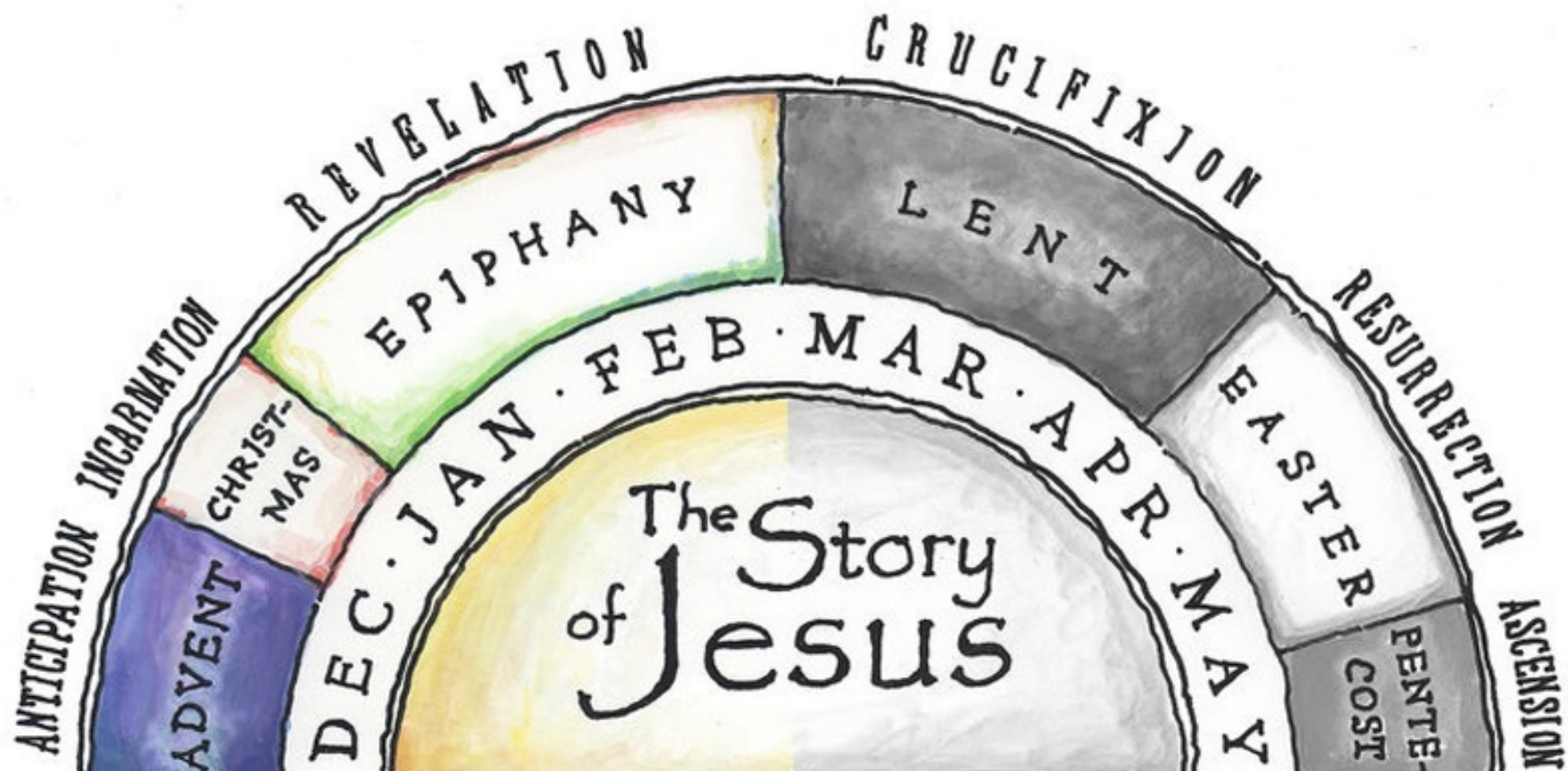


Lord God, you revealed your Son
in the waters of the Jordan and
anointed him with the power
of the Holy Spirit to proclaim good news
to all people. Sanctify us by the same Spirit,
that we may proclaim the healing power
of the gospel by acts of love in your name.
Amen.

OPENING PRAYER

A decorative banner at the bottom of the slide. It features a dark background with a Venn diagram of three overlapping circles in red, green, and blue. To the right of the circles is a stylized, textured pattern resembling a fishnet or a woven mesh. The entire banner is set against a light gray background.

