



**August 2020**

## **Meditation**

Find a quiet place where you can be undisturbed, take a moment there to sit still.

Keep your feet flat on the floor, your back straight. Allow your eyes to close softly.

Focus on the rhythm of your breath, notice each inhalation and exhalation. Settle in to the rhythm. As your attention drifts, return it gently to your breath.

Allow yourself to slow down, notice as your pulse rate drops.

After a few minutes of this, come to a place of gratitude for your life, for your space, for the opportunity to sit still and quietly.

## **Prayer**

Perfect peace isn't a dream, it's a gift.

It is not there to be wished for, it is to be accepted (if you want it).

I am led by still waters, by great deep pools of crystal clarity.

I am given rest amongst the lushness of deep greenery.

Amid the trill of bird song and the hum of insect wings,

I can breathe.

And for this

I am grateful beyond words.

Beyond words.

## **Reflection**

Read '[Birches](#)' by Robert Frost

Remember the things you loved to do when you were young.

Consider how the things which delighted you as a child have changed in your mind. How 'important' adult pressures have supplanted childish delights.

Notice if the seeming juvenility of these half-forgotten things has become a barrier to joy.

*"One could do worse than be a swinger of birches."*

As adults we do many worse things than take simple pleasure in the rush of leaving the ground.

We descend into pits of our own making, we delve into pathless forests, we push through thorns which tear at our skin. And for what?

When we could have been climbing black branches toward heaven.

"Do not despise these little ones, for I tell you that their angels always see the face of my father in heaven."

## **Call & Response**

**Where is God to be found?**

Here, in the midst of us.

**Where in the midst?**

Here in the very depths of us, in the day and the night.

**Only in the midst?**

God is beyond as well as within, transcendent and immanent, closer than skin, further than imagination.

**Further than stars?**

The whole universe declares the glory of God, the stars only display the work of God's hands. So yes, further than stars. Much further.

**Amen/Amen.**

## **A lament**

Troubles come, and they go.

Must mostly they seem to come. And stay.

The bad things that people do go unpunished, while the innocent suffer grievous wrongs.

Mismanagement is rewarded. Misrule is applauded.

History is written by the victors, not by those in the right.

Fairness is unfashionable.

Volume of output is preferred to quality.

And they who shout the loudest get the most attention.

The squeaky wheel gets the grease.

And so we slowly seize up,

And struggle,

And suffer,

And sometimes die.

And people are killed for no fault of their own.

Because they are in the wrong place,

At the wrong time.

Or because the pigmentation of their skin is slightly different.

Or because they have a different set of chromosomes.

Or some other nonsense reason,

That really,

Makes no sense at all.

And when religious people

Like me, like me, like me...

Justify this injustice

People shake their heads and walk away. And I don't blame them.

## **Blessing**

In all things,  
Above all things,  
Beyond all things.  
Travelling with us through time,  
Drawing near to us,  
Luring us to love.  
Calling us to care.  
God is.  
With us.  
The stranger on the road,  
To whom we should listen... Shhhh... Listen now.

To the one who breaks bread,  
With hands broken and bleeding,  
Dripping with the blood-love that infuses and suffuses.

May that blood-love fuse us together  
As together we turn towards confusing enemy-love  
And confounding graciousness  
And kindness, generosity,  
And gentleness.  
And by these stripes we are known.  
Amen