

“And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visit you?”

Matthew 25: “And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visit you? And the king will answer them: “Very truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.”

People of God, we wish today to share with you information related to the challenges put before us as a Matthew 25 Presbytery.

Hunger is the first challenge. We want to encourage your use of the website www.feedingamerica.org. This website gives you access to the Food Bank of Eastern Michigan resources useful for your hunger missions and to experts prepared to address any questions you may have on this significant challenge.

Getting to know our neighbors is the second challenge. Here we call attention to the Saginaw-Chippewa Indian Tribe of Michigan, the First Americans who since the 1855 Treaty of Detroit have held title to and lived on 216 square miles of land in Mt. Pleasant. The Saginaw-Chippewa Indian Tribe marks every June 6th as their Day of Honoring, Healing and Remembering, for this is the date when in 1934 the Mt. Pleasant Indian Industrial Boarding School was closed. This Day is used to remember the more than 200 children from the School thought to be buried at the Mission Creek Cemetery, Mt. Pleasant. It enables them to honor the children, while also healing themselves as they recover from this horror. Yesterday, I was able to attend the opening 7 a.m. Sunrise Ceremony at the Mission Creek Cemetery. Linda Langrill, Moderator of the Presbytery of Lake Huron in 2021, was able to attend other events of the day held at the Mt. Pleasant Indian Industrial building.

The third challenge carries a different tone. Here we are drawing your attention to the gut-wrenching expressions of white supremacy known as hate crimes. Yes, here, my brothers and sisters in Christ, we are putting ourselves into the skins of the people for whom the traumas of the hate crime shootings at Geneva Presbyterian Church-Laguana Woods Taiwanese Presbyterian church in California and the Buffalo, New York TOPS Market area are most real.

Hate crimes are based on race, color, and religion, as well as sexual orientation, gender, and gender identity. Such crimes include not just the perpetrator's intended target, but everyone like them-family, community, and entire nations.

My sisters and brothers in faith, it is our hope that with this report you will use the Feeding America website for information on the Food Bank of Eastern Michigan and that you will take time to develop a wise, compassionate knowledge about our Saginaw-Chippewa Indian Tribe neighbors.

My fellow sojourners in the faith, it is also our hope that this report helps you to grasp the urgency of learning about the realities of the white supremacy ideology and the hate crimes it leads to, for we are being called to make it clear to everyone that such prejudice/hate will not be tolerated in a nation in which we "pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one Nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."

Check out www.feedingamerica.org and You Tube...hate crimes TED talk.

Shalom, Rev. Karen Blatt, Moderator of the Mission Coordination Committee