

BLESSINGS ALWAYS

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Association Minister Message

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AUTHORITY. “Who’s in charge here?” “You want me to do what...???” “Don’t tell me what to do.” “Do I have to do that?” “By what *AUTHORITY* do you have the right to tell me what to do?” Personal rights versus community rights. January 6, 2021, is a day that many will not forget as hundreds broke through barriers and entered the U.S. Capitol to try to overturn an election...and democracy. It was a troubling and disturbing moment in which fear and disbelief threatened the order of the day. Here, in a sense, the question was raised: Who was the *AUTHORITY* or what was the *AUTHORITY* that permitted such an act of disrespect and violent force to happen?

As Christians, we hold precious God’s call—*AUTHORITY*—to us to act in ways of love, peace and justice. It is God’s *AUTHORITY* given to us of unconditional love that offers us grace, forgiveness and generosity. In Sunday’s lectionary found in Mark 1, Jesus “*taught as one having authority*” and demands that evil come out of “*the man with the unclean spirt.*” Those witnessing the healing “*are all amazed*” Jesus later gives *AUTHORITY* to His disciples to cast out demons, cure the sick and raise the dead. Those things ARE happening today with the miracles of healing through doctors, therapists, care from others and prayer. However, we limit our *AUTHORITY* to be healers or eliminate evil or stop the dehumanization of children or loved ones by neglect, ignorance, fear and refusal to recognize that evil is happening.

Each one of us has been given *AUTHORITY* to be agents of love that can heal others, bring calm into situations and raise up resurrection from dead ideas into vitality. As agents of change, it is important to bring about peace and goodwill to all. In Isaiah 61, the prophet declares, “*The Spirit of God is upon me, because the Holy One has anointed me to bring good news to the poor, heal the brokenhearted, proclaim liberty to the captives, and freedom to those who are bound.*” Such amazing power—*AUTHORITY*—is given by God on us, we who are called to be God’s servants, voices, prophets, hands, feet, embracers and servants. In this time of unrest, evil and meanness, we can be healers, lovers and visionaries as people (and world) who have been created with meaning and purpose to bring God’s amazing gift of *AUTHORITY* to transform life and living. We are called by God and needed by others. Accept and share the *AUTHORITY* given to you by God to do good.

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