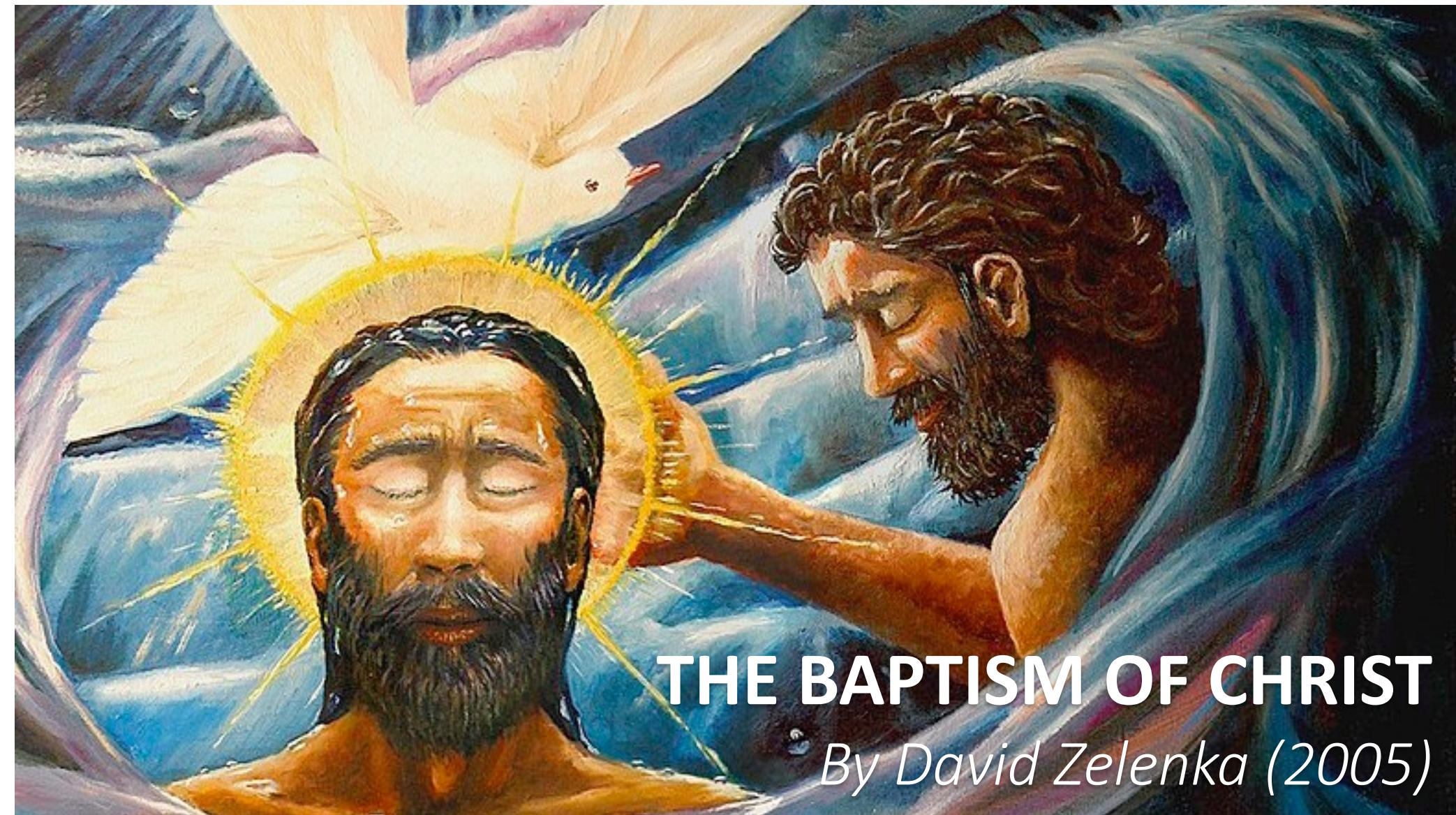




THE SEASON of EPIPHANY

the season of revelation,
seeing the character of God in Jesus

Week 1 – The Baptism of Jesus



THE BAPTISM OF CHRIST

By David Zelenka (2005)

THE BAPTISM OF CHRIST

By Daniel Bonnell (2018)



Then Jesus arrived from Galilee at the Jordan, coming to John to be baptized by him. But John tried to prevent him, saying, "I have the need to be baptized by you, and yet you are coming to me?" But Jesus, answering, said to him, "Allow it at this time; for in this way it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness." ...After he was baptized, Jesus came up... from the water...

