

Opportunity to heal nation is here

The civil, respectful tone of the Nevada presidential debate on Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday evoked two biblical phrases: "a light to the nations" (*Isaiah* 42:6) and "for the healing of the nations" (*Revelation* 22:2).

With good humor, the candidates evidenced mutual respect as they engaged one another and, as they lifted up their respective visions of light and healing for our nation, showed that differences need not be personally divisive.

The responses of two to each other made me think of the possibility (suggested earlier by a columnist) of a woman and an African American as running mates. It could lead potentially to years of national healing with the first woman as president, followed by the first African-American president, or the reverse.

The apostle Paul saw Jesus as dismantling ethnic, social and gender subordinations to bring healthy new human relationships: "There is no longer Jew or Greek ... slave or free ... male and female" (*Galatians* 3:28). Such words need not be only for religious communities but also for political ones, when candidates stand for barrier-breaking light and healing in our world today.

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