

Presbytery Worship

September 22, 2021



Invitation to Worship



Jammella Anderson kneels beside a bright pink refrigerator on a sidewalk in Albany, New York, stocking its shelves with fresh loaves of bread and heads of lettuce - food that is free for the taking. A passerby stops to ask how to donate. She tells them where and how to sign up to give veggies, dairy, or prepared meals.

Invitation to Worship

They continue walking, then double back and ask Anderson whether they can donate the stale contents of their apartment fridge ahead of a move. The answer is an emphatic “no.”

To Anderson, the question epitomizes the problem she’s trying to solve as founder of Free Food Fridge Albany:



Mike DeSocio

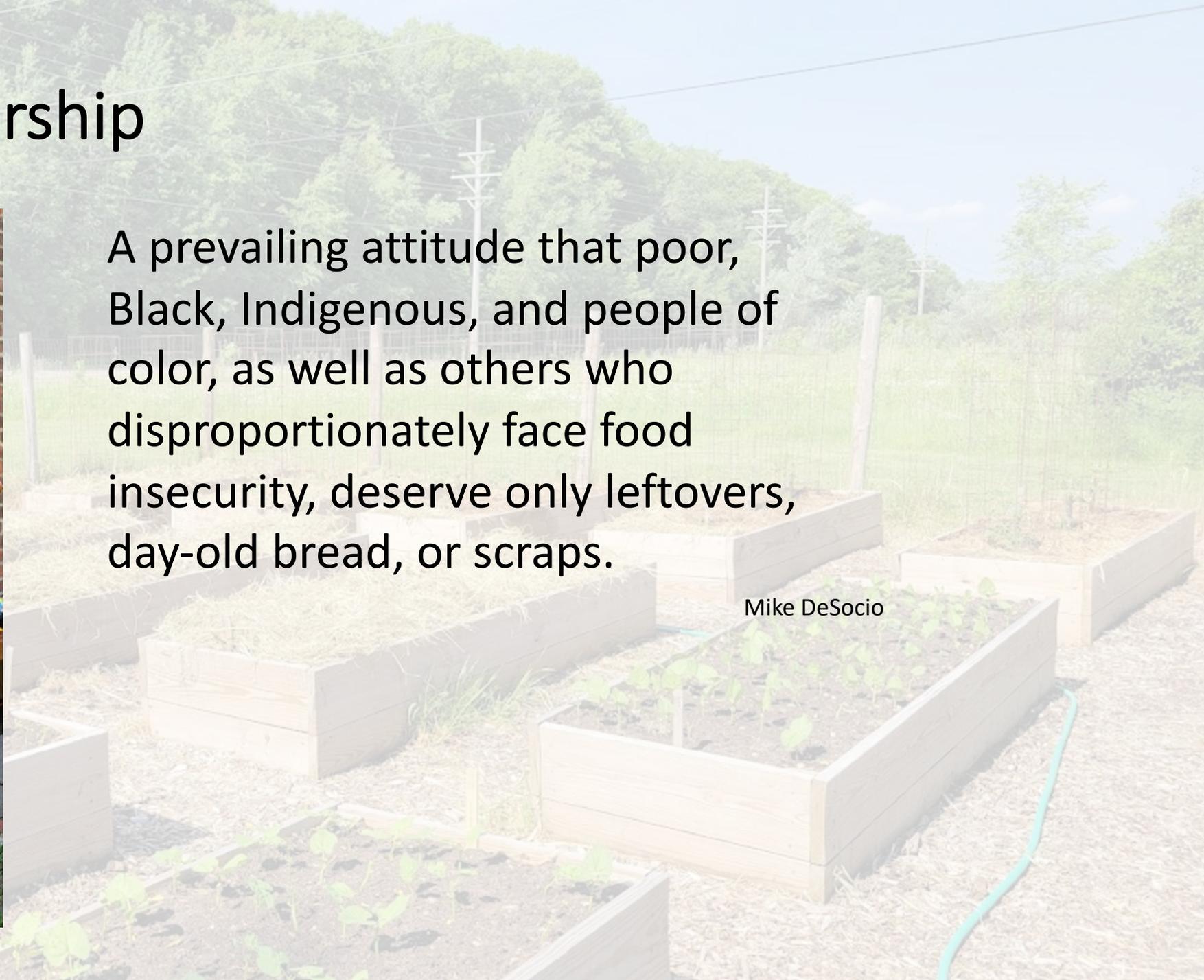
Invitation to Worship

A prevailing attitude that poor, Black, Indigenous, and people of color, as well as others who disproportionately face food insecurity, deserve only leftovers, day-old bread, or scraps.



Mike DeSocio

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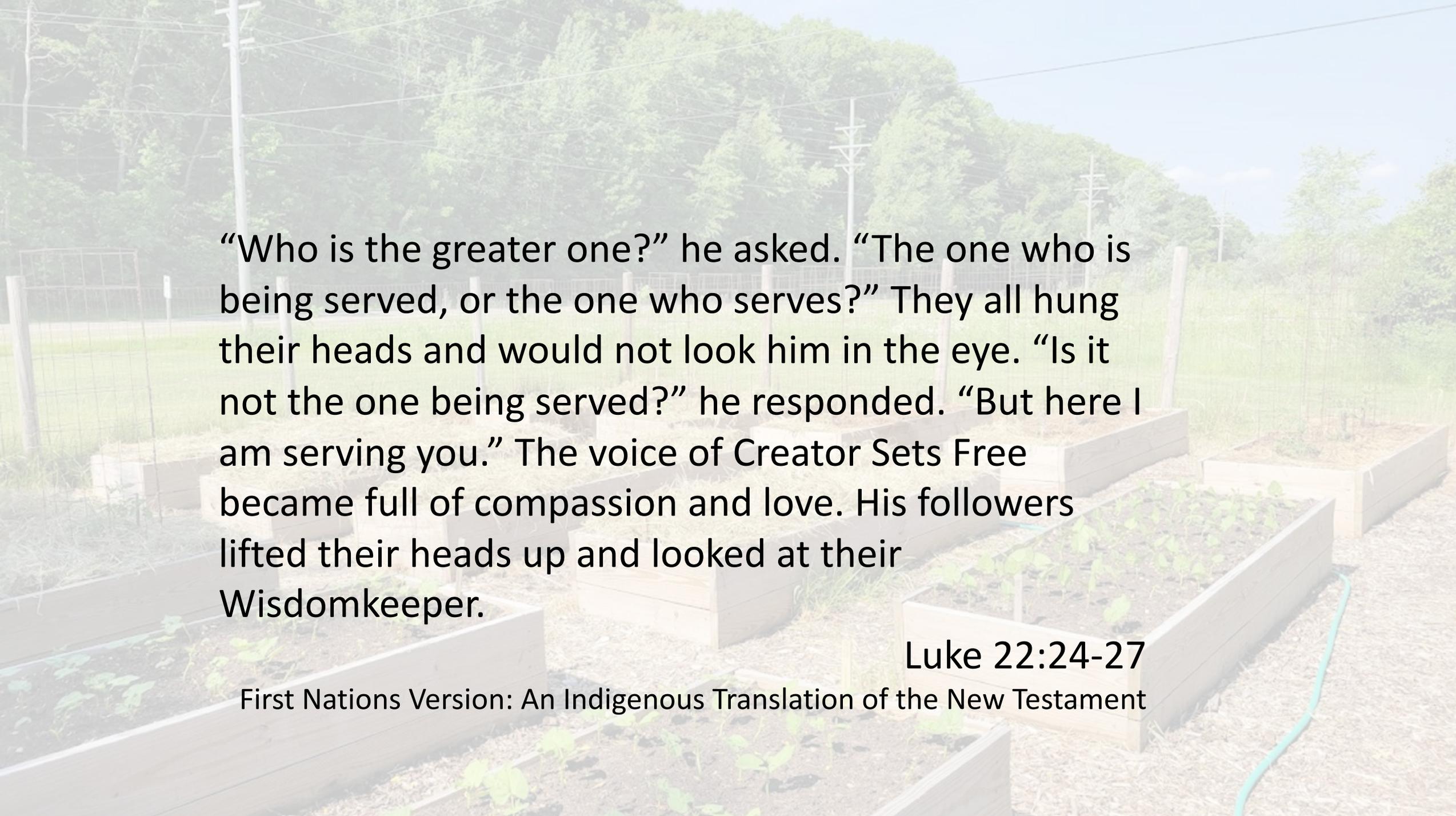


