

Pastor Talk: Interfaith choir puts annual awareness campaign to music

By The Rev. Duchess Dale Chico Enterprise-Record

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This past week, I had the opportunity to attend the 20th Interfaith Chico Choir Concert at The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. There were six choirs from various churches and centers in Chico.

Our center was the host church for the evening affording me the privilege of speaking the opening invocation and closing benediction. That simple honor gave me a unique perspective on the whole evening.

What I saw — in addition to what I heard — that night was more about the essence we share rather than our differences. The incomparable gift of music brought us together and touched our minds and hearts in a way that transcended any dogmas or principles.

The diversity of the evening reminded me of the panorama of possibilities we share on this planet within our respective places of worship. We may read different books, follow a different spiritual practice, sing different songs but we share a common ground while we do it.

Currently, many religious and spiritual communities are participating in The Season for Non-Violence. For over 15 years, this annual 64-day campaign, co-founded in 1998 by Dr. Arun Gandhi and The Association for Global New Thought, is an educational, media and grassroots awareness campaign spanning the Jan. 30 and April 4 memorial anniversaries of Mahatma Gandhi and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. This year, the Dalai Lama has also joined the ranks of supporters for this campaign of peace.

In this concert, we had a shared spiritual experience that dissolved our differences into a harmony of purpose. It captured the essence of The Association for Global New Thought vision statement: "To consciously bring forth the evolving human and an awakened world through the practice of universal spiritual principles and the energy of unconditional love." I might add that it was the unconditional love of music and the joy of singing from our souls that called us together that night.

This month, with the imminent arrival of spring, let us take this holy month as an opportunity of renewal as a way to seek finding our common ground and dissolving our differences. Perhaps this season, we might look for opportunities to uncover what unites us, rather than allow the headlines or external differences continue to separate us.

"Happiness is not something ready made. It comes from your own actions."

The Dalai Lama

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