

Small Talk – July 14 2021
By Michael Small

In 1965 Mick Jagger and Keith Richards wrote the memorable song (*I Can't Get No Satisfaction*). Released as a single, the song has been covered multiple times with artists like Otis Redding and Aretha Franklin being the most successful. Almost all of us can sing along. . . “Can't get no satisfaction . . .”

Have you known people whose life script seem to be the kinds of folk who live out those words – *I can't get no satisfaction*? There is never quite enough. It's either too sunny, or too cloudy, too warm, or too cold, too wet, or too dry. There are too many people or too few. It's too noisy or too quiet. And the list goes on. Rather than accepting things as blessings (yes, and also curses) one is surrounded with – there is instead that simmering complaint that easily emerges from their lips – *it's just not right, it is not good enough!* These people often are the ones who strive to get more, strive to find that satisfaction – but fall short and they find themselves in a constant state of disappointment and frustration. There is a time to accept the way things are and let go and move on. Jesus told us to brush the dust off our sandals and walk away.

Yesterday Vicki Kemper¹ wrote in the Daily UCC Devotional *Can't Get No Satisfaction*.

“To what will I compare the people of this generation?” Jesus asked. “What are they like? They are like children sitting in the marketplace and calling out to each other, ‘We played the flute for you, and you didn't dance. We sang a funeral song, and you didn't cry.’ John the Baptist came neither eating bread nor drinking wine, and you say, ‘He has a demon.’ Yet the Human One came eating and drinking, and you say, ‘Look, a glutton and a drunk, a friend of tax collectors and sinners.’” – Luke 7:31-34 (Common English Bible)

Unfettered capitalism promises the moon and the stars: unrestrained economic freedom for all, including permission for the wealthy to oppress or ignore everyone else.

Radically progressive politics promises bread and roses: justice and equality for all, even if it involves demonizing anyone who doesn't get with the program.

Religious fundamentalism condemns those who don't follow certain rules and believe what they believe.

Atheism and the a-religious may reject the very idea of spiritual truth.

Meanwhile, views harden, divisions deepen, cynicism abounds, and the ranks of the malcontent and disaffected – those who refuse either to dance or to cry – proliferate.

A heart that refuses to open cannot be healed. A mind that resists new information will not change. And a people who find fault with everything will be satisfied with nothing.

¹ Vicki Kemper is the Pastor of First Congregational, UCC, of Amherst, Massachusetts.

But Jesus offers another way: the pursuit of inclusiveness, flexibility, forgiveness, compassion, justice, healing, love, freedom, community, and room at the table for everyone.

So go ahead and grieve all that has been lost. Dance with joy every time hope is revived. And let your soul be satisfied with nothing less than the outrageous goodness [life and] of God.

Prayer

Truest Promise that ever was, may I put my trust in you. Amen.

May you, may we find satisfaction, ease and comfort on this day and the days to come. We can begin and end the day with the prayer written by the theologian Reinhold Niebuhr (1892–1971). Niebuhr comes from the Evangelical and Reformed branch of the United Church of Christ.

*God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change,
courage to change the things I can,
and wisdom to know the difference.*

In the spirit and agape love of Jesus, Michael

To Donate

And watch 11:00 am Sunday worship services live and at any time.

Go to www.uccwalker.com

Find back issues of "Small Talk".