

Wisconsin State Assembly Legislative Prayer 04 20 10

Representative Michael Sheridan, Assembly Speaker (D) Janesville – 44th District:

I'd ask the members and visitors to please rise, and I would like to call on the gentleman from the 54th, Representative Gordon Hintz, to introduce today's guests, who will be giving today's prayer.

Representative Gordon Hintz (D) Oshkosh – 54th District

Thank you. I'm pleased to be joined by my co-pastors, Ralph and Carol DiBiasio Snyder, of First Congregational Church of Oshkosh, to provide today's invocation. Ralph and Carol have been co-pastors at First Congregational Church since 1988, and were recognized by the Oshkosh community, earning the Oshkosh diversity award by the Human Relations Council of Oshkosh. Carol and Ralph both share worship, leadership, pastoral and administrative duties, each bringing his and her individual gifts to our ministry.

Much like our assembly membership, through the guidance of Carol and Ralph, First Congregational Church of Oshkosh acknowledges, celebrates, and respects people of diverse traditions, backgrounds, and perspectives, and encourages faith that expresses itself in action.

In a world that can be difficult to navigate, and in a job like ours, that can be challenging, I know that I find comfort and peace through my worship with my community, under Carol and Ralph DiBiasio Snyder, and, I'd like to welcome them here today.

Carol DiBiasio Snyder, First Congregational Church:

First, we want to thank you, Gordon, for inviting us here today. It is an honor. And, we would also like to thank all those who take up the difficult and demanding work of serving in government, especially those who serve the people of Wisconsin. And, particularly those of you in this body, on a day that is so full for you.

This week, on Thursday, we celebrate the 40th anniversary of the birth of the modern environmental movement. And, we remember the founder of that movement, our own former Governor and former member of the U.S. Senate, Gaylord Nelson.

And, then yesterday, at the age of 98, Doctor Dorothy Height died. Dr. Height was a leader in the civil rights movement working tirelessly for the civil rights of women and African Americans. And, so, in remembrance and in honor of those two people, who worked for the care of our earth and for the freedom of all people, we offer this prayer. Let us pray.

Ralph DiBiasio Snyder, First Congregational Church:

God, who is known by many names, but whose essence is love. Spirit of truth and grace who calls us to live in peace, to care for one another, especially those who cannot or who struggle to care for themselves and their families.

Compassionate one whose desire is that liberty and justice reign in our hearts and lives of all people, no matter their religion or creed or race or sexual identity, gender or age, ability or economic resources.

Compassionate one, we pray for this body of men and women, elected by the people of Wisconsin, to lead us through the complex challenges of our time. May they be wise in the use of the power entrusted to them, courageous to seek what is true and to find what is for the good of all, eager to find common ground, gracious toward those who disagree. Give them strength and stamina this day, oh God, and this evening, and maybe even this night, as they, together with the people of this state, might set an example of leadership for our nation by their conduct of debate, the content of policies and laws.

As you have in all times and places, oh God, you are still speaking to us in the language of love and grace. The language spoken by all people whether we profess a faith or not. The language spoken in deeds of compassion and justice and equality for all.

Carol DiBiasio Snyder, First Congregational Church:

And, so we pray for the women and men of this body, entrusted with the power to lead, that they might see with vision that looks far and wide to the interests of the people of this state, and to the care of our earth.

May they make legislation that continues to provide rights and protections, particularly for the poor and vulnerable.

May you give them vision to see beyond our time and our place. So, that our state's future might be bright, healthy and growing.

With gratitude for all your gifts, Divine Spirit, and dedicated to the service of others, we offer this prayer.

Amen.