

It is the last Sunday in May of 2020, a beautiful day in Denver. During better times Laini and I would have walked the sidewalks to Trinity United Methodist Church. Not today, however, because of two reasons: Trinity is not open for the traditional Sunday Schools and Services because of the fatal virus, and second, we have been warned by our daughter Emily to stay off the streets because of the violence on Capitol Center and elsewhere in Denver.

Over the weekend we tried to make sense of the world by local and national television news shows. We were horrified by the video of the white police officer in Minneapolis kneeling on the neck of George Floyd. At other times we might have joined the protest marches. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., had taught us not to stand by and watch after such events, but he, following Ghandi and others, also preached nonviolence. We turned to television news and heard that people with ulterior designs joined the marches and did the violence; the label “White supremacist” was assigned to some of the violent protestors, compounding these difficult times.

Never in my long life have I felt so unsettled, threatened, and disappointed by the medical and political troubles of our times. I needed the collective, community medicine of a Sunday morning at Trinity United Methodist Church in Denver. I remembered that we had some spiritual and religious compact discs that might help a bit. As I sorted through the large collection of discs, I saw one with a stained glass window, a bright blue background with some white lettering:

Trinity United Methodist Church
Denver, Colorado
Featuring
The Chancel Choir and Chamber Choir

Inside the plastic container I saw a photograph of our beautiful 19th century church. I picked up the disc and placed it in the groove in the front of the player. I called Laini in and we were taken in by the organ, voices, piano, and lyrics. It helped. Then came the third work: “Bridge over Troubled Waters.” Somehow it came over me and I imagined our bodies in troubled waters.

The music reminded us of what we need to have a bridge over the troubled waters: collective faith, righteousness, and discipline.

Phillip K. Tompkins