



Grain

(Giving is also) “astuteness about why people are hungry and then saying, “Wait a minute we can address those systems.’ We can be part of the great cloud of witnesses throughout time who have sought to change economic injustice and enable all to have life abundantly.” The Reverend Dr. Cynthia Moe-Lobeda

Field

11 What to me is the multitude of your sacrifices? says the Lord; I have had enough of burnt offerings of rams and the fat of fed beasts; I do not delight in the blood of bulls, or of lambs, or of goats. 12 When you come to appear before me, who asked this from your hand? Trample my courts no more; 13 bringing offerings is futile; incense is an abomination to me. New moon and sabbath and calling of convocation.” I cannot endure solemn assemblies with iniquity. 14 Your new moons and your appointed festivals my soul hates; they have become a burden to me, I am weary of bearing them. 15 When you stretch out your hands, I will hide my eyes from you; even though you make many prayers, I will not listen; your hands are full of blood. 16 Wash yourselves; make yourselves clean; remove the evil of your doings from before my eyes; cease to do evil, 17 learn to do good; seek justice, rescue the oppressed, defend the orphan, plead for the widow. Isaiah 1:11-17

Thoughts

One of my middle school teachers asked what counts when giving a gift. Hands flew up and answers were shouted out before anyone was called on. “The thought.” “Thought.” “It’s the thought that counts.” The teacher’s opinion was different. “It’s what we can afford in relationship to what we give.” That was something most of us never considered with our 7th grade limited incomes determined by our parents. The teacher offered a new perspective that challenged me. We all had something to give. What might seem like little could be a lot for the person giving, and what seemed immensely generous could be a small portion of what an individual or a group could make possible.

What about our attitudes toward our capacity to give as a country? For whom is there space? A white nationalist answered that question by murdering innocent people in Texas last week, pronouncing who belonged and who didn’t. In response I offer my own prayers and action. I am obligated to look at the facts, the systems that create hate and hunger and in the case of immigrants and refugees, our country’s capacity to give. A message in a recent action alert from our D.C. office comes to mind: “Right now, the White House is considering how many refugees to welcome in 2020... Reports surfaced that some administration officials have proposed resettling zero refugees in 2020 - all during the worst refugee crisis in world history.

Zeroing out refugee resettlement would amount to a full refugee ban, with grave long-term implications, devastating thousands of refugees who are in dangerous situations and who we have promised to protect.” Resettling 95,000 refugees is the historic average. We have the capacity to offer more as a country. We have the call to seek justice in response to the grace we have received. Stay tuned for an action alert. Happy Monday!

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Many Blessings upon you,

Pastor Cindy