HOLY
BIBLE

MATT
3:13-16a

*...and behold, the heavens were opened,
and he saw the Spirit of God descending
as a dove and settling on him, and
behold, a voice from the heavens said,
“This is my beloved Son, with whom
I am well pleased.”*

HOLY
BIBLE

MATT

3:16b-17



THE RIVER JORDAN

Recognized as the spot where
John the Baptist baptized Jesus

Jordan

Israel



EPIPHANY

the manifestation of Christ to the Gentiles as represented by the Magi; a festival commemorating this event in the church calendar; a manifestation of a divine or supernatural or being; a moment of sudden revelation or insight



WHAT IS BEING REVEALED?

1. The heart of a prophet, calling for covenant faithfulness in God's people and declaring God's faithfulness to them, and to all of creation



WHAT IS BEING REVEALED?

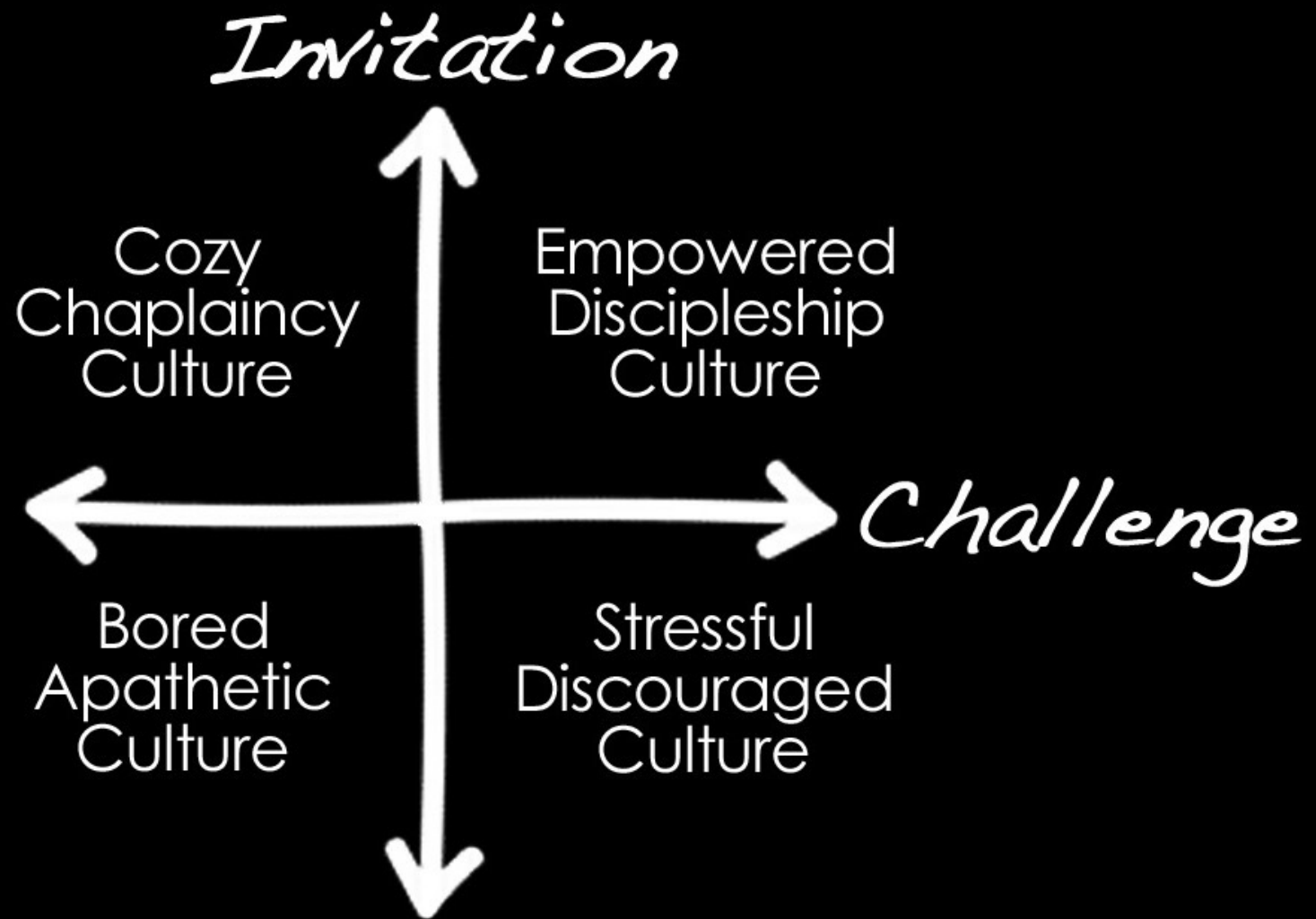
1. The heart of a prophet, calling for covenant faithfulness in God's people and declaring God's faithfulness to them, and to all of creation
2. The heart of God the Father for God the Son through God the Spirit



WHAT IS BEING REVEALED?

