



January 16, 2022

Epiphany 2

Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Sunday

Voices

Rev. Emma Chattin, Preaching

First Reading ~ *Romans 10: 18-21*

I ask, didn't they hear? Of course they did: "Their voice has gone out into all the world, their words to the end of the earth." So I ask another question: Is it possible that Israel didn't understand? Moses answered this long ago: "I will make you envious of those who aren't even a nation; I will make you angry because of the Gentiles, who have no understanding." Isaiah said it even more clearly: "I was found by those who did not seek me; I revealed myself to those who did not ask for me." But concerning Israel, Isaiah says, "All day long I stretched out my hands to a disobedient and obstinate people."

Second Reading

SEPTEMBER 15, 1963: Dynamite blast kills four young black girls in Sunday school at Birmingham's Sixteenth Street Baptist Church

~ from Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr's Eulogy for the Four Young Girls

These children—unoffending, innocent, and beautiful—were the victims of one of the most vicious, heinous crimes ever perpetrated against humanity. So they have something to say to us in their death. They have something to say to every minister of the gospel who has remained silent behind the safe security of stained-glass windows. They have something to say to every politician who has fed his constituents the stale bread of hatred and the spoiled meat of racism. They have something to say to a federal government that has compromised with the undemocratic practices of Southern Dixiecrats and the blatant hypocrisy of right-wing Northern Republicans. They have something to say to every Negro who passively accepts the evil system of segregation and stands on the sidelines in the midst of a mighty struggle for justice. They say to each of us, black and white alike, that we must substitute courage for caution. They say to us that we must be concerned not merely about who murdered them, but about the system, the way of life, and the philosophy which produced the murderers. Their death says to us that we must work passionately and unrelentingly to make the American dream a reality.