

NVHC Juneteenth Tikkun Vigil

עולם חסד יבנה
Olam chesed yibaneh

I will build this world from love....
And you must build this world from love....
And if we build this world from love.....
Then God will build this world from love....

Harlem

What happens to a dream deferred?

Does it dry up
like a raisin in the sun?
Or fester like a sore—
And then run?
Does it stink like rotten meat?
Or crust and sugar over—
like a syrupy sweet?

Maybe it just sags
like a heavy load.

Or does it explode?



A Prayer for Opening

We come into this space, as people calling to God's presence in our lives; as people enriched by cultures born into and discovered; as people wounded by racism; as people yearning for healing; as people working for wholeness, justice and peace.

ALL: God, be with us.

We come into this space, with anticipation of the work before us; with an openness to discovery; with a commitment to working for reconciliation; with a willingness to challenge and be challenged; with anticipation of discovery.

ALL: God, be with us.

We come into this space, to spend time with the each other, with our Jewish sacred texts and values; to learn about prejudice; to become aware of privilege; to explore cultures; to encourage each other to action.

ALL: Holy One of Blessing, bless our time together. Amen.



“DO JUSTLY, LOVE MERCY, AND WALK HUMBL Y WITH OUR GOD.”



Guide me, O Thou Great Jehovah,

Guide me, O Thou great Jehovah, Pilgrim through this barren land.

I am weak, but Thou art mighty; Hold me with Thy powerful hand.

Bread of heaven, Feed me now and evermore;

Open now the crystal fountain, Whence the healing waters flow;

Let the fire and cloudy pillar lead me all my journey through.

Strong Deliverer, Be Thou still my Strength and Shield.

When I tread the verge of Jordan, Bid my anxious fears subside;

Death of death, and hell's destruction, land me safe on Canaan's side.

Songs of praises, I will ever give to Thee.

Land me safe on Canaan's side

Bid my anxious fears, bid my anxious fears, goodbye.



Isaiah, Chapter 58: 1-14

Cry with full throat, without restraint; Raise your voice like a ram's horn! Declare to My people their transgression, To the House of Jacob their sin. To be sure, they seek Me daily, Eager to learn My ways. Like a nation that does what is right, that has not abandoned the laws of its God, they ask Me for the right way, they are eager for the nearness of God:

“Why, when we fasted, did You not see? When we starved our bodies, did You pay no heed?”

Because on your fast day You see to your business and oppress all your laborers! Because you fast in strife and contention, and you strike with a wicked fist! Your fasting today is not such as to make your voice heard on high. Is such the fast I desire, A day for men to starve their bodies? Is it bowing the head like a bulrush and lying in sackcloth and ashes? Do you call that a fast, A day when the LORD is favorable?

No, this is the fast I desire: To unlock fetters of wickedness and untie the cords of the yoke to let the oppressed go free; To break off every yoke. It is to share your bread with the hungry, and to take the wretched poor into your home; When you see the naked, to clothe him, and not to ignore your own kin.

Then shall your light burst through like the dawn and your healing spring up quickly; Your Vindicator shall march before you, The Presence of the LORD shall be your rear guard. Then, when you call, the LORD will answer; When you cry, He will say: Here I am. If you banish the yoke from your midst, the menacing hand and evil speech; when you offer your compassion to the hungry and satisfy the famished creature— Then shall your light shine in darkness, And your gloom shall be like noonday.

The LORD will guide you always; He will slake your thirst in parched places and give strength to your bones. You shall be like a watered garden, like a spring whose waters do not fail. People from your midst shall rebuild ancient ruins, you shall restore foundations laid long ago. And you shall be called “Repairer of fallen walls, Restorer of lanes for habitation.”

If you refrain from trampling the sabbath, From pursuing your affairs on My holy day; If you call the sabbath “delight,” The LORD’s holy day “honored”; And if you honor it and go not your ways Nor look to your affairs, nor strike bargains— Then you can seek the favor of Adonai. I will set you astride the heights of the earth, and let you enjoy the heritage of your father Jacob— For the mouth of the LORD has spoken.

Justice

That Justice is a blind goddess
Is a thing to which we black are wise:
Her bandage hides two festering sores
That once perhaps were eyes.

Aleinu - It Is On Us

Aleinu. It is on us.

To bow in praise before God as a sign of reverence and perhaps submission
It is on us to bend our knees only in reverence for life
and only for submission to that which is good.

Aleinu. It is on us.

Our sages teach that the angels have no knees.
Their legs do not bend, they do not need knees
because their entire purpose is to stand tall before God in service.
But we are not these kinds of angels-
We bend under the weight on our shoulders,
We let this twisted world twist us into knowing that our service to God comes,
not only in the form of thoughts and prayers, but in the form of action

Aleinu. It is on us.

Va'anachu kor'im. We bend at the knee
Umishtachavim. We bow at the waist
Lifnei Melech Malchei HaMalchim. We stand straight before God
HaKadosh Baruch Hu. We who are made in God's image must be holy
because God is holy.

So we rise to repair this very broken world
We stand straight because we can,
We stand up because we must.

Aleinu. It is on us.

We bend our knees before the God of love in devotion and in disruption,
In protest and in praise, from shame to *shleimut* - wholeness

We rise before the God of truth, to march and to move
to bend this broken arc towards justice.

Aleinu. It is on us.

Bent knees are for showing reverence-
to prostrate in peaceful protest,
to prepare us for moving, to prepare us for marching,
Bent knees are not for killing.
God did not make knees, or any other part of us, for that.

Aleinu. It is on us.

The Times They Are A Changin'

Come gather 'round, people wherever you roam
And admit that the waters around you have grown
And accept it that soon you'll be drenched to the bone
If your time to you is worth savin',
And you better start swimmin' or you'll sink like a stone
For the times they are a-changin'

Come writers and critics who prophesize with your pen
And keep your eyes wide, the chance won't come again
And don't speak too soon for the wheel's still in spin
And there's no tellin' who that it's namin'
For the loser now will be later to win
For the times they are a-changin'

Come senators, congressmen - please heed the call
Don't stand in the doorway, don't block up the hall
For the one that gets hurt will be the one who has stalled,
The battle outside ragin' will soon shake your windows and rattle your walls
For the times they are a-changin'



“DO JUSTLY, LOVE MERCY, WALK HUMBLY WITH OUR GOD.”



Credits and Sources:

Service envisioned and compiled by Cantor Susan Caro and Rev. Michelle Nickens, with inspiration and faith.

- “Olam Chesed” – Text: Psalm 89:3; Music: Menachem Creditor
- “Harlem” – Langston Hughes, 1951
- ‘A Prayer for Opening’, adapted from the Episcopal Church Anti-Racist Training Guide
- ‘Do justly...’ – Micah 6:8
- Guide me, O Thou Great Jehovah, Text: William Williams and Jeremy Casella; Music: Jeremy Casella
- “Justice” – Langston Hughes, 1923
- “*Aleinu* – It Is On Us” - Hollis Schachner, Rachel Stock Spilker, and Sara Stock Mayo
- “The Times They Are A Changin'” – Bob Dylan