1. The heart of a prophet, calling for covenant faithfulness in God's people and declaring God's faithfulness to them, and to all of creation
2. The heart of God the Father for God the Son through God the Spirit
3. The heart of God for God's people, and the path to life for all humanity







INVITATION

The love of God the Father poured out
on God the Son, affirmed by God the Spirit,
occurred before Jesus did ANY of his SAVING WORK

CHALLENGE

Following Jesus cannot be done by avoiding the cross/grave; his pattern of life is how life works: life, death, burial, resurrection, THEN new life...



GOOD REASONS TO BE BAPTIZED

1. To renounce Satan and all spiritual forces of wickedness that rebel against God
2. To renounce all sinful desires that draw you from the love of God
3. To renounce the evil powers of the world which corrupt and destroy God's creatures



GOOD REASONS TO BE BAPTIZED

- 4. To receive/trust in God's grace/love
- 5. To publicly declare your commitment
- 6. To formally join God's historic/global family in the here-and-now
- 7. To inaugurate your kingdom citizenship



BAD REASONS TO BE BAPTIZED

1. To please/appease the desires of others
2. To get God to like/love or be less mad...
3. To check off a “religion” box



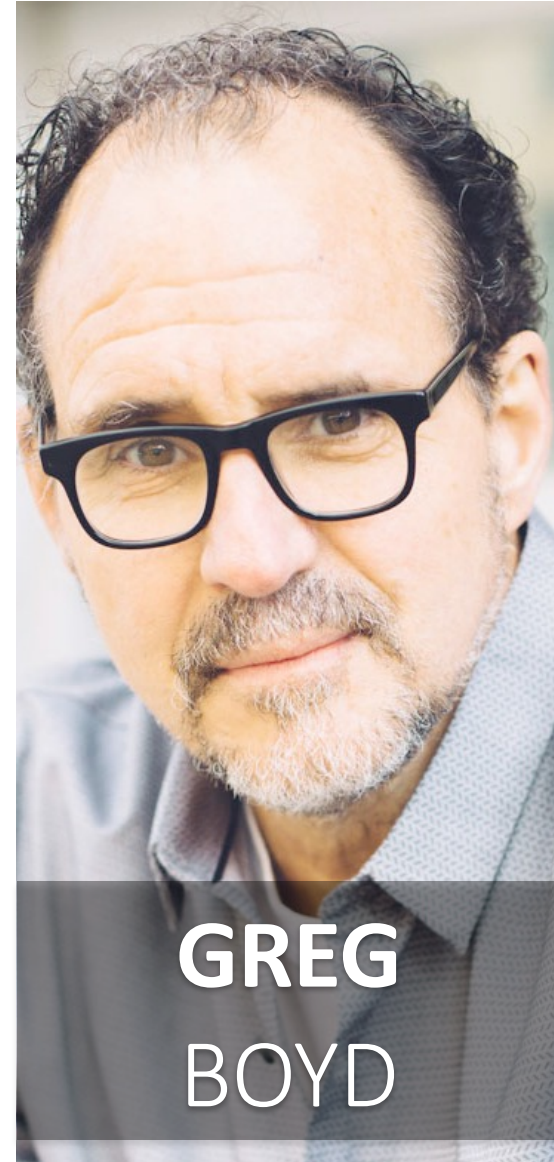
BAD REASONS TO BE BAPTIZED

1. To please/appease the desires of others
2. To get God to like/love or be less mad...
3. To check off a “religion” box
4. To baptize your current life/perspective



