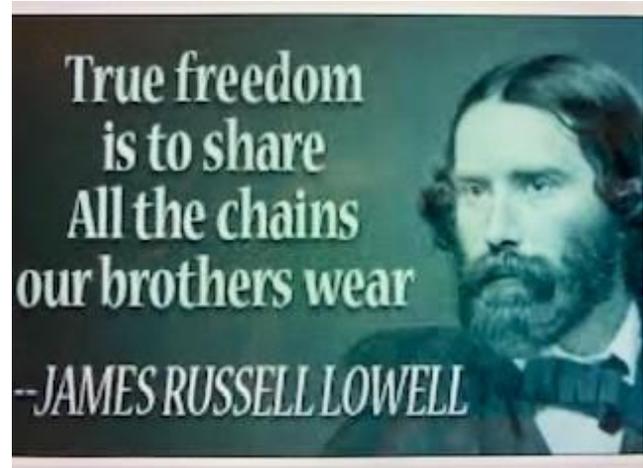


10/30/20

Nonviolent protest against injustice can take many forms – Marching . . . Prophetic preaching . . . Silent vigil . . . Writing words of power

In December 1845 New England poet, Harvard Law School graduate and noted abolitionist JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL published a long poem in the BOSTON COURIER called “Verses Suggested by The Present Crisis.”



James Russell Lowell (1819 - 1891)



The crisis ??? – the national debate over slavery and the impending war with Mexico. Lowell and a young anti-war congressman named Abraham Lincoln both declared the war “unjust aggression.”

This poem included lines which later became immortalized when they were included in a well-known hymn about social responsibility. The hymn ??? – “Once To Every Man And Nation” Enter this link in your browser to listen:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cSMqesZz3tU>

Quoted by The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King in his “We Shall Overcome” speech, the opening and closing verses read as follows:

Once to every man and nation comes the moment to decide,
In the strife of truth with falsehood for the good or evil side;
Some great cause, God’s new Messiah, offering each the bloom or blight,
And the choice goes by forever, ‘twist that darkness and that light.

Though the cause of evil prosper, yet ‘tis truth alone is strong,
Truth forever on the scaffold, wrong forever in the throne.
Yet that scaffold sways the future and behind the dim unknown
Standeth God within the shadow keeping watch above His own.

As we approach November 3, these 175-year old words are as appropriate now as they were in 1845. Another powerful way to protest injustice is to VOTE AGAINST IT.

The words of this hymn give us a great compass by which to steer our thoughts next Tuesday!

No matter which political party you favor, as Christians we are called to cast our ballot while also remembering our own NMCC mission statement: Micah 6:8

“And what does the Lord require of you ? (or anyone for whom you vote...)
To do justice
To love kindness
And to walk humbly with God”

AMEN.