



Love Is Justice Embodied

Sarah Lund

Minister for Disabilities and Mental Health Justice

According to Omid Safi, “love is justice embodied.” When following Jesus’ teachings to love our neighbors, how do we embody this love? How does the love of God show up in our embodied selves? What if we were to measure our love for neighbor by how their bodies are doing?

For example, does our neighbor’s body have the nutrients needed for physical and mental wellbeing? Is there clean water to drink, fresh fruits to enjoy, and enough to nourish the growing children in the house?

Does our neighbor’s body have the medications they need for their chronic illnesses, such as depression, anxiety and high blood pressure?

Does our neighbor’s body have the housing they need for safety, rest, and relaxation? Is there a home where our neighbor can create a sense of belonging and community, a sanctuary from the world?

Is our neighbor’s body engaged in meaningful work that brings them a sense of worth, dignity, and pride?

Every body deserves to be loved. No matter if you have depression or cerebral palsy, dementia or fibromyalgia. Every body is part of Christ’s body.

For the United Church of Christ, love is justice embodied when people with disabilities are included as part of the Body of Christ. Disabilities and mental health justice begins when we love our bodies and our neighbors’ body. This love is a form of action that has real results. This means working together so that every kind of body has what we need to flourish: access to quality and affordable healthcare, education, housing, and employment opportunities.

To learn how you can love your neighbors with disabilities, check out the UCC Disabilities Ministries resources to be an Accessible-to-All (A2A) congregation

(uccdm.org/a2a/) and the UCC Mental Health Network for researches on how to be a WISE (Welcoming, Inclusive, Supportive, and Engaged) for mental health congregation (<http://mhn-ucc.blogspot.com/p/wise-congregations.html>). Also, contact me to share stories of how your church is showing love embodied as justice for disabilities and mental health by emailing me at lunds@ucc.org

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Sarah Lund is Minister for Disabilities and Mental Health Justice

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