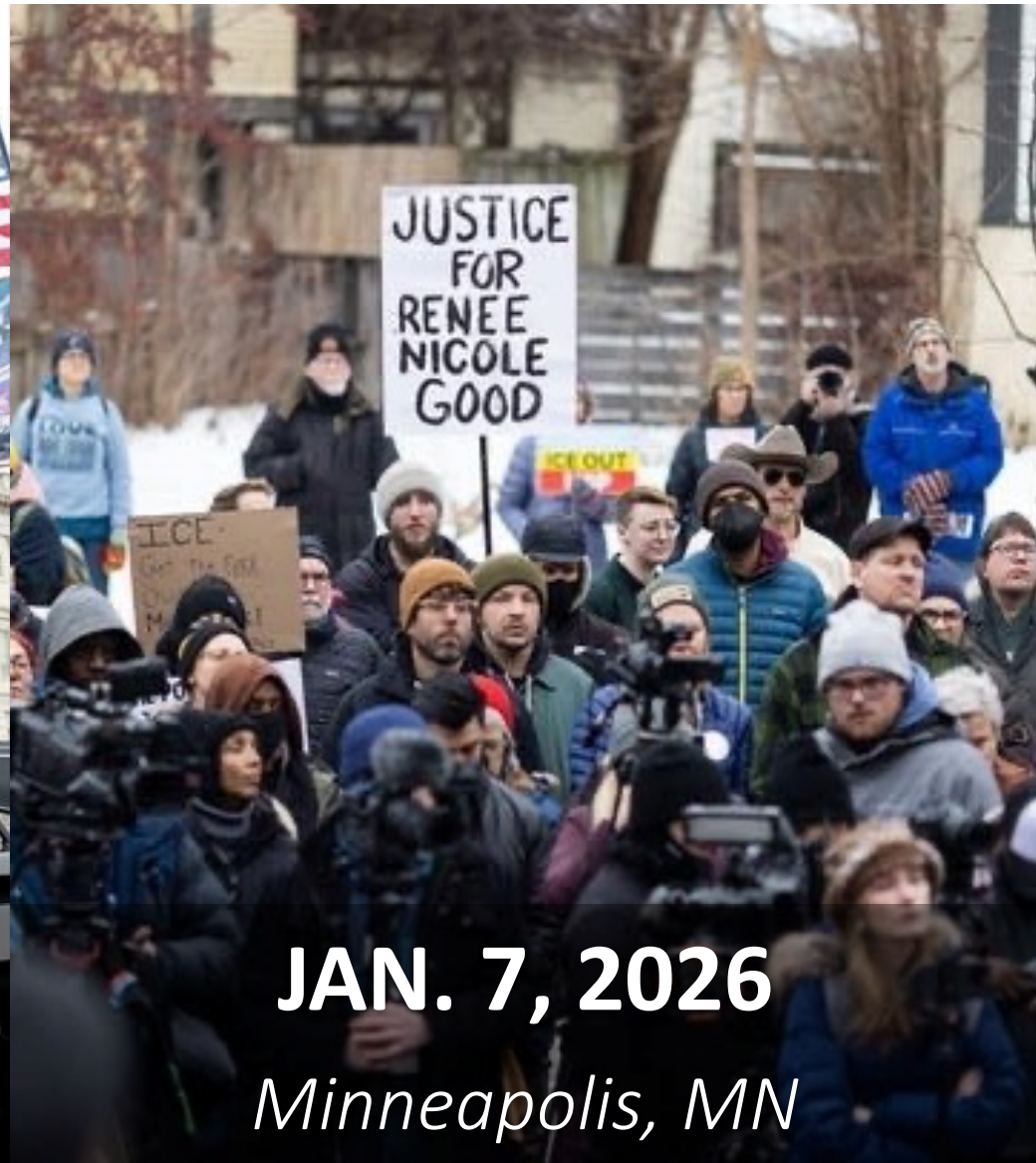
“To get the kingdom of God into someone, you first have to get America* out of them, or it just becomes another American* thing.”

** or WHATEVER national/tribal interests you might be tempted to idolize and prioritize above the kingdom of God*





JAN. 6, 2021
Washington D.C.



JAN. 7, 2026
Minneapolis, MN

GASLIGHTING

psychological manipulation
that makes the recipient
question their feelings,
instincts, and even their sanity



