



# Buffalo United Methodist Church

October 2020

1000 30<sup>th</sup> Street NE  
Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52402



## Justice For All

by Bishop Laurie Haller

It brought tears to my eyes on Friday evening as I watched hundreds of people gathering for a spontaneous vigil outside the Supreme Court building in Washington to pay tribute to RBG: Ruth Bader Ginsburg. An icon around the world, Ginsburg was one of the most outspoken advocates for gender equality of our time, including voting rights and equal pay for women. Ginsburg, who served as a Justice of the Supreme Court for 27 years, was the first female Jewish Justice. The crowd spontaneously recited the Jewish prayer for the dead and also began singing, "Amazing grace, how sweet the sound, that saved a wretch like me; I once was lost but now am found; was blind but now I see." Ruth Bader Ginsburg was a Justice for all, teaching us how to see the reflection of God in each person on this earth.

During a 2004 speech at the Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington D.C., Ginsburg said, "My heritage as a Jew and my occupation as a judge fit together symmetrically. The demand for justice runs through the entirety of Jewish history and Jewish tradition. I take pride in and draw strength from my heritage, as signs in my chambers attest: a large silver mezuzah on my door post, gift from the Shulamith School for Girls in Brooklyn; on three walls, in artists' renditions of Hebrew letters, the command from Deuteronomy: 'Zedek, zedek, tirdof' – 'Justice, justice shall you pursue.' Those words are ever-present reminders of what judges must do that they 'may thrive.'"

. . . Justice, justice you shall pursue. Treating and advocating for all people as the unique individuals God created them to be. It's not only the calling of Supreme Court Justices, but it's our call as well so that we may thrive as one human family. That's how I will remember our beloved Ruth Bader Ginsburg.

Is it coincidental that the gospel reading for yesterday was Matthew 20:1-16, the parable of the laborers in the vineyard? It's interesting, isn't it, that the lectionary passages for each week often speak directly to what is happening in our lives and how God hopes that we will make the connections. The laborers in the vineyard is one of my favorite biblical stories because it applies to so many situations where we feel disenfranchised and disregarded and say, "It's not fair! Nor is it just!"

Jesus tells us that a landowner went out in the morning to hire day workers and agreed to give them a denarius. Several other times during the day, the owner returned to the town square, saw other workers hanging around, and hired them, saying, "I'll pay you whatever is right." At the end of the day, the owner settled his accounts by paying each man a denarius, whereupon the workers who had been hired first complained, "It's not fair! We worked more hours than they did." And the owner simply responded, "Are you angry because I'm generous?"

The words "justice" and "fairness" are often used interchangeably, but common to both terms is the belief that we should be treated as we deserve. It's not fair! . . . Many things in our world right now aren't fair. Nor are they just. The Center for Disease Control and Prevention is discovering that COVID-19 is disproportionately affecting racial-ethnic groups, the elderly, and the vulnerable much more than other groups. Poverty, unemployment, and a lack of access to health care are also contributing to this discrepancy. It's not fair. Nor is it just. . . .

Cancer is not fair. Job loss is not fair. Crop loss is not fair. Recovering from floods, hurricanes, wildfires, and derechos is not fair. Mental health issues are not fair. Even in the church, we struggle. Clergy are having to

reinvent ministry day by day during this challenging time and, at times, feel stressed, anxious, and demoralized. It's not fair.

Perhaps the most important question is who deserves grace and who doesn't. As the parable of the laborers in the vineyard reminds us, you and I are called to embody the generosity and grace of the landowner, who refused to be distracted by pleas of "not fair" and justly paid all of the workers equally. . . .

When Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg was asked how she wanted to be remembered, she said this, "Someone who used whatever talent she had to do her work to the very best of her ability. And to help repair tears in her society, to make things a little better through the use of whatever ability she has."

Thank you, RBG, for being a Supreme Court Justice for all, and thank you for advocating for justice and fairness for those who come to our shores.

*When we've been there ten thousand years, bright  
shining as the sun;*

*we've no less days to sing God's praise than when we'd  
first begun.*

*[The complete text was posted to Bishop Haller's blog  
on 21 September 2020.]*

## **United Methodist Women**

The next UMW will be meeting on Thursday, October 15 at 9:30 am in the Fellowship Hall. After a business session, Judy Hackney will present the program. Face masks and social distancing will be required.

## **Linn Community Food Bank**

In October we will start collecting food to assist the Food Bank in their preparations for Thanksgiving. This year our goal is to inundate the Food Bank with cans of sweet potatoes, boxes of stuffing, and those crispy fried onions required for topping off the classic Midwestern green bean casserole.

## **October Special Offering**

The special offering on World Communion Sunday (October 4) provides scholarships for racial and ethnic minority students and international students, both undergraduate and graduate. Nelson Mandela said, "Education is the most powerful weapon you can use to change the world." Because of your giving on World Communion Sunday, the most powerful tool to change the world will be available to more young people. Please consider supporting this special offering.

## **Buffalo Administrative Board Meeting**

**Wednesday, 16 September 2020**

Summary of Trustees report:

- The kitchen fan has been repaired by Brecke Construction.
- The air conditioners were checked and are fine.
- The gutter was removed from the west side of the church and a new gutter will be installed following the roof repair.
- Summit Tree Removal is scheduled to finish trimming trees and level the south lawn damaged by the large equipment used for the tree removal. [This work has been completed.]
- The fence around the playground will not be replaced at this time; fencing might be installed next year if the absence of a fence causes any problems.
- The Board gave the Trustees authority for replacing the shed (built in 1970) with a new metal shed.

