



January 30, 2022

“I can’t think of anything that we need right now more than hope! “

Recently I heard a segment on NPR that addressed one of the unseen scars of the pandemic. Long after the physical ramifications of this dark hour are gone, there will still be many emotional, psychological, and spiritual byproducts that remain. One of those comes in the form of the many plans that have been altered due to covid. We have all been excited about the possibility of something that we were looking forward to for a long time, only to have those plans altered and cancelled and our excitement crushed. It could be the graduation that was only virtual, the prom that never happened, the wedding where guests couldn’t make it, or even the Christmas service that had to be done only virtually. Because of this, psychologists say that we are becoming afraid to hope, anticipating that our hopes will always be dashed. They call this phenomena hope fatigue. **I can’t think of anything that we need right now more than hope!**

Our recently departed brother, Bishop Desmond Tutu, said that hope is the ability to a glimmer of light, even while traversing through a dark tunnel. The Covid-19 pandemic has been a very dark tunnel, but Paul gave us a formula that I believe is helpful right now; suffering produced endurance. Endurance produces character. Character produces hope and hope never fails. For those of us who have our hope built on “Jesus blood and righteousness,” even in the midst of this pandemic I believe the best is yet to come!

Blessings,

Cean

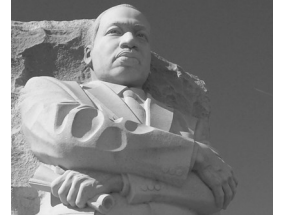
Rev. Cean James,
 Associate Conference Minister for Congregational Development

Justice seeking is not only for those individuals who are invested in economic, racial and social justice; it is also in large part, the vocation of the church – the body of Christ.

The Racial Justice Initiative Team of the PSEC of the UCC would like to share with you these links to both days of the Racial Justice Symposium held in October, 2021. We had the blessing of two great keynote speakers, the Rev. Dr. Drew Hart and the Rev. Dr. John Dorhauer. The wisdom they shared with us was so invaluable we wanted to share it with the whole conference and beyond.

Find the links on the PSEC Website (psec.org) by clicking the Missions & Ministries tab, then the Justice & Witness tab and you’ll see the Zachariah Walker Racial Justice Initiative tab, where the links will be the first article on the page.

Celebrate & Embody
 the DREAM



From the Addiction & Recovery Taskforce: The Family

Have you ever wondered what the families in your congregation with children struggling with drug addiction go through? Here is a small window.

Hours of Internet research, multiple outpatient rehabs, countless hours of individual therapy later, and there was still not a complete reversal of behavior...a nightmare indeed! I became quite versed in drug lingo and assorted tricks of the trade (vodka in water bottles, stuffing marijuana in cigars, various ‘tools’ used for drug prep, etc.) This was an education I didn’t sign up for. My son’s personality completely changed over time. I was having trouble recognizing the sweet, sensitive boy I once knew and loved. Where did he go? I endured many hours of tears and prayers. Would he come back? I honestly didn’t know.

After many months of heartache, fear, financial and emotional drain and familial strife, and many months of family treatment, we began to see a slow and steady improvement. What a joy to see my son return to us: an amazing gift!

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