A Reading from Scripture

Rev. Darren Utley

First Presbyterian Church, Racine

This led them to an argument about which one of them was to be seen as the first and greatest among them. So Creator Sets Free (Jesus) reminded them, “Rulers from the Nations show their power by forcing their way upon people and then call it ‘helping them.’ This will not be the way of the ones who walk my road. The greatest among you will be the least, like a child, and the rulers will be like household servants.” He let his words sink into their hearts.



“Who is the greater one?” he asked. “The one who is being served, or the one who serves?” They all hung their heads and would not look him in the eye. “Is it not the one being served?” he responded. “But here I am serving you.” The voice of Creator Sets Free became full of compassion and love. His followers lifted their heads up and looked at their Wisdomkeeper.

Luke 22:24-27

First Nations Version: An Indigenous Translation of the New Testament

Hymn

Jesus, Be with Us Today,
a Matthew 25 hymn





Prayer of Confession & Lament

Co-Moderator Elona Street-Stewart

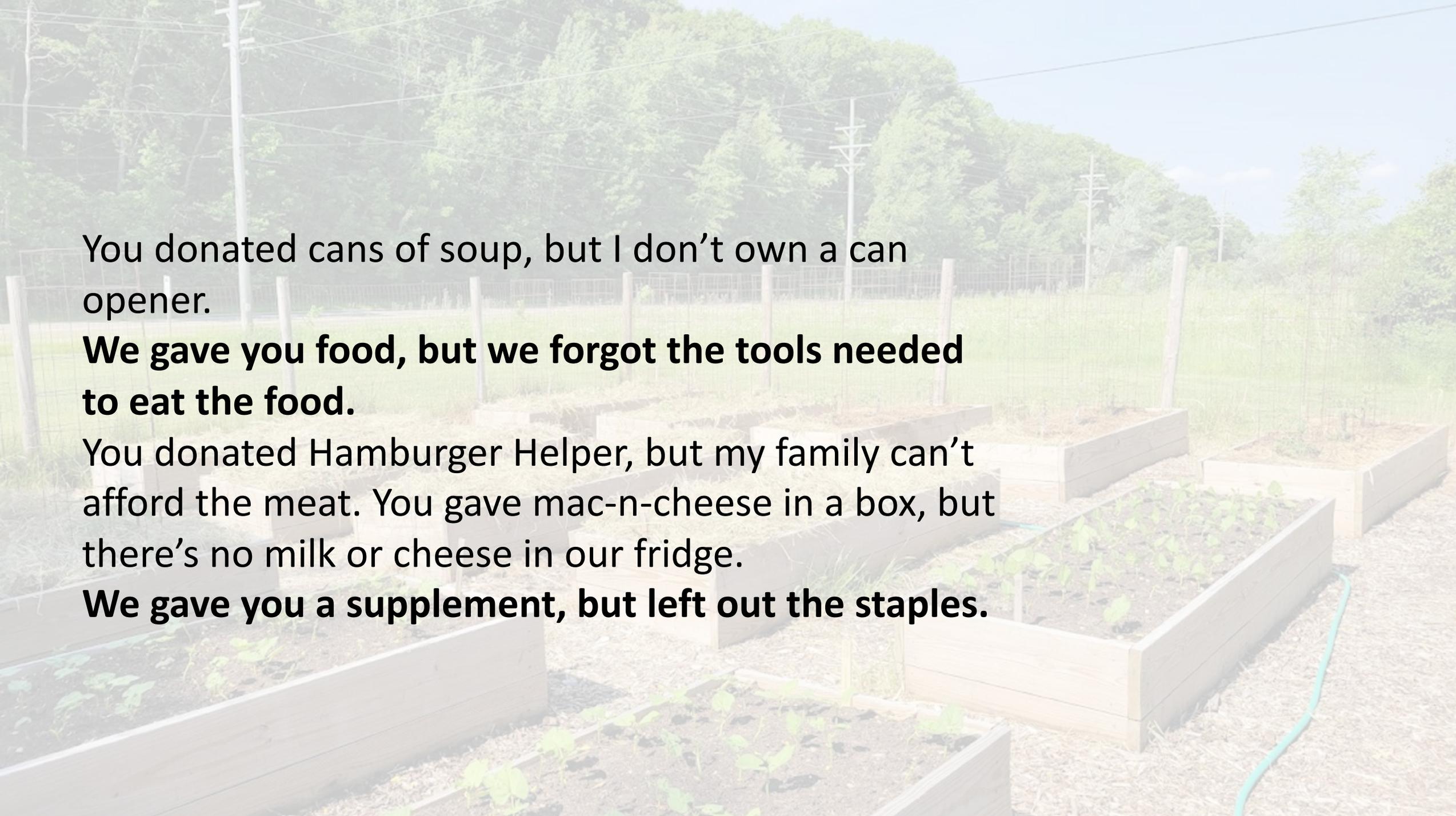
Please remain muted as you join in the **bolded** lines.

