



FRIDAY, OCTOBER 6TH, 2023



Dearly beloved,

In the midst of her 9-year-old daughter's health crisis, Tammy Arcuri is overwhelmed with gratitude. Zoe was diagnosed with leukemia last month; Tammy's asked me to thank us for all the cards and gifts we've been sending! Zoe's home from the hospital, now — though she has to return several days a week for more treatment — and is recovering her strength. Her bright spirit never waned! I'm deeply moved by this outpouring of love and care in our beloved spiritual community. *Thank you!* If you'd like to join the lovefest, cards can be sent to Zoe in care of Arlington Street Church, 351 Boylston Street, Boston, MA 02116.

This Sunday, honoring Indigenous People's Day, collaborative pianist Hyunju Jung is playing pieces by Melissa Sky Eagle (Grand Traverse Band of the Ottawa and Chippewa). Director of music Mark David Buckles sings Judy Collins' *Open the Door*; Drew Pearson and Greg Holden's *Home*; and Alicia Keys and Brandi Carlisle's *Beautiful Noise*. We'll all sing Jackie DeShannon's *Put a Little Love in Your Heart!* My sermon is called *The Big Heart of Universalism*.

Recently, I've found myself spending more time than usual with new Americans, all refugees who have fled violence, persecution, and poverty in their homelands. On the September day I performed Sardar & Huma's wedding, the Afghani refugees I spoke of in my sermon about Rwanda's Umuganda, I learned that six Haitian families had just arrived in Yarmouth, Massachusetts, where they were being housed in a hotel. Our friends who created Common Table during the COVID lockdown asked if Kem & I would join them in reigniting our meal preparation and delivery service both to feed our guests and also to welcome them and see how else we might help.

The request was especially urgent, they said, because people were protesting outside the hotel. My mind went white. Later, I read a little of the news — and a little was all I could stomach. Two takeaways:

- “We fear we’re losing Cape Cod,” one woman said. “Cape Cod is a special and beautiful place.”
- “We’re not going to just sit back and accept this situation here on Cape Cod. It’s wrong, and we’re not afraid to stand up and say so,” Republican State Representative Steven Xiarhos said. His grandparents immigrated from Greece.

I suspect that you, too, will like this poem called *Refugees* by Brian Bilston. Very Important: It’s what’s known as a “reverse,” “upside down,” or “palindrome” poem. You can read it from top to bottom, but its meaning will only be revealed in reading it from bottom to top. *Please don’t panic*; as soon as you’ve read it top to bottom, read it from bottom to top!

They have no need of our help
So do not tell me
These haggard faces could belong to you or me
Should life have dealt a different hand
We need to see them for who they really are
Chancers and scroungers
Layabouts and loungers
With bombs up their sleeves
Cut-throats and thieves
They are not
Welcome here
We should make them
Go back to where they came from
They cannot
Share our food
Share our homes
Share our countries
Instead let us
Build a wall to keep them out
It is not okay to say
These are people just like us
A place should only belong to those who are born there
Do not be so stupid to think that
The world can be looked at another way

(now read from bottom to top!)

*Faithfully yours, with love,
Kim*



Illustrating last Sunday's sermon: This photo was taken just after the Concord Academy student (in the red shirt) found the wedding ring (lost in the sand of the volleyball pitch) belonging to the gentleman in the yellow shirt. That's his family, rejoicing around him.