

# DREAM Sabbath

Guest Preacher: Michael Ramos, Executive Director of The Church Council of Greater Seattle

## Scripture

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### ***Ezekiel 34: 11-16***

For thus says the Lord GOD: I myself will search for my sheep, and will seek them out. As shepherds seek out their flocks when they are among their scattered sheep, so I will seek out my sheep. I will rescue them from all the places to which they have been scattered on a day of clouds and thick darkness. I will bring them out from the peoples and gather them from the countries, and will bring them into their own land; and I will feed them on the mountains of Israel, by the watercourses, and in all the inhabited parts of the land. I will feed them with good pasture, and the mountain heights of Israel shall be their pasture; there they shall lie down in good grazing land, and they shall feed on rich pasture on the mountains of Israel. I myself will be the shepherd of my sheep, and I will make them lie down, says the Lord GOD. I will seek the lost, and I will bring back the strayed, and I will bind up the injured, and I will strengthen the weak, but the fat and the strong I will destroy. I will feed them with justice.

### ***Matthew 25: 31-46***

“When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, and he will put the sheep at his right hand and the goats at the left. Then the king will say to those at his right hand, ‘Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.’ Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?’ And the king will answer them, ‘Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.’ Then he will say to those at his left hand, ‘You that are accursed, depart from me into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels; for I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not give me clothing, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.’ Then they also will answer, ‘Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not take care of you?’ Then he will answer

them, 'Truly I tell you, just as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.' And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

## Questions

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- 1.) The DREAM Act, supported by countless United Methodists and Bishops, is a legislative bill to allow long standing U.S. residents, arriving as a child to our country as an undocumented immigrant, to become a permanent resident provided that they complete 2 years of college or serving in the military. Recently in our church, we have been discussing the role of church in politics and society. Is this a good example of church affecting political change for good? Or is Church dangerously dabbling too much in affairs of the state?
- 2.) The Bible is full of stories of exiles and outsiders. Ramos pointed out that in the Matthew passage, God feels so close to outsiders that how people treat them is how people treat God. Share a story of how you have been an outsider at a time in your life. Have you been welcomed in your exiled status? Who welcomed you? How did it make you feel?
- 3.) Ramos said that the practice of putting immigrants into detention centers and deportation are dehumanizing. We are called to show the humanity of all of God's people. Where do we start? What are some simple, practical ways to "humanize" those in Seattle?
- 4.) This Thanksgiving, we partake in a specifically American holiday in commemorating gratitude. There are innumerable things in which to give thanks to our God. What are the lands from which our families came? In gratitude, name these places and remember our privilege of being in this land.

*Prayer: O Holy God of the exiled, we are grateful for the luxuries we have received and repent of using any luxury in an idolatrous manner. Give us vision and compassion to shine the light on humanity in a dark world of fear. Amen.*