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| |  |  | | --- | --- | | **Global Respect** **Kenneth L. Samuel** | January 3, 2019 |  |  | | --- | | "May all kings bow down to him and all nations serve him. He will take pity on the weak and the needy. He will rescue them from oppression and violence ... Then all nations will be blessed through him, and they will call him blessed." - Psalm 72:11-17 (NIV)  Since World War II, the United States has been regarded by many as the leader of the free world. The designation itself is politically charged, given the fact that some countries aligned with the U.S. and thus considered ‘free’ are actually ruled by military dictatorships. Notwithstanding the controversy, there is an expectation among many Americans and among many other nations that the U.S. has a definite responsibility and role to play as a global leader.  Some of us understand that America’s leadership in global affairs is not merely a function of her military might or monetary prominence. Our leadership is greatly dependent upon the ethical values we practice and promote; ethical values that transcend tribe, class, color and nationality. Those values are reflected in Psalm 72, where there is no mention of border walls or military build-up or nationalistic allegiance.   What the psalmist advocates are values that are centered on the defense of the weak, deliverance for the oppressed, and relief for those in poverty. These are the enduring values that make America (or any nation) a city set on a hill ... a candle that can’t be hidden under a bushel ... and a light of the world. These values are not articulated in any attempt to establish a moral hierarchy. They are expressed as deep needs of our common humanity, no matter our national differences.     William Sloane Coffin once said that before America can lead the world, she must first join the world.  **Prayer** Lord, make me and my country agents of your global justice. Amen.  Kenneth L. Samuel is Pastor of Victory for the World Church, Stone Mountain, Georgia | |
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**Upcoming Events**

* **January 10th 5:30 to 7 pm Community Supper.** Join us for another delicious meal with companions from Mason and surrounding area. As always, you are welcome to bring an item for the Greenville Food Pantry. Deposit it in the box as you come in. Don’t let food sensitivities keep you home – Each community supper has a gluten-free, dairy-free, and nut-free entrée for our guests.
* **January 12th Nashua Soup Kitchen.** Meet in the church parking lot at 3:30 for carpooling to Nashua. We are usually back by 6:30 or 7 pm. Share your love and energy in this outreach mission of our community. Contact Kathy Chapman if you plan to go or need information 603-878-4993 or email [chapman.kathy@gmail.com](mailto:chapman.kathy@gmail.com)
* **January 18th Women’s group meets 2-4 pm to talk about the book Active Hope by Joanna Macy.** We will talk about decisive action that can be taken as a result of this reading. We may have a guest speaker? To be determined.
* **January 19th 6:30 pm. Living Room Coffee House with Decatur Creek.** They are one of the best bands around! All are welcome to join in this lively coffee house starting at 6:30 pm for conversation plus coffee and food. Music begins at 7 pm with some open mic players, then the feature. For more information: https://thelivingroomcoffeehouse.wordpress.com/
* **January 20th Reports for Annual Meeting are due!** Dotsie would like committee reports by this date, so she can prepare the Annual report in time for the February meeting. Email to: [Dotsie24@gmail.com](mailto:Dotsie24@gmail.com) or leave it for her at church near the office door in the file folder for Moderator.
* **January 20th 5:30 to 8 pm - The Conversation.** This community meeting is about end-of-life issues, from your Healthcare Directive (that document you share with your physician) to low-cost funerals, and discussions about your life, such as what you want to be remembered for, what wisdom you have learned and want to share, and how to write a loving and/or humorous obituary for yourself or for loved ones!

**We start with a simple shared meal**, and move into our discussion. Next month we have a representative from Threshold Care who will discuss simple funerals and related preparations. I have asked them to bring their guide, which they sell for $15, and it is a beautiful way to wade through all the details of this “conversation.” All are welcome; bring friends, family, the family dog…



* **Curt Dunn** He has moved and is in the Courville Community at 44 Webster Street, Manchester, NH 03104, or call him on his phone at 603 222-3004 or the main number 603-562-5900. Although he has trouble reading, he still loves cards, but of course, enjoys calls and visits even more. He is getting over pneumonia, and lost strength while recovering, so please don’t bring any germs with you!
* **Laila Washburn** Laila lives at Summer Hill Assisted Living in Peterborough. She loves company and cards. At 99, every day is treasured. Laila Washburn, Summer Hill, 183 Old Dublin Rd, Peterborough, NH 03458. Call ahead if you have questions. 603-924-6238
* **Karin Eisenhaure** is doing as well as a person can do who is stuck inside, but she is now getting around her house, as she can stand and walk with her brace. Her goal with PT is to get that leg ready to press the gas pedal and maybe the brake too! She is in pretty good spirits, but does enjoy company, and sometimes even has something you can do to help out. Her canine best friend, Baby, is doing her best to keep Karin entertained.

Cards to: 265 Gilman Hill Rd, Mason, NH 03048 and phone 603-878-2675

* **Deborah Prince Smith and Don Smith** are working through his recent diagnosis of bone cancer. Your prayers are much appreciated.

Address: 41 Sauna Row Rd, West Townsend, MA 01474 Phone 978-597-2204

* **Gretchen and Wally Brown** Always in need of a little cheer, and just contact with the outside world, so stop by with a smile, a meal, or just to pick up syrup!

Cards to: 421 Meetinghouse Hill Rd, Mason, NH 03048 phone: 878-1481

* **News: The Forty family has a new baby coming.** Meredith and family are expecting, and are sharing the Forty house in Mason, as they have sold their home in Nashua. They have jobs pending, and decisions to be made. Meanwhile, Judy and Kent spend a few days a week in Washington, NH, to give the young family a little “family time.” A story of sharing and love!

**Shevirah - Shattering the Vessels from the Kabbalah – a Jewish wisdom book**

At the beginning of time, God’s presence filled the universe. When God decided to bring this world into being, to make room for creation, (S)He first drew in (Her)His breath, contracting (Herself)Himself. From that contraction darkness was created. And when God said, “Let there be light” (Gen. 1:3), the light that came into being filled the darkness, and ten holy vessels came forth, each filled with primordial light.

In this way God sent forth those ten vessels, like a fleet of ships, each carrying its cargo of light. Had they all arrived intact, the world would have been perfect. But the vessels were too fragile to contain such a powerful, divine light. They broke open, split asunder, and all the holy sparks were scattered like sand, like seeds, like stars. Those sparks fell everywhere, but more fell on the Holy Land than anywhere else.

That is why we were created — to gather the sparks, no matter where they are hidden. God created the world so that the descendents of Jacob could raise up the holy sparks. **That is why there have been so many exiles** — to release the holy sparks from the servitude of captivity. In this way the Jewish people (and all people) will sift all the holy sparks from the four corners of the earth.

And when enough holy sparks have been gathered, the broken vessels will be restored, and tikkun olam, the repair of the world, awaited so long, will finally be complete. Therefore it should be the aim of everyone to raise these sparks from wherever they are imprisoned and to elevate them to holiness by the power of their soul.

~ written by Howard Schwartz, Tree of Souls, p. 122 (parentheses added by M. Scott)

Our congregation has been releasing holy sparks by telling stories of “light” in our lives as part of our Sunday worship service. We plan to resume this activity during Lent. All are welcome to share their stories.