

Raising Holy Hell
Gail Frank, 2-10-20

Not long ago, House Representative John Lewis, in reference to Bayard Rustin, an American leader in social movements for civil rights, nonviolence, and gay rights, said it was time to make some good trouble. That directive was pretty much given by Randy Mayer, pastor of the Good Shepherd United Church of Christ in Sahuarita at a recent meeting of the Green Valley/Sahuarita Samaritans. Their mission is to save lives and relieve suffering in the Arizona Borderlands. Addressing his remarks to visitors from around the U.S., Randy encouraged them to plunge into the activities of the Samaritans, find out what is really happening at the border and then return home and “raise holy hell.”

If anyone is going to raise holy hell at the appalling circumstances of migrants and asylum seekers in the Sonoran Desert, it's going to be one of the many humanitarian groups, Samaritans included, who are dedicated to alleviating suffering and raising awareness of inhumane conditions in our Borderlands. You could say that our job is to be a cog in the wheels of injustice.

Most of us look for hope wherever we can as an anecdote to the world's despair. If you join a group like the Samaritans, you need look no further. Here you will find a plethora of folks over the age of 60 who have not yet given up on life or what they can do to make it better for all people. Here you will find people of faith or no faith, but all humanitarians at heart, regular folks trying to break through the moral exhaustion of the daily destruction of human rights.

Bayard Rustin said, “When an individual is protesting society's refusal to acknowledge his dignity as a human being, his very act of protest confers dignity on him.” He went on to say, “We need, in every community, a group of angelic troublemakers. Let us be enraged about injustice, but let us not be destroyed by it.”

As a Samaritan, I am inspired just by being around folks who believe in the goodness and dignity of all people, folks who still have energy left from a lifetime of experience to make a difference; folks who say, “What is it you need?” And then roll up their sleeves, put on their boots and say, “Whatever it is that you need, I will raise holy hell to get it for you. I will be the one to be a cog in the wheels of injustice.”

Holy hell raisers, that's what we are.