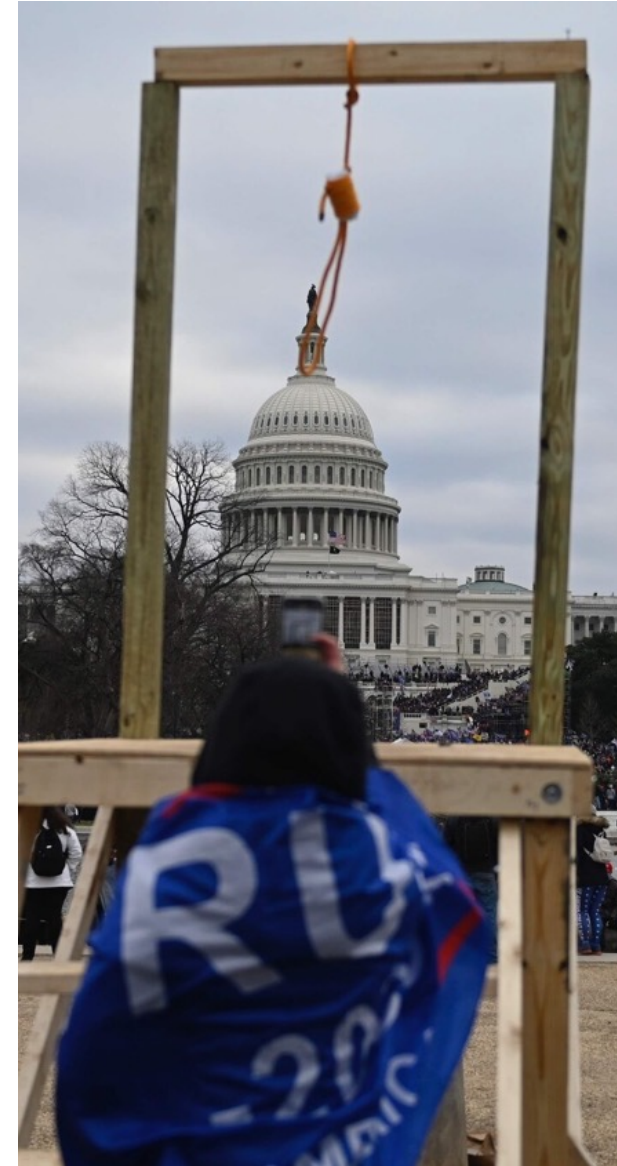
GASLIGHTING

“The Party told you to reject the evidence of your eyes and ears. It became their final, most essential command. And when all others believed the lie, then it passed into history and became the truth.”



TRUMP ON EVENTS OF 1.6.21

“They were there with love in their hearts, and it was a beautiful day.”



TRUMP ON EVENTS OF 1.7.26

“The woman screaming was, obviously, a professional agitator, and the woman driving the car was very disorderly, obstructing and resisting, who then violently, willfully, and viciously ran over the ICE Officer, who seems to have shot her in self-defense.”

(He also later claimed the officer had been injured, was hospitalized, and was lucky to be alive.)