Thank you for the food you've donated to me. It's been a big help.

You are welcome!

Don't take this the wrong way, but I have some suggestions for the next time.

We're glad to hear them.

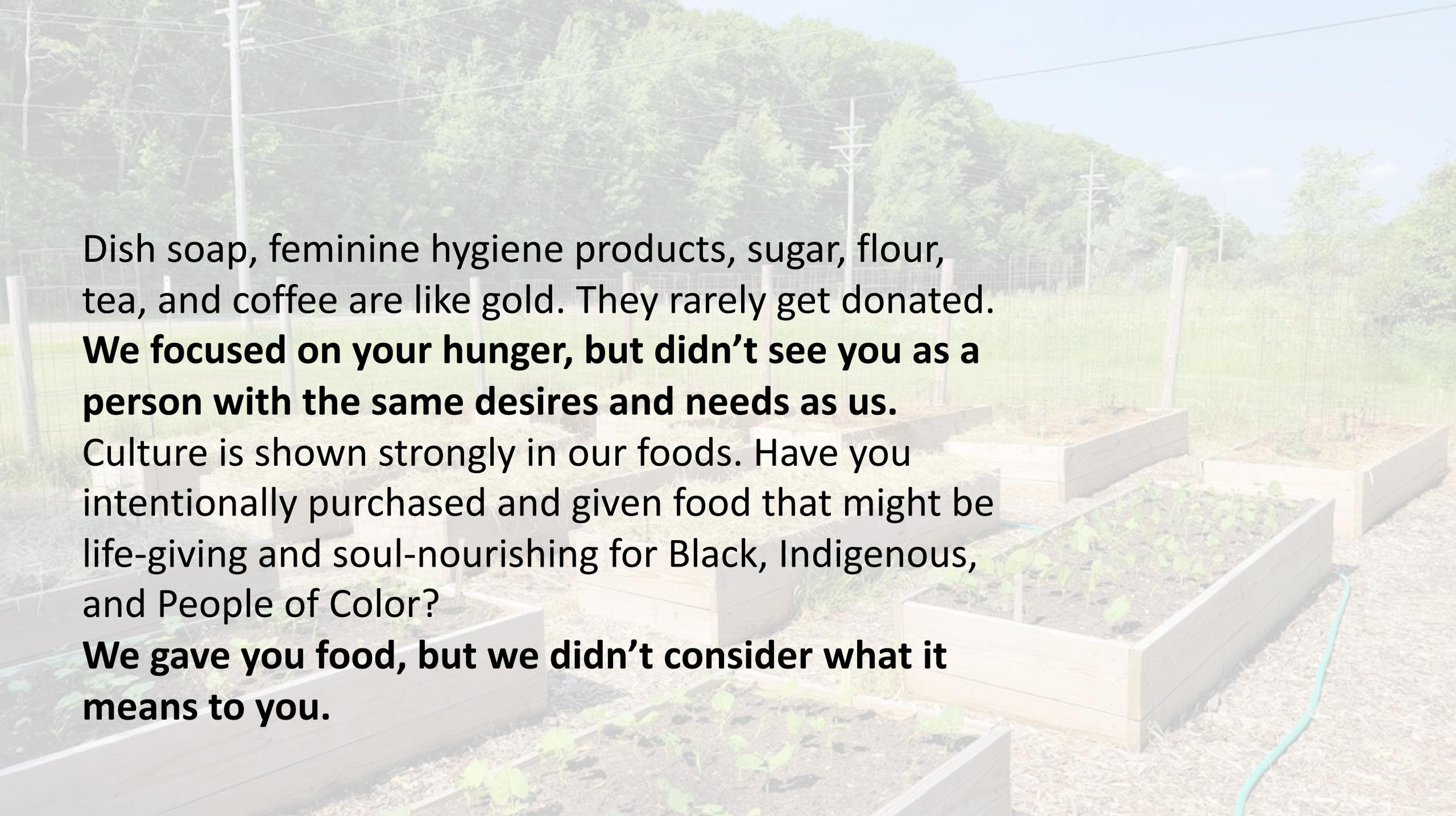


You donated cans of soup, but I don't own a can opener.

We gave you food, but we forgot the tools needed to eat the food.

You donated Hamburger Helper, but my family can't afford the meat. You gave mac-n-cheese in a box, but there's no milk or cheese in our fridge.

We gave you a supplement, but left out the staples.

