

Invite.
Embrace.
Include.
Empower.



FAITH4ALL

Inclusive Times

Latest Edition:
This issue considers
the nature of our
inclusive efforts,
comparing them to
justice rolling down.

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Can Justice Truly 'Roll Down'?

In honor of the worldly contributions of [Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.](#), on the Sunday before the observance of Martin Luther King Jr. Day, the First Congregational Church of Christ, Boulder devoted an entire service to hearing reflections on his message of inclusion. One highlight of this service was that the church choir presented a rolling rendition of the song "[Roll Down Justice](#)" composed by [Mark A. Miller](#) which incorporated some of the song "Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing" by Robert Robinson. This song is very powerful and moved some of its audience to the point of tears!

Here are the lyrics of the song by Mark Miller:

*There's a voice, strong and clear
Ringing out far and near
"Let justice roll down, let justice roll down!"
Like the rush of a stream
Comes a powerful dream
Let justice roll down
Justice rolls down!*

*Let the earth be restored,
Ev'ry soul be reformed;
Let the healing renew Creation reborn.
Here in this sacred space
With the strength of God's grace
Let justice roll down,
Justice rolls down!*

*Roll down! Roll down, justice!
Roll like an ever flowing stream.
Roll down! Roll down, justice!
Roll like an ever flowing stream,
Flowing stream, Roll down!*

*Let your heart soar,
Open the doors wide,
Let your mind be transformed,
Let it be, let it be.
Let it be opened by love
Opened by love.*

*On this glorious day,
Give us courage we pray
That justice rolls down,
Let justice roll down!
Let the vision take flight and God will delight
As water roll down,
Justice abounds!*

*Roll down, justice!
Roll like an ever flowing stream.
Roll down! Roll down, justice!
Roll like an ever flowing stream,
Flowing stream, Roll down!*

Although this is one of the most powerful songs that I've ever sung, on reading the lyrics I have to quibble with a line of the text: "Let justice roll down". My criticism is based on a belief that justice doesn't "roll down", instead, justice is something that has to be worked for! This is not simply my personal observation, but that of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

I believe that justice "rolling down" - or following the natural course of nature, one may say - goes against the first burden of selfishness embedded in the human animal. Because we are beings that primarily have control over our own actions and geared towards our own survival, we inherently lean towards acting selfishly. Sharing our food or other resources and letting justice abound, is not an inherent motive for humans, especially those in capitalistic economies! Yet, an equitable distribution of the necessities of life, allows us to see our hidden interconnection and how justice leads to a more prosperous, stable society. The importance of justice may not be an apparent concern for those primarily interested in themselves. Justice, or the fair distribution of life's necessities, is something that needs to be *worked for to attain*.

The Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. apparently felt similarly: he wrote this in his [Letter from a Birmingham Jail](#) (1963): "We must come to see that human progress never rolls in on wheels of inevitability. It comes through the *tireless efforts and persistent work of people willing to be coworkers with God, and without this hard work, time itself becomes an ally for the forces of social stagnation*" (my own italics).

So, you might ask, what does all this have to do with disability and the work of [Faith4All](#)? It is the goal of [Faith4All](#) to help inspire and guide interested faith communities as they attempt to make the changes in their community, programming, and nature of interactions with - and expectations of - community members. This is done so in the aim that people with disabilities are more likely to feel welcomed and supported in the community.

Beginning with the next issue of *The Inclusive Times* and continuing for several editions, we will detail several efforts that can be undertaken by any faith community to strengthen its honest welcome and inclusion of people with disabilities into their house of faith.



We hope you are enjoying our Spring weather and praying for more rain or snow!



We would like at this time to acknowledge the death of [Judith Heumann](#), the "Mother of the Disability Rights Movement", who passed from this life on March 4th of this year. Ms. Heumann was an exceptionally talented and driven woman who worked passionately at many levels of state and national government to insure the rights and just treatment of people who lived with disabilities. Ms. Heumann was responsible for the implementation of legislation at the national level for programs in special education, disability research, vocational rehabilitation and independent living, including the [Individuals with Disabilities Education Act \(IDEA\)](#), regulations for [Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973](#), the Developmental Disability Administration and the [Rehabilitation Services Administration](#), and Heumann served as the [World Bank Group's](#) first Advisor on Disability and Development.

She will be missed by a great many people!

Future Inclusive Times Topics:

- **Steps towards full inclusion: An Honest Welcome!**

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