## Commentary: Woe to the Unambitious: Greta as Prophet

October 03, 2019 Written by **Brooks Berndt**

Prophets provoke a reckoning, a moment of truth that cannot be denied. The illusion of righteousness is dispelled. The mask of insincerity is ripped away. The mirror is held aloft, and we must consider our reflection without lie or deception. The complacency of the cautious and circumspect remains tenable no longer.

While I am reluctant to bestow the title of prophet on anyone, there can be no doubt that Greta Thunberg and many [other youth](https://wearyourvoicemag.com/news-politics/youth-climate-activists-of-color) are a force of reckoning today, crying out: Woe to you politicians and wielders of power! Your failure to act on climate change with speed and ambition simply cannot persist.
As [Greta declared](https://www.npr.org/2019/09/23/763452863/transcript-greta-thunbergs-speech-at-the-u-n-climate-action-summit) at the U.N. Climate Action Summit, “For more than 30 years, the science has been crystal clear. How dare you continue to look away and come here saying that you’re doing enough, when the politics and solutions needed are still nowhere in sight.”

Greta tells us that we are failing. She tells us that if world leaders understand the situation but fail to act, then they are, well, evil. And, she is right. There is no sugarcoating it. There is no spit and polish to make it look any different. All this from a teenager who skewers those who pretend to be informed adults, but whose actions reveal a stark regression in outlook and behavior. When it comes to the “uncomfortable” numbers of climate science, these grown-ups are “still not mature enough to tell it like it is.”

Greta’s language evokes the unsettling words of Jesus who declared words of “woe” to leaders who failed to exercise their responsibilities with justice as they loaded people with “burdens hard to bear” without lifting “a finger to ease them” (Luke 11:46). Greta is right in declaring that the youth of today have drawn a line. We can no longer run, hide, or feign ignorance. We can no longer wait for others to act. We can no longer excuse our inaction. Greta won’t abide claims of hopelessness. Hope comes to those who act, so get out there. Join your kids and grandkids in the street.

The true test of character now is ambition. This is the measuring stick before which we must all stand day after day. If we fail to measure up, Greta assures us that there will be no forgiveness from the generations to come.
The line has been drawn. The question for all of us adults is this: on what side shall we stand? The prophet has spoken. Harsh truths have been laid bare. The moment of reckoning is upon us.

Brooks Berndt is Minister of Environmental Justice for the United Church of Christ. He recently released [a church-based discussion guide](https://www.uccfiles.com/pdf/ThunbergDiscussionGuide.pdf) for Greta Thunberg's book "No One Is Too Small to Make a Difference."
View this and other columns on the [*UCC's Witness for Justice page*](https://www.ucc.org/justice_advocacy_resources_witness-for-justice).

**Upcoming Events**

* **October 10th Thursday 5:30 to 7 pm Community Supper -** Bring a friend! Don’t let food sensitivities keep you home – Each community supper has a gluten-free, dairy-free, and nut-free entrée for our special guests. Bring something canned or boxed for our local food pantry at St Vincent De Paul, and put it in the bin near our side entrance—and thank you.
* **October 12th  3:30pm Nashua Soup Kitchen** Meet in the church parking lot at 3:30 for carpooling to Nashua. We are usually back by 6:30 or 7pm. Share your love and energy in this outreach mission of our community. Contact Kathy Chapman, chapman.kathy@gmail.com or 878-4993 if you plan to go or need information. We welcome members of the community in this service mission.

## Oct 19th 6:30 pm. Living Room Coffee House See website for full information <https://thelivingroomcoffeehouse.wordpress.com/> **Tom Keating** ” I’m a  old luthier, fascinated by the passing parade. Inventor, cook, ancient neophyte, believer in love and personal assistant to the muse.”**Tom is all those things and more. He possesses a wonderful finger picking style of guitar that flows and ebbs with expression. The music pours effortlessly thru his fingers, painting a wide “music-scape”, were he calmly lays down his lyrics that are poetic and heartfelt.  SPT**

* **October 20th Worship Service at 10 am**  Reverend Veronica will be on vacation. The Deacons have invited Robert Sims from High Mowing School to speak during our time of worship. He teaches math, humanities, and horticulture with a great spirit, and inspires students and parents. Please join us in welcoming Robert on this occasion.
* **October 31st Halloween at Mason Church “Trunk and Treat” in the parking lot at 6pm until 7:15 pm** Decorate your car, costume yourself, and get ready for some fun with the children of Mason. They love showing off their costumes, and checking out everyone’s treats and costumes. **Invite your neighbors, all are welcome!**

#### **Image result for god is still speaking**

* **Curt Dunn** Curt is at the rehab center Courville, 44 West Webster Street in Manchester. Although he has trouble reading, he still loves cards, but of course, enjoys calls and visits even more. He is over the pneumonia, and lost strength while recovering, so don’t bring any germs with you! Courville phone is 647-5900
* **Be sure to meet:** Lisa and Brian Charbonneau, 130 Jeds Lane, Mason, NH 03048 878-1502. Welcome to Mason Church!
* **Susan and Jim Suokko** have moved to Leominster, MA. Their new address is: 50 Brooks Pond Rd, Apt 104, Leominster, MA 01453. Packing and unpacking is no one’s favorite activity, but settling in to a new place is something they have been looking forward to!
* **Gwen Whitbeck** had surgery 4 months ago to amputate her leg. This is a huge adjustment, as anyone can imagine. Check with Doug – dwhitbeck@hotmail.com – if you want to visit or call her. This month she has had further surgery on her other leg to help with the circulation. The Whitbecks have given so much to NH and the community in service – many thanks! Now let us help you.
* **Laila Washburn is still 100 years old!** Laila lives at Summer Hill Assisted Living in Peterborough. She loves company and cards. At 100, 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 driving, and getting stronger every day, but recovery is always slower than we want or expect! She, like the rest of us, enjoys seeing friends, and sharing a meal. So give her a call 878-2675.
* **Gretchen and Wally Brown** Always in need of a little cheer, and Gretchen needs contact with the outside world, so stop by with a smile, a meal, or just to pick up syrup and say hello!

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

* **Forty Family** Meredith and family are moving to Manhattan. We wish them well, and hope they will come home to Mason often.

**Please join us!**

**Community Volunteer Transportation Company (CVTC) is in your neighborhood! Call: get a ride or get information about volunteering to be a driver.** (877) 428-2882 **Just an hour or two of your time can make a big difference in a person's life.**

When you volunteer to be a driver for CVTC — taking neighbors to nonemergency medical or social service appointments, the grocery store, banking, or pharmacy — you increase the health of the entire region, one person at a time. Volunteer drivers donate their time, at their availability, and can choose to be compensated for their mileage.

Community Volunteer Transportation Co. is a nonprofit providing no-fee rides for individuals without access to transportation due to age, ability, income, and/or life circumstance.

To give or get a ride, visit [cvtc-nh.org](http://cvtc-nh.org/) or call 1-877-428-2882, for more information. Thank you!

 **For your reflection:**

Kahlil Gibran, The Prophet, 20th century
"You pray in your distress and in your need; would that you might pray also in the fullness of your joy and in your days of abundance."

Wendell Berry, 21st century
"Healing is impossible in loneliness; it is the opposite of loneliness. Conviviality is healing. To be healed we must come with all the other creatures to the feast of Creation."