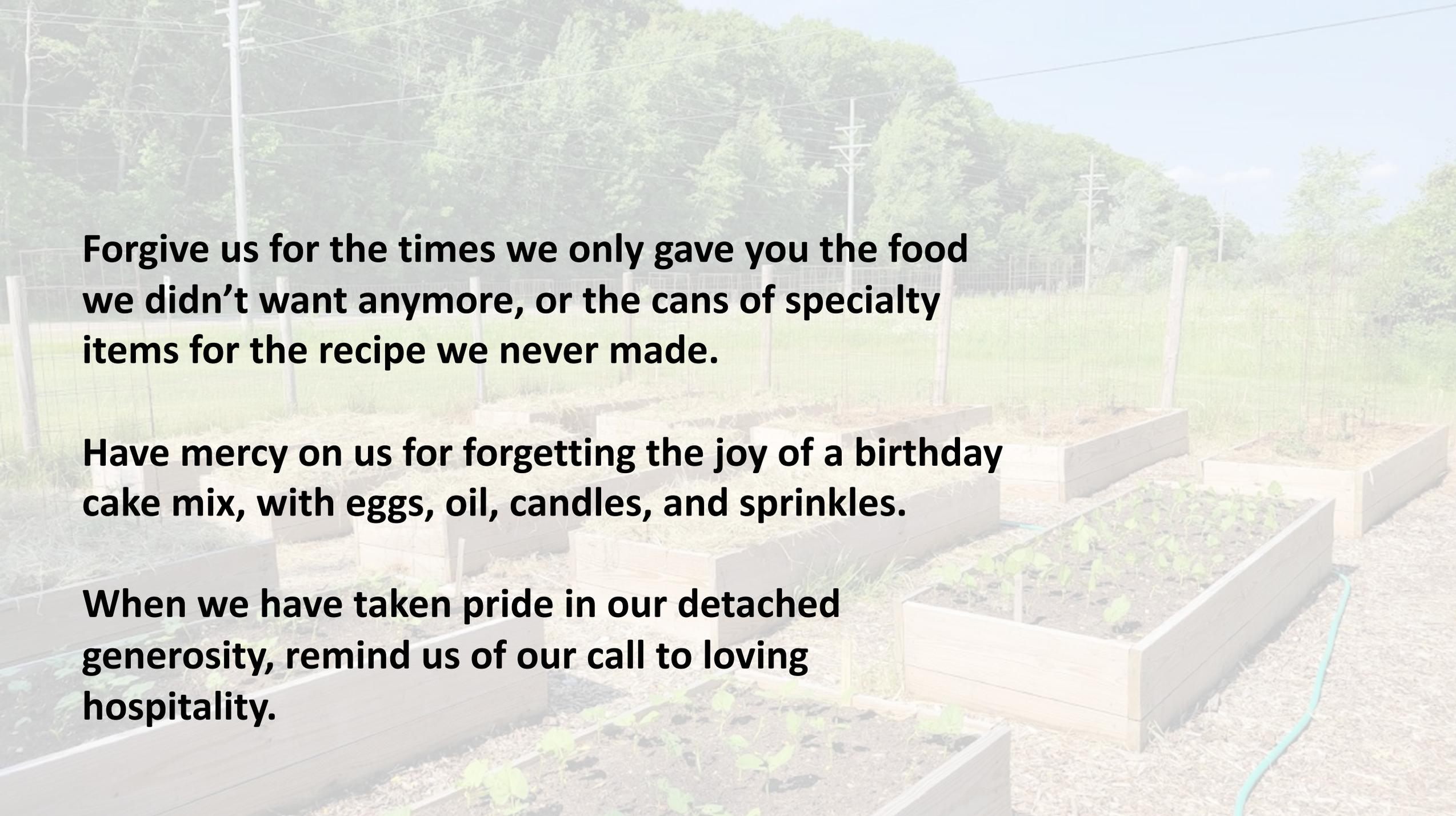


Dish soap, feminine hygiene products, sugar, flour, tea, and coffee are like gold. They rarely get donated.

We focused on your hunger, but didn't see you as a person with the same desires and needs as us.

Culture is shown strongly in our foods. Have you intentionally purchased and given food that might be life-giving and soul-nourishing for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color?

We gave you food, but we didn't consider what it means to you.



Forgive us for the times we only gave you the food we didn't want anymore, or the cans of specialty items for the recipe we never made.

Have mercy on us for forgetting the joy of a birthday cake mix, with eggs, oil, candles, and sprinkles.

When we have taken pride in our detached generosity, remind us of our call to loving hospitality.



