

## **CROSSWALK**

In early Spring 2012, I accompanied my husband to an international academic conference being held in Chicago. Whilst he attended the learned sessions at the meeting, I explored Downtown Chicago and visited galleries, museums and the beautiful waterfront onto Lake Michigan. I think I must have seen a poster about a walk to take place on Good Friday, 6<sup>th</sup> April 2012. This was the first CROSSwalk started by the Episcopal Church in Chicago. It is now an annual event.



### **What is CROSSwalk?**

Founded at All Saints' Episcopal Church, CROSSwalk is an initiative of the Episcopal Diocese of Chicago to address the violence that is killing children and youth in Chicagoland. More than 797 children and youth have been killed since 2008.

### **What is the CROSSwalk event?**

**CROSSwalk** is a four-mile Holy Week procession across the heart of the city to remember murdered youth and to connect participants with opportunities to protect children, mitigate violence and support families struggling with these issues. CROSSwalk began as a conversation about honest, relevant liturgy that ties the pain and loss of Christian Holy Week with the reality of everyday life in Chicago. But it has also grown into a broad outreach effort, one hoping to link to individuals and communities that have long been active, or would like to be active, on the issue of violence and youth.

**CROSSwalk** is not a protest march. It is a vigil, one tied directly to follow-up action.

[www.crosswalkchicago.org](http://www.crosswalkchicago.org)

We arrived, at the appointed time, at start of the walk and were moved to see that we were walking with thousands of people. The procession stopped at various places en route and individuals, bereaved parents, councillors and various others, gave testimony about the issue of violence and child murder in their city. As we walked, we sang the refrain from the song, *Let Justice Roll Down Like a River* - very quickly we picked up the tune and words and were deeply moved at the focus it brought to the procession.

We left the March at a church where we attended a Good Friday service.

The words of the song are based on Amos 5, verse 24

*But let justice roll on like a river, righteousness like a never-failing stream*

For me, this event was so fitting on the day when we remember Jesus' walk to Calvary and his violent death. His life was not in vain as it brought us salvation. Christ was a witness to the importance of justice for all, to inclusive love...

As I write we are approaching the first anniversary of the first Lockdown - we have experienced the frightening effects of the Coronavirus Pandemic and the devastation of COVID in every corner of our world.

Many of us have had to work hard at having hope for the future and sometimes we have become trapped in everything to do with the virus, the data and the lifesaving vaccination programme. However, there are still many other issues in our world, our society, to which we should give our attention and for which we should pray and be active in endeavouring to bring about change.

This meditation, drawing on *Justice Rolling on like a River*, is so apposite to these last 12 months – the Black Lives Matter movement emerging after the death of George Floyd, the sad murder of Sarah Everard, the continuing struggles of the Uighur and Rohingya people and the demonstrations in Myanmar, highlight the importance of justice for all, regardless of creed, colour, gender or nationality.

We remember Jesus teaching in the Beatitudes, Matthew 5, verses 6-7

*Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, and they will be filled.  
Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.*

I pray that this coming Good Friday, we may remember our suffering Lord as someone who taught us about love for all, justice for all, forgiveness for all and that He is the hope for our future and that of all the world's citizens.

The attached links are to two songs, based on the words from Amos – they challenge us! The lyrics for the first song are in a separate attachment.

The final musical link is more suitable for our meditative moment, an arrangement for cellos of the Benedictus by Karl Jenkins.

### **Let Justice Roll Down Like a River – Joshua Walters**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w4kM4J5OGaQ>

### **Let Justice Rain**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RORyLr9y2Y0>

From an album by *The Many*.

Amos 5:24 tells us "Let justice roll down like waters and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream." With mobs at the capital, privilege and power and pandemic raging, and all in a month we honor and celebrate Martin Luther King, we'll be singing this song a lot this month. This is a call to all of us to say, "Enough is enough." We need to weep and work to see that things change. And we need to realize, as Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. told us, "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere." This video is dedicated to Ahmaud Arbery who went out for a jog and never made it home. ...and to all who work for justice for him, for all people and for this planet.

### **Benedictus Karl Jenkins Zagreb**

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f\\_RjllPuqyc](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f_RjllPuqyc)



LET JUSTICE ROLL DOWN LIKE A RIVER

BY [COLIN GIBSON](#)

Refrain:

Let justice roll down like a river,  
let justice flow down to the sea;  
let justice roll down like a river  
let justice begin through me.

Justice for all who go hungry,  
crying to God to be fed,  
left in a world of abundance  
to beg for a morsel of bread.

Refrain

Justice for those who are homeless,  
victims of war or of need,  
trapped on the borders of nowhere,  
lost in the canyons of greed.

Refrain

Justice for all who are powerless,  
yearning for freedom in vain,  
plundered and robbed of their birth-right,  
silently bearing their pain.

Refrain

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