Making a Difference

People keep asking me if I think protesting the actions of the administration makes any kind of difference. I think it does, but maybe not in the ways that are obvious.

I don't kid myself for even a second. Showing up with signs, chanting, and making demands isn't going to change any public policy or personal opinion. No consistently conservative voter is suddenly going to experience a revolutionary change of heart because a bunch of mostly old hippies and jaded GenXers gathered downtown or in front of a certain EV dealership. The current regime isn't going to become sympathetic to the plight of the minoritized people they are demonizing simply because our signs are poignant.

But there ARE two ways we can make a difference with protests.

First, our presence together can leave us feeling energized and supported, which in turn will inspire us to keep resisting the demise of democracy. Isolation is a breeding ground for complacency, and a protest is just the opposite of isolation.

Second, our presence together shows the world outside of the United States that we aren't all on board with the priorities of the oligarchs who have seized control. The whole world knows that there were more than 1200 protests around the country last Saturday, and that those present were just SOME of many who are resisting the forces that are breaking down our government and all it has proclaimed over the centuries. (Of course we have often fallen way short of those ideals, but at least we had ideals.)

There may be an added benefit of visible protests. They might take attention away from the quiet work that is happening behind the scenes and underground, the undeniably effective work of protecting the people who are immediately at risk. I'm probably wrong about that, but I like to believe.

I'll continue to be at protests when I can. And when I can't, I know many of you — and so many others — will be there representing me. Thank you for doing it!

In Peace,
Rev Denis