

Monday, 18 January 2021 – Weekly Inspiration from Rev. Jason

We decided to pray and worship with our feet on that Sunday in Jerusalem. The walls that currently surround the Old City are mostly walkable in their size; one can pay an entrance fee to climb up to the top of the ramparts and walk the perimeter of the Old City. Every step of your walk allows you views into and across the Old City, and some of our group chose that as our active form of worship on that Sunday, praying for the city and its inhabitants, praying for relations with other countries, praying for those who sought God's presence, and discussing our experience with one another.

The prophet Jeremiah, writing on behalf of God to the Israelites who were in exile in Babylonia, urged them to join in the efforts to build up the places where they now found themselves - to plant gardens and build houses, to marry and raise families. "But seek the welfare of the city where [God has] sent you into exile, and pray to the Lord on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare" (Jeremiah 29:7). The people of Israel, even in exile, would only survive and flourish by lifting up & strengthening those around them, including the ones who held them in exile.

In 1959, reflecting on the state of relations in Montgomery, Martin Luther King, Jr., observed, "[People] often hate each other because they fear each other; they fear each other because they don't know each other; they don't know each other because they cannot communicate; they cannot communicate because they are separated."

On that Sunday in Jerusalem, we worshiped with our feet as we walked around a city inhabited by Jews, Christians, Muslims, Armenians, and a host of other backgrounds represented...backgrounds that often don't get along but who live & work alongside one another for the benefit of each other. Breaking down the separation that they might know one another, building up their own welfare by supporting the welfare of all those around them.

Are we, today, willing to do the same? Are we willing to be led by the Spirit of God speaking to us still through Jeremiah and Martin Luther King, Jr.? Speaking to us to guide us in a better way, a way not defined by fear and anger? It's a tall order, but so is the calling of the Kingdom of God. We know the worth of it.

Prayer: Lord, help me to hear your call, to heed these words, and to seek our own well-being by working actively for the well-being of all. Amen.