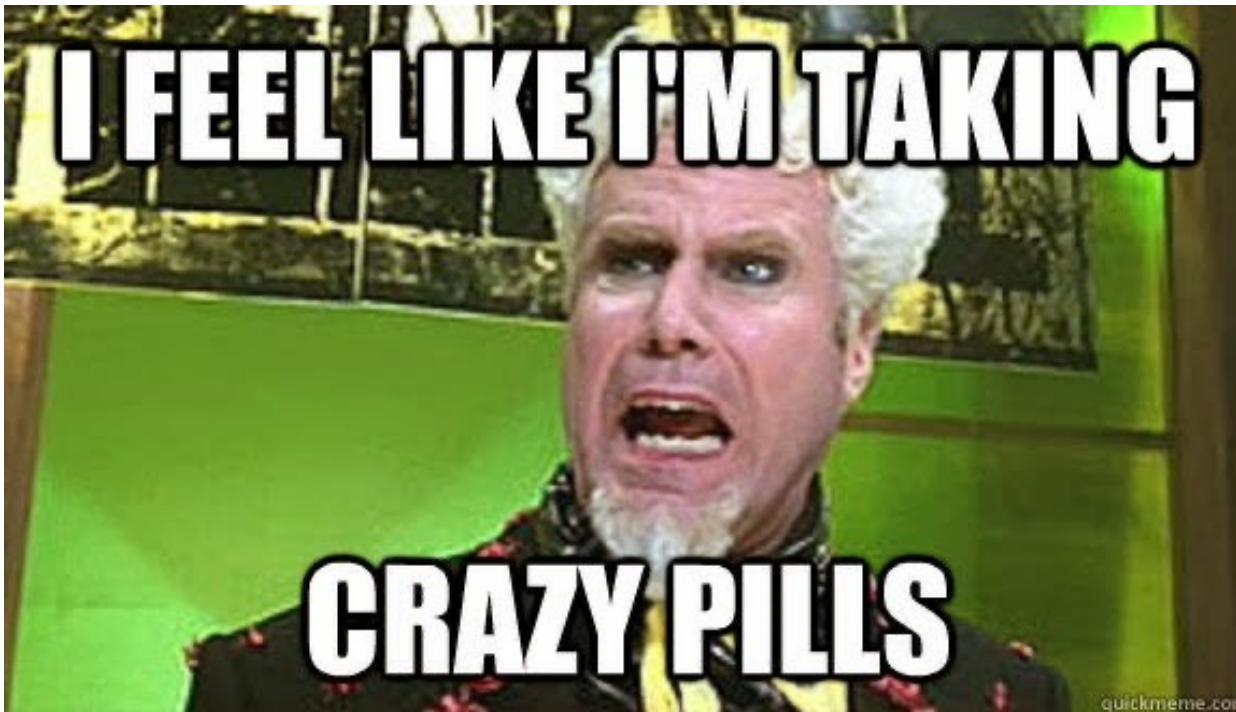
JANAE (BATES) IMARI

Renee was 37 years old, a mother, a U.S. citizen, a Minnesotan, a legal observer, a woman who believed that her neighbors deserved dignity, safety. She was not armed (nor) a threat. She was standing for freedom. And the federal government answered her courage with a bullet.



WORDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT

- You are not crazy



WORDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT

- You are not crazy
- You are not alone



WORDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT

- You are not crazy
- You are not alone
- What ICE is doing – and what happened to Renee Nicole Good (among so many others) – is as wrong and unjust as you think it is



WORDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT

- Christian hope is that:
 - God will make all things right by the power of restorative justice
 - Restoration will be complete, from “molecular” to “universal”

