Reflection for Monday, June 19, 2023

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I appreciate about the O.C.C. congregation that I can take on pretty much any topic and know that it will be met with interest, even if people approach issues in a different way than I do. I do consider curiosity a God-given gift, and it has been very meaningful to learn along with this congregation.

We may, perhaps, have further conversations about restorative justice (about which I preached Sunday), but first I wanted to share with you the article which inspired my sermon, “Can Forgiveness Play a Role in Criminal Justice?” by Paul Tullis:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2013/01/06/magazine/can-forgiveness-play-a-role-in-criminal-justice.html>

It’s a sad and painful story, but also a story about hope and healing. All the parties had to take enormous leaps of faith and make enormous changes in their lives to move through that sorrow. Their sense of what was “right” had to be examined again and again. And so I’ll repeat the section from the Yehuda Amichai poem that I quoted yesterday:

From the place where we are right

flowers will never grow

in the spring.

The place where we are right

is hard and trampled

like a yard,

but doubts and loves

dig up the world

like a mole, a plow.

May your doubts, but especially, your loves, plow the soil of your soul and make it ready for fresh new growth to send up its tendrils.

In faith,

Elizabeth

**Announcements:**

The church office will be closed on Monday, but Centering Prayer will meet as usual.

Happy Juneteenth!

\*

Elizabeth misspoke, and the 17th of June **wasn’t** John Thursby’s birthday, but John and Nancy’s anniversary! Oops! And **happy anniversary John and Nancy!**

\*

The in-person contemplative service will not be meeting this week, though Anna is available to unlock the chapel for those who would like to use it.

There will be no writers’ group, reading group, or Theology and Scripture group this week.

\*

We are delighted to welcome Rev. Birte Beuck, with able assistance from Rev. Lee Cruise next Sunday, June 25.

\*

The church has a long tradition in helping to supply backpacks and school supplies for children working with Hope Solutions, and the backpack drive is now in progress.

Hope Solutions now runs the backpack drive online, with two options.

If you would like to purchase a packed backpack at this link:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c094dafaa2da5f94-hope12?ct=t(SpringtimeatHopeSolutions_COPY_01)&mc_cid=3cf54ead45&mc_eid=7f8b300e70#/>

Thank you for supporting schoolchildren and adding some excitement to their school year!