Other business:

- The new church directory remains on hold.
- The Board voted to continue donating cookies the third Wednesday of every month to the Cedar River First Nations Community and discussed obtaining a UMW financial grant to help support this program.
- Pastor Kathryn expressed her appreciation for the congregation's willingness to observe social distancing and to wear face masks during services. Some Methodist pastors have been frustrated with church members resisting these COVID-19 guidelines.

## **Three Messages for Buffalo Bakers**

- (1) Although there will not be an October Bazaar, we will be collecting money for a NO BAKE SALE. Simply add up the cost of the supplies you would typically use in preparing your baked goods and donate the money to the church, identifying the donation specifically for the "No Bake Sale." This fall's donations will be used to help cover unexpected expenses caused by the derecho.
- (2) For the General Election, there will be a bake sale on Tuesday, November 3. A bucket will be available for money donated for baked goods.
- (3) Cookies for the First Nations October food drive are due at the church by noon on Wednesday, 21 October.

## **Buffalo's Financial Obligations**

Alas, Buffalo continues to face large expenses (for example, over \$10,000 for the tree removal), so further prayers and a few more dollars will certainly be most welcome.

# October 2020

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>"You can give without loving, but you cannot love without giving." ~Amy Carmichael</p>				1	2	3 Jewish Festival of Sukkot begins
4 8:45 Worship on World Com- munion Sunday	5	6	7	8	9	10
11 8:45 Worship Service	12 Church Cleaning (9:00 am)	13	14 John & Charles Wesley set sail for America (1735)	15 UMW (9:00 a.m.)	16	17
18 8:45 Worship Service	19	20	21 Donate Cookies for First Nations	22	23	24
25 8:45 Worship; Charge Conf. (2:00 pm)	26	27	28	29	30	31 All Hallows Eve

**October Wedding Anniversaries:** 14 – Gary & Judy Hackney

**October Birthdays:** 2 – Ada Olmsted    15 – Mary Richman    18 – Bobby Kelley    18 – Shannon Kelley  
19 – Beverly Brooks    22 – Ivy Seufferlein    26 – Gloria Clinton    29 – Cameron Terpin

## Buffalo's New Portable Sound System

The church recently purchased from West Music a Yamaha Stagepas 400 Sound System, which includes two portable speakers and adjustable stands, two Shure microphones, a flexible microphone stand, and two storage bags. Adaptable for both indoor and outdoor events, the system has excellent sound qualities and appears to be user friendly in its set up and operation.

## Hy-Vee Receipts

Don't forget: we are still saving Hy-Vee receipts to help support Garfield Elementary.

## Spic and Span Ladies and Gents

### Cleaning Day at Buffalo

We start sweeping, scrubbing, and vacuuming at 9 a.m. on Monday, March 9. No previous experience or special skills required.

## Annual Charge Conference

Buffalo's Annual Charge Conference is scheduled for Sunday, October 25 at 2:00 p.m. with Rev. Jaymee Burns presiding. Further details will be forthcoming on how the session will be conducted, whether it be a meeting at the church or a virtual gathering.

## Honor Roll of Buffalo Heroes

- Thanks to Becky Durand and Marlene Himes for sanitizing the church before Sunday morning services.
- Thanks to the trustees in their efforts to repair and restore the church, grounds, and damaged equipment (shed, roof, gutters, stove vent) following the August 10 wind storm.
- Thanks to Gary Hackney for taking down the damaged fence around the playground and to Barb Crawford, Linda Otto, Brad Gardner, and Chris Gochenouer for removing tree debris. It's a slow process but we are making headway.
- Thanks to everyone who has brought baked goods for the First Nations Community food baskets. We will continue to donate items on the 3rd Wednesday of the month (October 21, November 18, and December 16). Cookies are to be packaged six in a package, and delivered to the church by noon on each Wednesday. Pet food and personal items are also welcome.

## Bison Blog

After five weeks without internet service, Buffalo's Bison Blog is back in operation. Check out the latest postings on John Lewis, Moses, and Justice Ginsburg. <http://buffalounitedmethodist.weebly.com/>

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## Pastoral Letter

God calls us to be good stewards of all living things, and that includes ourselves. Here are a few suggestions to help us keep in good shape and be the hands of God to the world around us.

- Get moving – even if it's just little steps. Weight bearing movement builds and maintains bone density, while improved balance and flexibility can prevent falls.
- Turn on the lights. This is not the time to save 25 cents on the electric bill and spend \$1500 at the hospital.
- Wear the right shoes and retire the old favorites to the garbage bin.
- Make your stairs and steps safe. No junk piled up, good hand rails, non-skid surfaces. Stairs can kill you. After my Mom pointed out that there were 13 steps to our basement, I started counting and quit falling.
- Keep rugs from sliding with non-skid liners and tape. Or lose the rugs all together.
- Clear the clutter.
- And, of course, continue to use all your good COVID-19 habits at church. Being open and flexible is a gift that we can give each other during these challenging times.

~Pastor Kathryn

The Pastor's complete letter can be found on the Pastor's Page posted on Buffalo's website.

