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To Members and Friends of United Lutheran Church - Oak Park

Take and Read: Dennis Bushkofsky's Selected Sermons at ULC

At Kurt Stadtwald's thoughtful request, Dennis Bushkofsky has sent us a beautiful way of helping to remember and value Dennis' ministry with United. These sermons selected for our archive bring to mind Dennis' preaching voice, the particular cadence and flow of his style, and themes he often brought home: that Christian faith is lived in *action*, that the love of God and deliverance from fear are things *felt* in the texture of richly storied lives, that *identity* in baptism carries through into *mission*: using our own voices, energy and resources for justice and mercy.

I've intentionally added the *italics* here as Dennis does in the sermons, as I've appreciated how that addition has helped me reconnect particularly with those from the collection which I heard in person with you at United. For many of you, these sermons will be a gift to reconnect spiritually with yourselves, with the particular encouragement and vision that Dennis' words brought you on Sundays of the recent past: including traumatic events in the immediate wake of George Floyd, in "Pentecost 2020: A Time to Forgive," and the January 6<sup>th</sup> riot in "Baptism of Our Lord 2021: Strong Words and Actions." Also, read to reconnect with significant times in ULC's recent past, as the joy and fun of our first post-pandemic Easter Vigil in 2022, and in Passion Sunday 2021 "Didn't See that Coming?" which interweaves the unforeseen complications with removing the carpet in the sanctuary with Jesus' walk to Jerusalem: which ends in ways unexpected, but where yet God calls us to work of mercy with our hands.

I can't complete this invitation to take and read without also mentioning the wry humor that shines through the sermons, in Dennis' comments about finding himself unexpectedly checked for age (carded) in "All Saints 2020: A Year of Mourning," but also his vulnerability in sharing with us from his own life, as in "Ash Wednesday 2020: No Tweeting About This." Pastor Dennis shared with us a gift in these sermons. I invite you to read them as you would devotions, perhaps simply one a week, or pick ones that fit our current time in the church calendar. And, if you're so inspired I also encourage you to write Dennis back. As a minister myself, I can assure you hearing back will be a gift.

In gratitude for remembering Dennis ministry,

Ole Schenk

Synodically Authorized Minister, United Lutheran Church