



It's Time to Get into Good Trouble

Sara Lund

Minister for Disabilities and Mental Health Justice

On Tuesday, April 3, history was made by U.S. Senator Cory Booker who spoke on the Senate floor for the longest consecutive time in history, over 25 hours. Senator Booker told dozens of stories during his speech: stories of Americans who sacrificed their lives for freedom. Stories of fear mongering, harassment, and threats to the U.S. Constitution. Stories of Native Americans who love this country, despite all its sins against them. Stories about love, kindness, and diversity.

Toward the end of his remarks, Senator Booker said, “We are one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice, not just for some, but for all. We are in this moral moment now. It is not about left or right, but about right or wrong.” Then at 8pm, as he ended his 25-hour speech, Senator Booker quoted the late John Lewis, inviting all of us to “Get into good trouble” as he yielded the floor.

During these days of political division, chaos, unrest, and global uncertainty, we are called to get into good trouble—boldly and courageously, with open minds and hearts. We are called to tell the God stories happening now in our lives and in the world, the stories of how God/Mercy/Empathy/Compassion/Love/Justice are showing up in our lives and in the world today.

In the United Church of Christ, we have a saying, “Never put a period where God has placed a comma because God is still speaking.” The stories of God recorded in the Bible didn’t end with the book of Revelation. The stories of God continue with every generation, including mine, including yours. As author Mary Oliver says, “Pay attention. Be astonished. Tell about it.”

The role of faith is to notice where God is showing up and then join God in doing good work in the world. This is what it means to follow Jesus and claim God's blessings of mercy, love, and justice in a world that is falling apart.

Is God showing up in the streets? Go there.

Is God showing up in the advocacy work for justice? Go there.

Is God showing up in worship Sunday morning? Go there.

Is God showing up in your neighbor? Go there.

Is God showing up at the nonprofit that serves immigrants and refugees? Go there.

Where is God's mercy, kindness, love, and justice showing up? Go there.

Often we don't notice God already at work in our lives. When we neglect to notice how God shows up, then that's a calling, too. It's time to get into good trouble.

National Medal of the Arts winner Julia Alvarez is a Latina poet and novelist who writes about immigrant experiences. She grew up in the Dominican Republic and says, "I grew up in a dictatorship, where you couldn't talk about difficult situations – there was this culture of silence. We would run into a problem and have no one to talk to."

She quotes a well-known saying, "They tried to bury us, but they didn't know we were seeds." As a truth teller and storyteller, Alvarez adds, "They tried to silence us, but they didn't know we were stories." "They tried to silence us, but they didn't know we were stories."

We are stories. Each one of us.

We come from the stories of our mothers and grandmothers, our fathers and grandfathers, the stories we heard and the stories we lived. The stories we told, and the stories kept silent.

The stories of God.

Now is the time to live our stories out loud! Now is the time to show up for justice, kindness, and love and get into good trouble.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

The Rev. Dr. Sarah Lund serves as the Minister for Disabilities and Mental Health Justice in the national setting of the United Church of Christ.

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