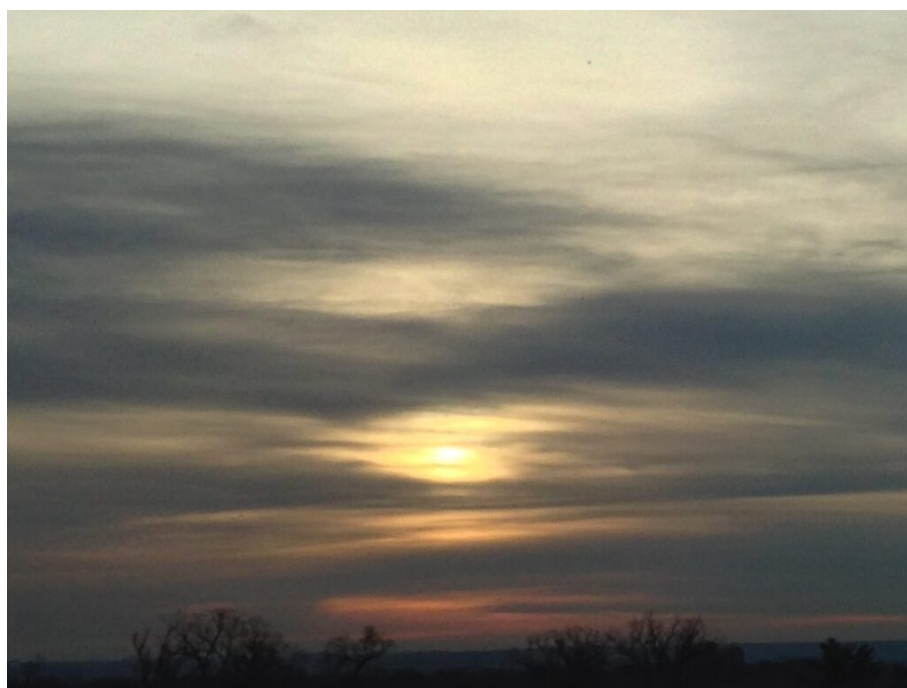


“Recovery Cafe DC and Recovery Cafe Network” by Kim Montroll, Catalyst at Large, Recovery Café Network

Fourth Sunday After Pentecost



June 25, 2023

It is such a joy to be here with you all this morning. Thank you. I was very moved and inspired hearing from Peter about the intensive learning and work you all are doing around reparations. Peter, thank you for sharing the Maryland Episcopal Reparations document with me, and the Seeker's class where you've been working with this so deeply as a community. I have so much to learn and I'm grateful for this opportunity to reflect on how am I working with the realities of reparation in my own life, and in our work as Recovery Café DC.

Our New Testament reading for today is Matthew 10:24-39.

²⁴ “The student is not above the teacher, nor a servant above his master. ²⁵ It is enough for students to be like their teachers, and servants like their masters. If the head of the house has been called Beelzebul, how much more the members of his household!

²⁶ “So do not be afraid of them, for there is nothing concealed that will not be disclosed, or hidden that will not be made known. ²⁷ What I tell you in the dark, speak in the daylight; what is whispered in your ear, proclaim from the roofs. ²⁸ **Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul.** Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell. ²⁹ **Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground outside your Father’s care.** ^[a] ³⁰ **And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered.** ³¹ **So don’t be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows.**

³² “Whoever acknowledges me before others, I will also acknowledge before my Father in heaven. ³³ But whoever disowns me before others, I will disown before my Father in heaven.

³⁴ “Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. ³⁵ For I have come to turn

“‘a man against his father,
a daughter against her mother,
a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law—

³⁶ a man’s enemies will be the members of his own household.’ ^[b]

³⁷ “Anyone who loves their father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; anyone who loves their son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. ³⁸ Whoever does not take up their cross and follow me is not worthy of me. ³⁹ **Whoever finds their life will lose it, and whoever loses their life for my sake will find it.**

This morning I want to especially work with power and rethinking how we use whatever power we have... And I love that the scripture today names in many ways ... “don’t be afraid” ...”Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul.” “Whoever finds their life will lose it, and whoever loses their life for my sake will find it.” Don’t be afraid... more about this soon...

