

Sermons

Seekers recognizes that any member of the community may be called upon by God to give us the Word, and thus we have an open pulpit with a different preacher each week. Sermons preached at Seekers, as well as sermons preached by Seekers at other churches or events, are posted here, beginning with the most recent.

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[“Preaching Commitment” by Deborah Sokolove](#)



Recommitment Sunday

October 16, 2022

Throughout this recommitment season, the Hebrew Scripture readings have been filled with lament, with prophets relaying God's disappointment with a people who have turned away from love, from just and merciful dealings with one another, and instead become filled with hatred, violence, and taking advantage of everyone who is lower than themselves on society's ladder. In this time of ugly rhetoric, corruption, and exploitation of every disadvantaged group I can think of, all this has been sounding way too familiar. Jeremiah and the other prophets might as well have been writing yesterday,

rather than nearly three thousand years ago.

In Jeremiah 29, however, the prophet turns away from lamenting the destruction of Jerusalem and the difficulties of the people who remained. Instead of haranguing the false prophets who persuaded the nation to trust in lies about God's word, as in the previous chapter, Jeremiah decides to write a letter those who had been taken into captivity in Babylon.

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[“Continuity and Change” by Jacqie and John](#)



Recommitment Season

October 9, 2022

John: Jacqie and I were thinking about the Learners and Teachers tradition of preaching sermons for Recommitment Season. Our group asked who wanted to preach when, and we both sort of hesitated and said Well, but we didn't really know what we would preach about. Then Jacqie said, What if you and I preach a sermon together? That instantly sounded like fun to me, and it would also let some creative energy flow between us.

Jacqie: I first met John 37 years ago when I first started going to noon AA meetings in the Parklawn building in Rockville. He had the awesome attainment of 4 years of sobriety at that time, so he was very much my senior in sobriety, even though he is 10 years younger than me. It was hard for me to even imagine an alcoholically-inclined person going for 4 whole years without a drink. He was very kind and supportive to me and we became friends though we drifted apart over the years. I was so surprised the first time I came to Seekers for worship and noticed John in Circle Time. This was almost 20 years ago and we have been in the same mission group, Learners and Teachers, almost ever since. Sharing 12-Step principles and Seekers values, which have a lot in common, as well as much of our personal history, has created a strong bond for us and we often touch base for reality checks to keep our "stinking thinking" from getting out of control. We also taught School for Christian Growth class (then the School for Christian Living) on the 12-steps many years ago. It was called "The Twelve Steps for Everyone."

John: In fact, Christianity and the 12 Steps have a lot in common, which is no surprise since the founders of AA were devout Christians – who fortunately had the wisdom to make sure no overt religious creed was ever mentioned in their

writings. Our Gospel story today focuses on gratitude, and gratitude is a hallmark of 12 Step recovery. The Samaritan who is healed by Jesus praises God for his recovery, and returns to Jesus to thank him personally.

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[“A Community of Active Belonging ”](#) [by Kolya Braun-Greiner](#)



Recommitment Season

October 2, 2022

At Seekers we talk a lot about accountability. This may scare some out of fear of falling short of whatever commitment one makes. What's meaningful to me is responsibility or ability to respond, individually or collectively. I understand community as a context for reciprocal relationships in which call upon our ability respond with our unique gifts, callings and mutual support. What if the foundation for accountability within community is the ability to respond to the invitation of commitment to belonging, what I'd like to call active belonging? This is different from what seems common in our society – a kind of passive belonging which I dare say this true for many churches. One's name is on the roles or membership of an organization, people have paid their dues, but not a lot is expected of people beyond that – especially in hierarchical structures.

M. Scott Peck describes the kind of churches many of us have experienced, I'd call a culture of passive belonging, in which the dreaded coffee hour is when everyone talks about "niceties" and when asked "how are you doing?" the common response is "fine" whether or not they are. He contrasts these "pseudo-communities" of superficial interactions with communities in which the organizational culture promotes honesty and vulnerability. Here at Seekers I affirm that our "do-it-yourself" church promotes active belonging through participatory engagement and intimacy.

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[A Service of Quiet Prayer](#)



Recommitment Season

September 25, 2022

On this day, Elizabeth led us in a time of quiet contemplation, praying out of the silence as each person was moved. To focus our prayer, at Celebration Circle's request, Marjory read the gospel reflection "Left Behind" that she had previously posted on Inward/Outward. You can read it here:

<https://inwardoutward.org/left-behind/>

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[“Recommitment” by Marjory Bankson](#)



Recommitment Season

September 18, 2022

The morning after Pat Conover died, Peter woke up with the hymn that we just sang, *It is Well With My Soul*, and he said, “It felt like a message from Pat.” That same morning, I woke up from a dream of making a bed on the couch in our living room for Pat’s daughter, Samantha, who was apparently going to be staying with us for a time. It’s clear to me that Pat had a larger-than-life impact on us and, judging from the email tributes this week, on the wider Seekers community.

While this is not a memorial service for Pat, I do not want to ignore the importance of his presence, both in person and with his writing. Although he was a PhD sociologist and an ordained UCC minister, Pat was an ardent advocate for the priesthood of ALL believers and he often gave us language for what we were already doing to make that sustainable.

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