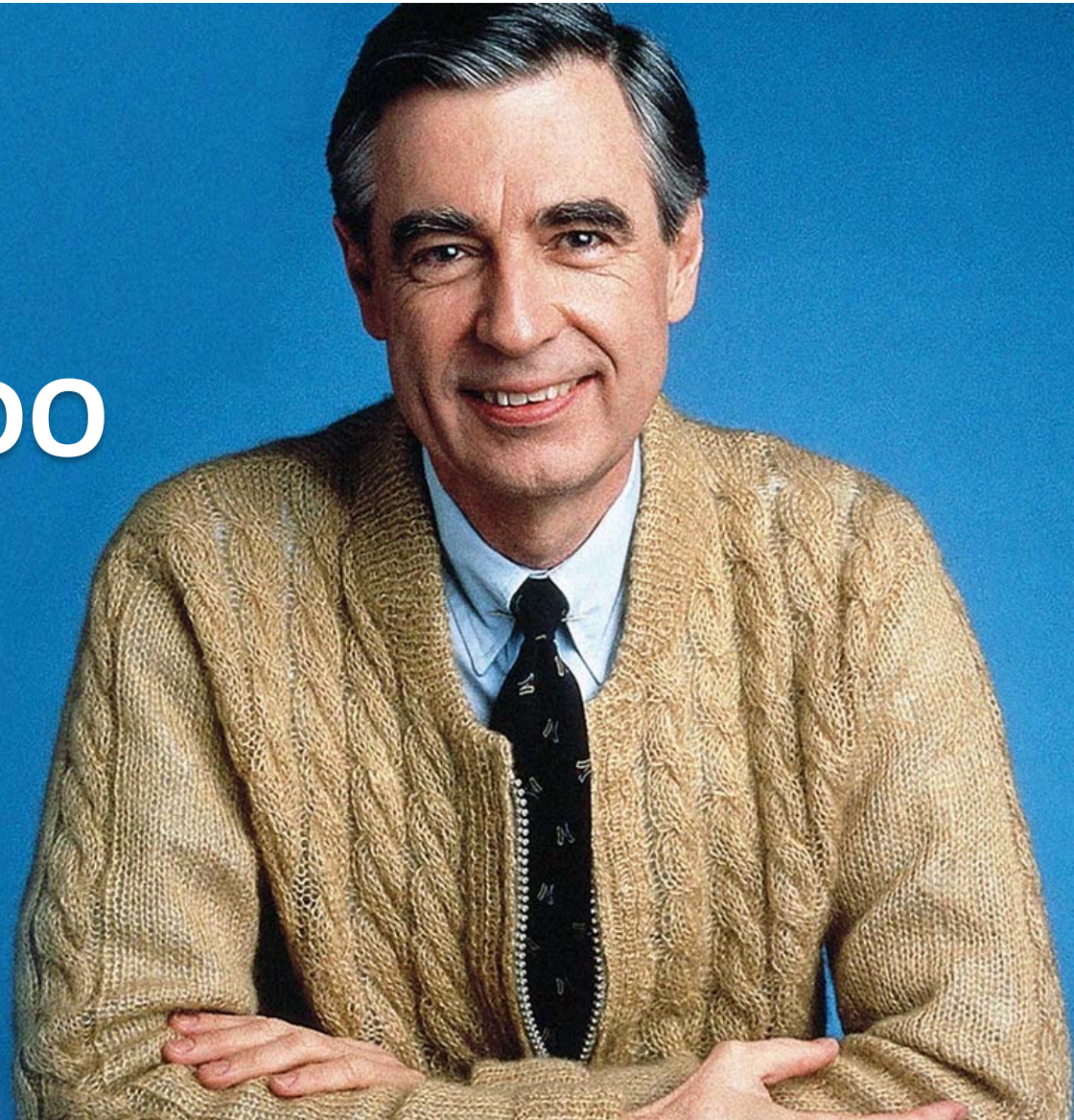


WORDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT

- Christian hope is that:
 - God will make all things right by the power of restorative justice
 - Restoration will be complete, from “molecular” to “universal”
- While we await God’s final victory, we are invited to do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly *together*



WHAT DO YOU DO
WITH THE MAD
THAT YOU FEEL?



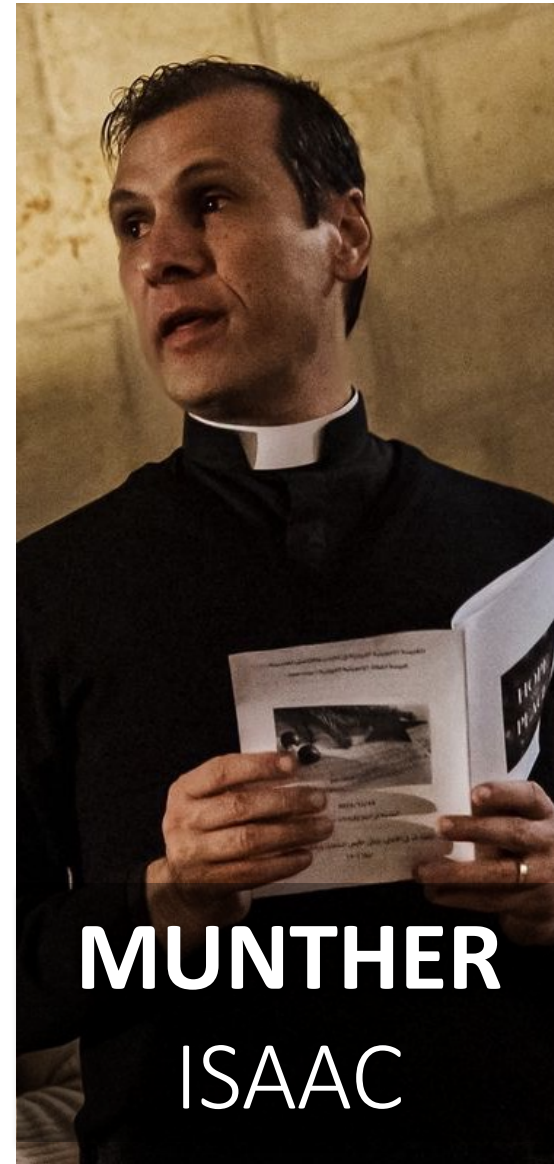
Let's Talk Palestine



Podcast



You need to channel all of this anger you have into action, into helping others, making phone calls to politicians, etc. ... If all of this suffering is in vain, is vanity, is meaningless or worthless, do I even want to go on living in this life? Then why would we even advocate for (justice)? (But) belief in God, belief in ultimate goodness and ultimate justice enables (us) to never lose hope...



MUNTHERR
ISAAC

Renee leaves behind three extraordinary children; the youngest is just six years old and already lost his father. I am now left to raise our son and to continue teaching him, as Renee believed, that there are people building a better world for him. That the people who did this had fear and anger in their hearts, ***and we need to show them a better way.***



God of all ages,
you have revealed your grace
in our Savior, Jesus Christ.
As we wait patiently on his return,
strengthen us to live in your justice,
that with open hearts we may hear
and accomplish your will, through Christ,
who lights our way to you. Amen.

CLOSING PRAYER

A decorative banner at the bottom of the slide. It features a dark background with a Venn diagram of three overlapping circles in red, green, and blue. To the left of the circles, there are stylized white outlines of hands reaching out. To the right, there is a white outline of a fishnet or mesh pattern.