

Last Sunday, February 14th, Valentine's Day, white supremacists Zoom-bombed the church service of the Community Unitarian Universalists in Brighton while they were celebrating the legacy of civil rights achievements in a Sunday Service. This is an open letter to them.

To the people who virtually attacked my church this past weekend,

I'm sorry for whatever happened that filled you with so much hate. I don't know who hurt you enough to make you want to threaten someone you've never met, but I want you to know you deserve better. I live in fierce resistance to your actions and your harmful viewpoints. I also hold your evident pain in the utmost compassion. I'm writing to you today out of that compassion, and I want you to know three things.

1. I am not afraid. If your objective was to use fear to change my behavior, to make me less outspoken, I didn't work. I will not hide. I don't think you intend to do the awful things you described doing to me, but even if you did, it wouldn't accomplish much. When you broke into our service, we were celebrating the beautiful sacrifice of brave people who used their life force to bend the arc of the universe toward justice. If I wasn't around to do it, there was a whole Zoom room full of people who would take up the cause in my stead, with renewed vision and purpose; and our love conquers any hate any day. So I think you were blowing a bunch of hot air, but even if you weren't, your violence wouldn't help you accomplish your goals.
2. I owe you great thanks. The day you threatened us, the surrounding community came out in droves with messages of solidarity and support. We heard from the Livingston Diversity Council, Congresswoman Elissa Slotkin and her brilliant staff, the Livingston County Sheriff, other local churches, and most importantly, a whole wide range of our neighbors. In response to your actions, we have found so many more who are also working to build the Beloved Community. I thank you for the introduction and deepened connection.
3. Finally, I want you to know, I forgive you. Perhaps you aimed to trespass on our sacred time in our sacred space, but there can be no trespass when all are welcome. Now, I can't let you make a mess of my worship services anymore, but you are welcome to get in contact with me; my information is public. I will hold your anger, and your fear that the world of white domination is going away, because you are right: it is. I will travel with you through the valley of hatred and shame, and we can arrive together to the beautiful reality of blessed human interconnection. Trust me. It's so much better than holding on to outdated rage and nonsensical ideologies. And the tech is easier to access when people are willing to give you the password.

I have no idea if you will read this, and if you do, I have no idea if these words will reach you, but it's not my job to worry about that. My job is to practice love, live with integrity, and fight to uphold the worth and dignity of every person. There is no dignity in how you behaved. I believe you can do better. There is more love somewhere. I pray you keep on, till you find it. I'm here if you get lost along the way.

With peace and blessings,

Rev. Julie Brock

Minister,

Community Unitarian Universalists in Brighton