

Profiles in Goodwill: Joe Phelps

Joe Phelps is the new justice coordinator for Earth and Spirit Center and co-chair of Empower West, a Louisville, Kentucky, black-white clergy coalition. He served previously as pastor of Highland Baptist Church in Louisville.

1. **Where did you grow up?**

In the Midwest - Joplin, Missouri, as a child and then Dayton, Ohio, as a youth.

2. **What is your favorite verse, book or story in the Bible? Why?**

I love Jesus' "Let the children come to me and don't prevent them, for of such is God's Realm" (Matthew 19:14; Luke 18:16).

That line grabs my heart with its nonjudgmental compassion and inclusion.

3. **What is your favorite movie? Why?**

"The Big Lebowski."

It is endlessly quotable, adaptable, entertaining, has both a Jesus and a Christ-figure, and, best of all, it quickly runs off prudes who are offended by a movie's language.

4. **Who are three people you admire?**

Walter Brueggemann; Kevin Cosby, pastor of St. Stephen Baptist and president of Simmons College; and Joey, a young man in jail for four years who has endured more than is imaginable.

5. **What is one little-known fact about yourself?**

I began my public speaking career as a junior hire working at Putt-Putt, where I got to make the announcements over the P.A. system about a free game for the next hole-in-one.