

Blessed are



those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Photo by Chucky Liddy, The News & Observer

Jesus was a peacemaking, blessed child of God, but he also was an “other.” Reviled and persecuted, he was the paperless son of displaced parents. The prophetic iconoclast executed because he was an outsider whose ways confounded the powers-that-be.

We have become a nation that loves to “other” people. We point out their differences as reasons they cannot be trusted, as evidence that they take too much and threaten our well-being. We know who belongs, and the others need to clear out and leave us alone with our worldly possessions, our rules, and our way of doing things.

But that mindset presents a problem for those of us who consider ourselves followers of Christ. Jesus called us into community, to be in relationship with one another, and, from those relationships, to live in peace. Because Jesus knew it is a lot harder to be in conflict with people if you really know and value them.

Since its founding more than 80 years ago, the North Carolina Council of Churches has sought to build that community and to work together toward Christ’s vision. Clearly, all within Christendom might not agree on everything. But by blessing the others in the Beatitudes, Jesus made clear that the community needs every single one of us. By striving to live in relationships of respect and welcome, we inherently reject the harsh edge of blame that would cut us apart. Instead, we bind closer together.

Be an ally to the “othered.”

Support the work of the
North Carolina Council of Churches.

Jesus was an advocate for social justice.

Just read His Beatitudes;
they are a social justice primer.

So when we at the North Carolina of Churches work on behalf of farmworkers and recent immigrants, those living in poverty or with disabilities, children and the elderly, we are doing what Jesus did.

The Council got its start in 1935 when a group of white ministers came together out of opposition to segregation and to work together as Christians across denominational lines. The Council has since grown to a statewide organization representing 17 Christian denominations and committed to the twin goals of ecumenism and social justice. More than 1.5 million North Carolinians are members of congregations under the Council's umbrella.

And while the Council remains committed to its founding ideals, our work continues to expand, to peace as both a local and global issue, to care of creation, health care for all, gender equality and fair treatment for our LGBT brothers and sisters. We continue to break new ground with work to establish churches as centers for good health and to view food as a faith issue.

Although our focus may shift, our vision does not. We continue to work for the least of these and to act on the words of the One who

blessed the poor in spirit,
those who mourn and the meek,
those who hunger and thirst for justice,
the merciful and the pure in heart,
the peacemakers,
those who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness,
and those who are reviled.

We welcome your questions and your support.

North Carolina Council of Churches



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