



Injustice is Heavy: Let There be Light

Sherry Warren
Minister for Women's and Gender Justice

A quick glance at the news and I almost shut down completely. There are so many social problems, acts of violence, and injustices that I cannot even begin to list them, let alone analyze them or find a meaningful response other than spiritual despondency. It is the hopeful season of Advent, but hopelessness penetrates my psyche almost as deeply as the journalists' descriptions of the horrors they report on. It's the holly, jolly season of Christmas, but I feel as hollow as tinny muzak blaring through shopping malls and office parties and television ads.

Amidst the noise and anxiety, I go quiet to ponder what I hold dear. What God would say to me were God here to speak their vision into existence? Would I be able to hear God over the harmonies of the carolers? Would God swear when the tape dispenser cuts into their fleshless fingers while wrapping a gift? Would God cry out as molten sugar from a bubbling pot of corn-syrupy divinity glubs out on the back of their hand? Does God holler when the ladder used to hang lights on the eaves slips a little and sinks into the mud? Where is God among the bustling shoppers and police sirens that echo through the streets? Can I be quiet enough to hear God's tears as they slip off a damp cheek and drop onto the keyboard while reading about another shooting, another bombing, and another court decision that is based in fear instead of love?

It is so heavy to witness the injustices of our world. It is heavier to experience the injustices directly. Against the heaviness, I muster strength. I must speak up for those whose existence and decision-making capacities are challenged over and over and over again by lawmakers making ill-informed decisions. I must lift myself out of the shadows of trauma being inflicted around the world and turn to the light – pink and purple and burning brightly– flickering hope, peace, joy, and love into the uncertainty that encloses us. My heart warms and my spirit soars as I recognize God's presence amidst all the chaos.

If I listen closely, I hear God in the tinkling piano keys and the chiming bells, in the slightly off-key carolers' voices raising a joyful noise as I hum along. I can smell God in the fresh cuttings of evergreen hanging in the shops and in the cinnamon mixed with hot apple cider, that tastes so sweet and spicy on my tongue. I see God when I give my attention to people-watching, seeing the kindness that is shared among strangers holding doors for each other. I feel God, when I witness a young girl speak truth to powerful legislators, asking them to give her the same rights they afford to her brother, simply by the nature of biology. When I pause long enough to let my feelings actually feel, I am aware of God's presence all around me, calling me to greater good, reminding me to love more loudly and visibly because this world – God's world and our world– desperately needs it. And so this is Christmas.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Sherry Warren is the Minister for Women's and Gender Justice for the United Church of Christ.

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