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Reflection on Freedom by Rev. Mike Mather

A few weeks ago at church we heard the passage from the Gospel of Luke where Jesus reads from the scroll of Isaiah and announces freedom to the captives. We do not often think of the captives as our own sons and daughters. Or ourselves.

I have two sons...two teenage sons. And especially because of that -- freedom – its sacred value matters to me. It is the truth that makes us free. It is not what we might like it to be. It is not what others think it should be. It is truth. That simple. Truth.

We have nothing to fear from the truth – except for fear itself.

I want my sons to be free. I want the young people around our congregation and our community to be free. And that starts...it must start with the truth. The truth will make you free, says the scripture. And it does. But if the adults in our lives, if the persons and institutions that are around us don't tell us the truth – our freedom grows constricted. And that is no freedom at all. Freedom to know what is at stake with our lives...Freedom to know what the consequences are for how we use our bodies. Freedom to know what choices we can make for our own health.

Fewer and fewer children grow up on farms – places where we learned a lot more about sex education than we do in this so-called "information" age. A better description is that we are the age of missing information. We know less about our bodies and ourselves. And it is a good and holy thing to know who we are and whose we are.

It's time for those of us who visibly stand for the sacred values of life, to bear witness to the fact that we have absolutely nothing to fear from information – knowledge – and ideas. We have nothing to fear – because it sets us free. It sets us free to make good and wise choices with the brains that our God gave for us to use.

Our young people are not to be treated as scared little boys and girls, but loving, gifts filled, young people – not "at-risk" – but "at-life" – full and joyful and overflowing with the gifts of God. But in order to share their gifts; In order to give what they have to give...they must be free – free from fear, free from ignorance. If we want them to grow up to live fully into the title of beloved child of God that each of us carries, the more information they have within them – the better.

We are afraid. So very afraid of the dangers of this world for our children that we steal their freedom from them. We end up holding back the very thing we say we hold most dear.

Freedom, though, is the freedom to choose – to make choices and the best way to make good choices is with good information and that fuels imagination and spirit and hope.

Please turn to each other and say – “we are all in this together.” Mother, Fathers, Sons, Daughters, Neighbors, Friend. Turn to one another again and say – “We are all in this together.”

If you believe that freedom is worth encouraging – would you say, Amen!

AMEN!

If you believe that freedom is worth saving and preserving, say amen!

AMEN!

If you believe that freedom can be saved, say amen!

AMEN!

If you believe that you can make a difference to encourage and open up freedom, Say amen!

AMEN!

The echo of Isaiah and Jesus can be heard in the words that define and shape us as a nation.

Remember – this state is our state. This land is our land. Of the people. For the people. By the people.

WE the people.

The truth shall make you free. That’s quite a promise. But there it is. The truth shall make US free.