**Lord, open our eyes to see you in the faces of those
who hunger.**

**In your mercy, open your bountiful Table to all.
Amen!**

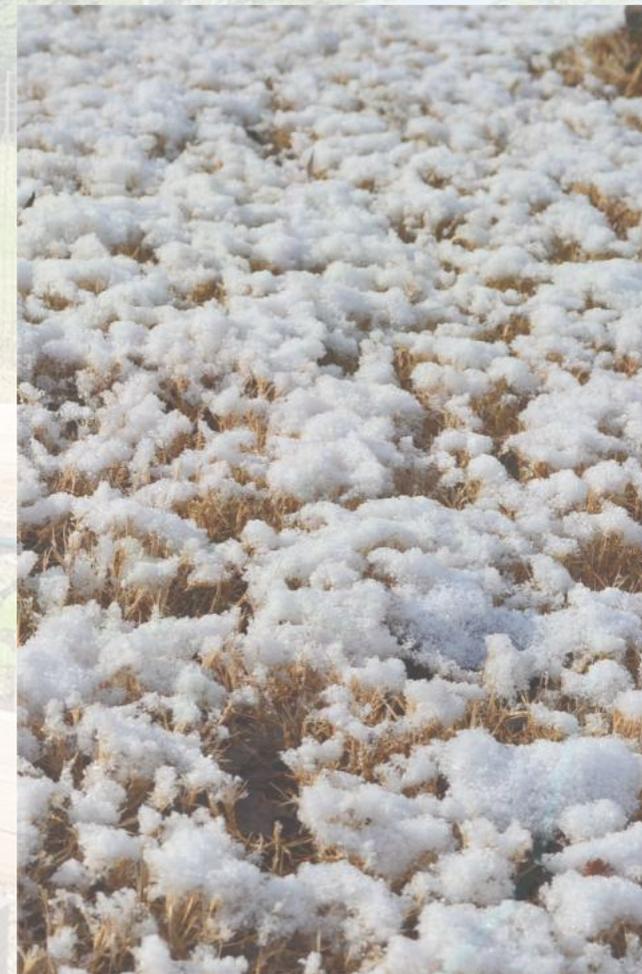
Communion

Rev. Karen Hagen



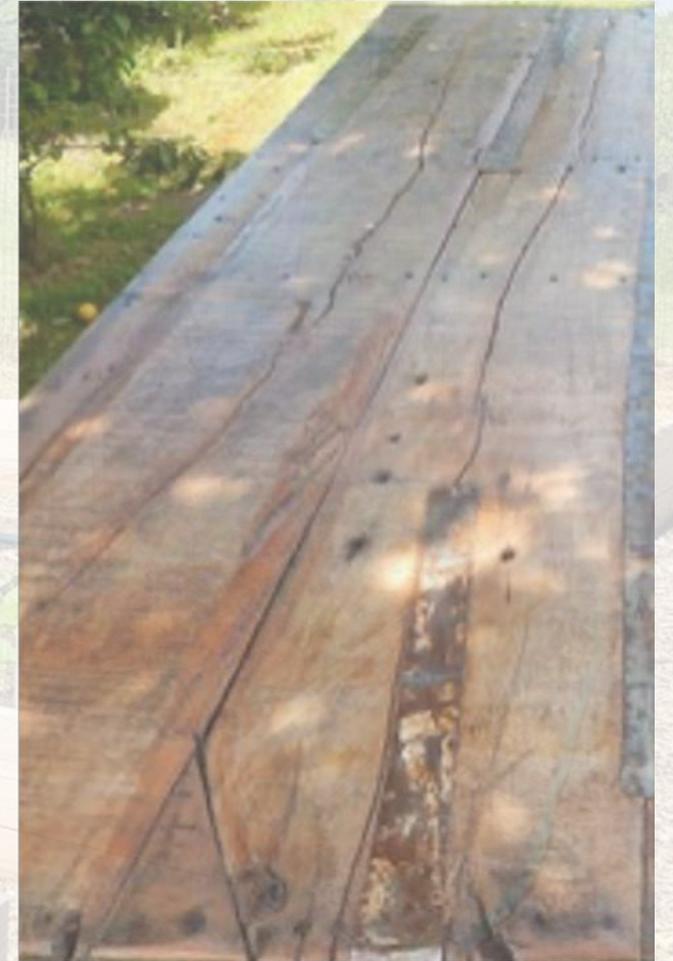
Prayer of Thanksgiving

God of the abundant feast,
formed from the earth you created,
containing the life you breathed into us,
bearing your image,
we come seeking your Kingdom. As you led us out of
our bondage and fed us manna in our wilderness
hunger, you saw our need and saved us. When we
wandered, you showed us the way and brought us
into your promised land. You call us your own.



