiah 61. In what ways did Jesus fulfil this prophecy of Isaiah? In what ways did he not fulfil what Isaiah had anticipated? Jesus entrusted his disciples with the task of proclaiming this same message in Matthew 10:7-8. What does this imply for us as followers of Jesus?
6. Read Isaiah 58:1-12. What does this passage say about religious observances and social justice? The prophet makes a connection between acting justly and experiencing the presence of God. Can you think of a time in your life when you have sensed God’s presence in the context of pursuing justice?
7. Read Galatians 3:26-28. In light of these verses, how does being “in Christ” change our perspective on social justice?
8. What justice issue moves you deeply at this current time? How are you addressing this issue—or how might you? If you are meeting in a group, take some time to pray for one another as you seek to participate in God’s work of bringing about justice on Earth. If you are reflecting on these questions alone, talk to God about this.

Practice for the week: Practicing oneness

Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. wrote in his letter from Birmingham jail: “Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly.”

At the start of each day, ask God to open your eyes to injustice. When you encounter injustice during your day, remember that we are all one—all God’s children and all connected. Divisions between people are an illusion. How does this impact your view of the injustices you notice? Talk to God about this.