

BLESSINGS ALWAYS

November 8, 2023

Association Minister Message

Rev. Daniel L. Busch

CHOOSE/CHOICE. "CHOOSE this day whom you will serve...But as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord." (Joshua 24:15). We have just completed another voting cycle in which we had *CHOICES* to elect candidates who will be in leadership positions and voted on issues that will guide how things are to be done. The election had its winners and losers. It is now time to move on and realize that we are a democracy with *CHOICES*, and we can disagree with respect. Some people, though, have an agenda of their own or want to exclude people by limiting *CHOICES* for those who are different spiritually or ethnically, differently abled or express sexuality differently.

The journey that the Israelites took from Egypt to the Promised Land was filled with all kinds of drama. Fears versus hopes, reality verses dreams, restrictions verses options, gods verses God. Along the way the Israelites complained about the food, their leaders, about God possibly leading them into a death trap. Some of the travelers were so disenchanted that they were willing to go back to Egypt and be slaves again, for Egypt offered them stability amidst imprisonment.

The Book of Joshua is a "*report*" on the Israelites in the Promised Land with a new leader, Joshua. Their complaining did not stop even though they were aware of being in the Promised Land. Joshua reminded the Israelites that they were now responsible for living their lives in gratitude to God who was with them and saved them. God blessed them to be a nation and the Promised Land was in their care. God led them and was with them, even when they made and worshipped idols. The journey to the Promised Land was dangerous, difficult, and mysterious. They risked much on the journey, but they had a vision of promise. Joshua had to remind them to trust in God, the source of life and their protector on the journey. Joshua says, "*CHOOSE this day whom you will serve...*" Joshua was more than the preacher, for he declares that he, too, and his family, will trust and give God praise for the miracle of promises fulfilled. Who will we serve? Thanks be to God for being with us on our journey into a future of unlimited possibilities. *BLESSINGS ALWAYS.*