



## Worship Resources for *Steeple's Ad Run* – Fall 2008

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**Genesis 1:27**

### **Not Politically Correct**

I have often imagined the Eternal One surveying the panoply of world religions, then playfully and profoundly assigning to each faith community a particular aspect of divine truth to struggle with, to live into, and to live up to. The UCC, I believe, was given Genesis 1:27. Our past, our present, and our future has been, is, and seemingly will be a working out and working with what it means that all human beings are created in the image and likeness of God. From the churches in Connecticut who raised money to feed, house, clothe, and care for the captives on the *Amistad*, as they sought freedom; to the Association in New York that ordained Antoinette Brown in 1853; to our ongoing pursuit of the full meaning of “open and affirming” we are called to accountability.

Contrast that outlook with one that contends that we’re just being “politically correct.” “Politically Correct” assumes that some faceless someone somewhere beyond our control and unconcerned with our own specific well-being maintains a “correctness chart.” And is keeping score. “Politically Correct” assumes that the multitudes will hop aboard whatever “bandwagon” rolls into town—and, most likely, use the ride to their own advantage. “Politically Correct” has no business in church. We are summoned to a much higher standard for our actions. We need to continually remind one another that, as Christians, we are rooted in a Biblical faith. We need to hold one another accountable to the reality that we are rooted in a Biblical faith. And that God is still speaking.

We need to cultivate a garden where fear cannot take root and cynicism does not choke out hope. We need to drop any lingering presumption that within The United Church of Christ there is room for only one set of anything: one set of theological beliefs; one set of political party loyalties; one economic class; one ethnic group; one sexual orientation.

None of us is ever left out of God’s love or treated with divine indifference. Not white people not brown people not black people. Neither Native Americans, nor those of English, German, Japanese, Javanese, Puerto Rican, Samoan, Slavic or any other ethnic origin need to fear rejection by The Almighty. The opening verses of Genesis show us The Creator loving the universe into being with lavish and tender attention to all manner of diversity. Not one big swoosh and there it all was. Not drab uniformity in the composition of creation. But gradual movement, complex ingredients.

Now, there will be times—and there have been times—when our beliefs, our faith, our understanding of discipleship, impel us to actions in the sphere of politics. And as a church we know that we could count up the number of times when we’ve ever all agreed on anything, and come up with a number that wasn’t much bigger than the number of candles on a toddler’s birthday cake. So it shouldn’t surprise us a whole lot when we disagree. Or when we find that fundamentalists and near-Buddhists, Socialists and Republicans, farm owners and farm workers are all clustering around the same communion table. What can we make of it, except that Jesus has called each one of us to be here—in the church and in the world? How can we live with our differences, not merely tolerating them but cherishing them, except by reminding ourselves that The Almighty has created each of us in the divine image? That’s not political correctness, my friends. It’s Gospel. Good News for all the people.