As you all know, Recovery Café DC is part of the larger national Recovery Café Network. There are 61 Recovery Cafes now in the growing network, all over the US, and one in Vancouver, BC. Each Recovery Café is an independent non-profit, birthed by people in their own community, people whose hearts are breaking over the suffering and loss of too many in their community. Every Recovery Café holds in common a set of shared commitments.

Jacqueline Conerly was one of the key leaders on the Recovery Café Network task force to create the 6th Core Commitment ... Which every Recovery Café in the Network commits to practice...

The 6th Core Commitment names that as a Recovery Café community, we will: *Work to end systemic racism and socioeconomic inequality so every person can thrive.*

In 2019 Washington Post Columnist [Courtland Milloy](#) wrote this:

The District’s latest “health equity” maps shows a city divided by race and income. How well you live, or sometimes whether you live at all, can depend on what side of the line

you are on.

On one of the maps, we see that Woodley Park in Northwest Washington is the neighborhood where residents have the longest life expectancy, 89.4 years on average. Residents in the St. Elizabeth's neighborhood, in Southeast, have the shortest, 68.2 years.

Woodley Park is wealthy and predominantly white. St Elizabeth's is poor and predominantly black. The difference that makes 21 years of life.

The disparities are stark, the consequences appalling. And the cause is no mystery. As the report notes, they are the result of "historical forces that have left a legacy of racism and segregation, as well as structural and institutional factors that perpetuate persistent inequities."

Recovery Café DC is located in Ward 8, not far from the St. Elizabeth's neighborhood.

With this reality..In all the decisions large and small about RCDC in our daily operations and larger vision ..., our co-founders Jacqueline and Donald have led us in getting really specific and intentional about how we use whatever power we have as an organization...and influence we have...not only in our programs, but also where we bank, who does our annual financial audit, who are our key trainers and vendors, who are we partnering with to develop and co-own our new building in Ward 8..

We have committed as a Black founded and led organization, to use whatever money, resources, influence we have as an organization, no matter how young or small we still are – towards ending systemic racism and socioeconomic inequality right here in DC.

RCDC banks at our local City First Bank, which merged with Broadway National in 2020 to create the largest Black led US

bank. For our annual financial audit and 990 preparation, we hire a Black woman owned CPA firm. For our lead Recovery Coach trainer, we hire a deeply gifted Black-led training group from Baltimore. Our amazing developer partner, Stan Jackson and Anacostia Economic Development Corp, a long time Ward 8 and DC leader, names over and over again – we have got to use our power for the healing of the trauma of racism and inequity.

When the RCDC vision was first emerging... as you know, a mission group of Bread of Life formed to “mid-wife” the formation of this healing work. Not to lead it, but to support it. We had to “re-think” how we used our power. Since then... as a little faith community and as individuals, I think there is a growing sense of being more intentional about how we use whatever power, influence, connections we have...

What does that look like for each of us here? You all live this so faithfully already...and what does a next step look like for you now? What does a next step look like for me now?

Back to the scripture’s naming “don’t be afraid.”

I’ve been reflecting ..how much does fear prevent us from re-thinking power, how much does fear keep us gripped in the need to control, the need for security... what are we afraid of when we can’t let go?

Where has fear blocked the larger work of reparations? What are the fears that we need to name honestly and release, in our own lives, in our communities?

I don’t think we can do this work without a daily practice of prayer, I don’t believe we can do this work without deeply committed community.

Thank you for letting me share...

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To learn about starting a Recovery Café in your community:

<https://recoverycafenetwork.org/>

To learn about Recovery Café DC: <https://recoverycafedc.org>