God of the incarnate Kingdom,
you are the Good News
of great joy
for all people.

You walked with us on the dusty roads, taught us on
the mountain side, laid your hands upon us when we
were sick. You ate at every table to which you were
invited — and welcomed those to the table who were
not ever invited. You taught us the abundance of
love. You call us your family.

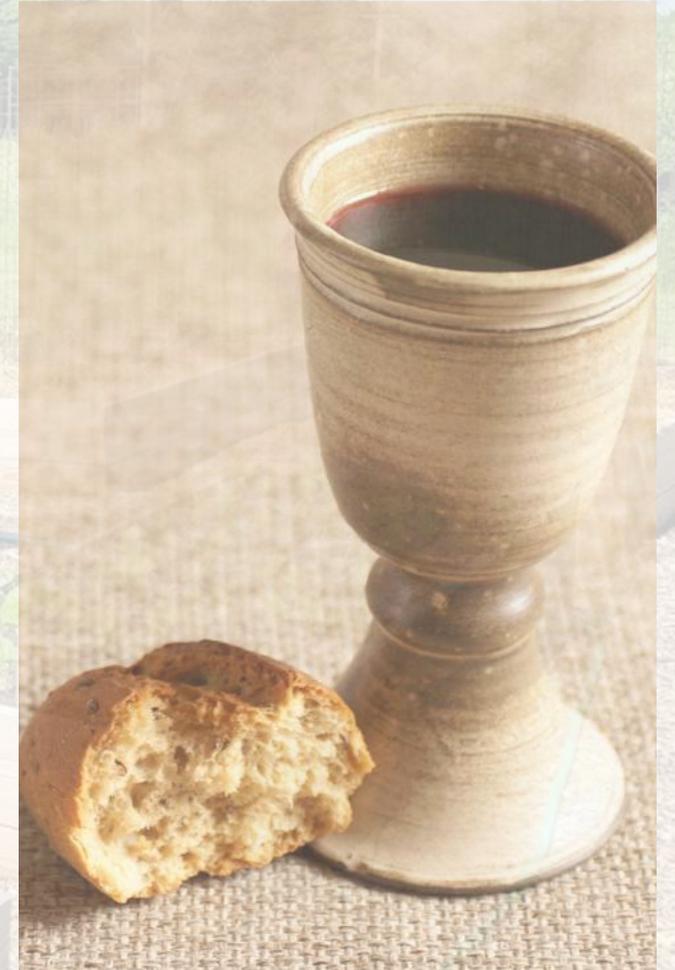


God of Spirit and truth,
who dwells within us,
comforts us in our affliction,
afflicts us in our comfort,
we feel your presence. When we grow complacent at
injustice, you kindle the fire that moves us to act.
When we judge and call people “other” on the basis
of their ethnicity, gender identity, nationality, or
economic need, you remind us of the impartiality of
your loving kindness.



When we are proud of our generosity to others, you invite us to learn from the humble. You call us to oneness.

As we seek to live into our unity in Christ, we offer the bread and cup. Holy Spirit, wherever we are in this moment, gather us to the table of the Kingdom of God. Feed us with your grace and bring the Kingdom of God ever more near. As we prepare to commune with you, we pray together, saying: Our Father...



Prayer after Communion

Please remain muted as you join in the bolded lines.

**Jesus, when you gather and feed us at your table,
we receive a glimpse of the fullness of your
Kingdom. As we serve and love others in your name,
may our eyes perceive not a problem, but the
human being before us. Rather than relying on what
we think we know, train our ears to hear their
stories. May we be generous not only in what we
give, but in accepting what is offered. For thine is
the Kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever.
Amen.**



FOOD SECURITY

Crossroads Presbyterian Church garden
photo: Ann Gibbs

