

KMarie Tejada: Good morning.

Congregation: Good morning.

KMarie Tejada: Welcome to morning prayer. If you please stand as you're able and join me in our responsive reading, which this morning is Psalm 136, found in your Black Appleton Psalter book on page 68.

KMarie Tejada: O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good, for his mercy endureth forever.

Congregation: O give thanks unto the God of gods for his mercy endureth forever.

KMarie Tejada: O give thanks to the Lord of lords, for his mercy endureth forever.

Congregation: To him who alone does great wonders, for his mercy endureth forever.

KMarie Tejada: To him who by wisdom made the heavens, for his mercy endureth forever.

Congregation: To him who stretched out the earth above the waters, for his mercy endureth forever.

KMarie Tejada: To him who made great lights for his mercy endureth forever.

Congregation: The sun to rule by day, for his mercy endureth forever.

KMarie Tejada: The moon and stars to rule by night, for his mercy endureth forever.

Congregation: And hath redeemed us from our enemies, for his mercy endureth forever:

KMarie Tejada: Who give food to all flesh, for his mercy endureth forever.

Congregation: O give thanks unto the God of heaven, for his mercy endureth forever.

Choir: (singing)

Grace Killian: The sacred text this morning comes from Genesis, chapter 18. "Abraham looked up and saw three men standing near him. When he saw them, he ran from the tent entrance to meet them and bowed down to the ground. He said, my Lord, if I find favor with you, do not pass by your servant. Let a little water be brought in, wash your feet and rest yourselves under the tree. Let me bring a little bread that you may refresh yourselves, and after that you may pass on since you have come to your servant. So they said, do as you have said.

Grace Killian: And Abraham hastened into the tent to Sarah and said, make ready quickly three measures of choice flour, knead it and make cakes. Abraham ran to the herd and took a calf tender and good and gave it to the servant who hastened

to prepare it. Then he took curds and milk and the calf he had prepared and set it before them. And he stood by them under the tree while they ate. They said to him, where is your wife, Sarah? He said, there in the tent. Then one said, I will surely return to you in due season and then your wife Sarah shall have a son."

Grace Killian: One Saturday a month in the sanctuary of the Methodist church in Halle, Germany is transformed into a repair cafe together. The congregation deconstructs everything in the sanctuary. They take down the rows of chairs and set up work tables full of sewing machines, work lights, and of course, there's a table full of cookies, cakes and tea and coffee. At 2:00 p.m. people, both Germans and refugees alike bring broken items to be repaired with help from others who are skilled in different kinds of repairs. A mother and daughter from Syria mend torn curtains for their new home in the city with the help of a German member of the congregation. A German man brings a lamp to be fixed and sits together with men from all over the world to repair it.

Grace Killian: Young Germans sit together with young men from Syria and practice German patiently with him. The room is filled with different languages as people greet one another and assist each other in these repair projects. By 5:00 p.m, most items have been repaired and the Germans and refugees join together again to return the sanctuary to its necessary layout for worship the following morning.

Grace Killian: This describes just one of the scenes and the many different ways I witnessed churches in Germany reaching out to welcome the flood of refugees and their communities in 2016. Again and again, I was struck by the radical nature of hospitality. Hospitality is not simply kind or polite, it is transformative and subversive. In times when our world feels shrouded in fear and divisiveness, welcoming the other, the one that is different from us affirms our shared humanity and assures us that differences are not inherently scary.

Grace Killian: Indeed, it is not only refugees that we must be welcoming, but all those who may be different from us. Providing hospitality at our borders in our communities and in our sacred sanctuaries is a powerful statement of reconciliation, and it's vital work for the transformation of the world. Just as the sanctuary of the Methodist church in Halle, Germany has transformed once a month to welcome refugees, the people who came together in that space participate in transformative acts. We too are called to transform our spaces to welcome those that may be different from us in a number of ways.

Grace Killian: In doing so, we open ourselves and our community to the possibility of greater transformation. Engaging and working with the other forces us to constantly reimagine what our communities could look like, the ways they could be safer, more peaceful, and more just for all.

Grace Killian: After Abraham welcomed the strangers, his life did not continue unchanged, but rather new life was brought into his world in the form of a son. In the same way,

practicing radical transformative hospitality in our lives and our sacred spaces can breathe new life into our communities.

KMarie Tejada: Let us pray the Lord's prayer found on the reverse of your Order of Worship. Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen. Please stand as you are able and join together in singing the hymn, I sing the Mighty Power of God, found on your Crimson Hymnal, Hymn 188.

Congregation/Choir: (singing)

KMarie Tejada: And now let us go. May the Lord of joy, our redeemer and sustainer take us through this day so we may be the light that shines everywhere we go. Amen.

Congregation: Amen.