

Greetings:

This is the day that Lord has made and we will rejoice and be glad it.

My name is Rev. Sheila P Spencer and I am grateful for this opportunity to share with the Vista La Mesa Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) – Thank you Pastor Rebecca Littlejohn for the invitation

I bring you greetings in the name of Jesus Christ and on behalf of the CC(DOC) and Disciples Home Missions. I bring greetings on behalf of my home church Light of the World Christian Church in Indianapolis, Indiana Interim Pastor Janae Pitts Murdock.

But I also take personal privilege – I am glad to be virtually in the Pacific Southwest Region – this is where I was born and raised. California is and will always be home, wherever I am. Today I am home.

"The Rocks are Crying Out: Show Up, Speak Up, Stand Up: Get In Good Trouble"

Luke 19:39-40

Proverbs 31:8-9

Micah 6:8

"Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to him, "Teacher, order your disciples to stop." He answered, "I tell you, if these were silent, the stones would shout out." Luke 19: 39-40

"Speak out for those who cannot speak, for the rights of all the destitute. Speak out, judge righteously, defend the rights of the poor and needy." Proverbs 31: 8-9

" and what does the Lord require of you, but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?" Micah 6:8

Show Up, Speak Up, Stand Up – Get In Good Trouble

The Honorable John Lewis was a civil rights icon, minister, political leader, Comic Con participant, justice seeker and author.. He advocated for justice literally until his last breath when he passed away this past July at the age of 80.

"Never ever be afraid to make some noise and get in good trouble, necessary trouble" John Lewis

As we enter the Luke text, we encounter Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem. As he rode, the people gave him a grand welcome, throwing their coats on the street. Right at the crest, where Mount Olives begins its descent, the whole crowd of disciples burst into enthusiastic praise over all the mighty works they had witnessed: "Blessed is he who comes, the king in God's name! All's well in heaven! Glory in the high places! And it is at this point, that the leaders say = Get your disciples under control, keep your people in check, they are being disruptive. But Jesus lets them know that even if those voices were muted, there would not be silence ... they would not be afraid to make some noise and get in good trouble.

"He said we are all complicit when we tolerate injustice. He said it is not enough to say it will get better by and by. He said each of us has a moral obligation to stand up, speak up and speak out. When you see

something that is not right, you must say something. You must do something. Democracy is not a state. It is an act, and each generation must do its part to help build what we called the Beloved Community, a nation and world society at peace with itself.”

Show Up

We are called to show up. We can never underestimate the ministry of presence. Showing up refers to our ability to remain committed to and consistent in our actions. Living in a state of multiple pandemics may affect physical but not virtual present. Show up for spaces and places of conversation. Show up for opportunities to engage in dialogue, Show up to listen and to learn. One of the most effective ways for people to know that you are committed and care is simply when they see that you are there. Show up as your best self.

Speak Up - It’s not enough just to be present, we are called to speak. Proverbs 31:8-9 calls for us to use our voice. Each one of us are placed in unique spaces and places where we can make an impact.

John Lewis reminded us When you see or hear something, that is not right, not fair, not just, you have to speak up. You have to say something.

Recognize that there will always be an opportunity to speak, even if your voice shakes. This is an excerpt from one of the prayers in the Book of Uncommon Prayers that can guide us when we hear a not right, not fair not just “LBut no I can’t let those hideous words just hang in the air. So give me the courage to say something in response. Give me the wisdom to know what to say. Help me to speak the truth in love. The truth – not wielded like a weapon, but in love”

We are called to Show up with the ministry of presence and amplify that presence and speak up with power.

Stand Up

We are called to Show up and Speak up but it is not complete until we Stand Up. Standing Up shows that we what we say is followed up by our actions. Stand up calls up to face boldly the reactions to our presence words. Micah 6:8 reminds us that that loving others includes standing up for justice and remaining connected to God.

John Lewis wrote an essay shortly before his death and wanted it to be published on the day of his funeral – An excerpt “I urge you to answer the highest calling of your heart and stand up for what you truly believe”

This week I think of Dawn Wooten, a nurse who worked in a detention facility who made the decision to show up, speak up and stand up on behalf of the conditions of the mistreatment of immigrant women at a detention facility. But she stood up for what is right and just. Our situations may be different, but standing up connects our presence, with our words and our action.

Show Up

Speak Up

Stand Up

I subscribe to a history box called Because of them we can – it includes a monthly learning kit for kids to learn about the lives of African American men and women.

But I reflected on that.....

Because of Christ, we can, because when others tried to silence the voices, Christ made it clear that nothing or no one could mute or silence. They would make noise, Christ was not afraid to disrupt the system.

Because of them we can, because of the cloud of witnesses who made the decision to show up, speak up and stand up. Because of them we can, those who are currently showing up , speaking up and standing up, we can get into good trouble

When the world tells us to Be silent, put those voices in check, remember the words of Christ in Luke passage, Nothing can mute, silence or dismiss.... There will be noise and there will be trouble good trouble.

Sounds like Jesus.

Get into good trouble.

Amen

Rev. Sheila P. Spencer

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