

Dear Friends:

Democracy is the worst form of government, except for all the others.” (Attributed to Winston Churchill)

In the Hebrew Bible, nations in the Middle East were run by kings. In Jesus’ day, the Roman government, which had a Senate, was a Republic but led by a central figure, Caesar. Each kingdom and nation in our European history has had good and bad kings, success and failings at people-centered, rather than power-centered, governments.

Our Founding Fathers did our country a great service in taking the first steps toward a democracy and government of the people, by the people, and for the people. They also ensured that women, minorities, and poor people (those without land) would have little power in making the laws of the land. For instance, California has forty million people and two Senators, the same as North Dakota which has less than a million. In lots of ways, our country is no better or worse than any other country.

We have a long list of sins: genocide of First Nations, slavery, patriarchy, racism, and gluttony for the few. We also have a long history of trying to right these systems of oppression and neglect. Trying to build this nation of the people (all people), by the people (all citizens), and for the people (including immigrants) is taking too long, but I believe it is moving forward.

As Christians, we are called to work for justice, to ‘air’ our dirty laundry and then to clean it up. We are called to love all people by making sure all have enough to eat, a place to sleep, safety, healthcare, and community. God’s kingdom, on earth as it is in heaven, seeks to free the oppressed, repent our sins, and welcome the stranger and the sojourner, seeking the lost, and running towards the prodigal child. We are to be light, salt, and leaven in our nation and in this world.

Peace
Pastor Enno