

Hello all,

I hope you are well and had a lovely fall weekend! My son and I went to Forest Church yesterday and it was so good to be out in Creation and guided through a meditation that helped raise our awareness of the living creatures and things around us. We experienced Raven and Daniel singing and drumming (at a very safe distance) and all the sounds of Creation, including other people - Dominion Arboretum is a very popular place on a Sunday morning!

The Broadview Reading Club just met and they reminded me of this beautiful poem that was written back in March, at the beginning of the pandemic. I will add it to the bottom of this message. There is also a sung version, I'll attach the link here too. <https://www.martinsedek.com/reach>
I am also attaching another prayer by Steve Garnass-Holmes, from whose poetry I've been comforted.

Looking back is always helpful when thinking about moving forward and I've been doing that lately, wondering how we will survive and thrive this winter of covid. Maybe you've been doing this too? Please do write or otherwise let me know what you've been doing to figure this out/plan ahead/imagine a winter of physical isolation?

Blessings, one and all, as you live out this week - the week that sees summer turn to fall,
Jenni

Pandemic

What if you thought of it
as the Jews consider the Sabbath—
the most sacred of times?
Cease from travel.
Cease from buying and selling.
Give up, just for now,
on trying to make the world
different than it is.
Sing. Pray. Touch only those
to whom you commit your life.
Center down.

And when your body has become still,
reach out with your heart.
Know that we are connected
in ways that are terrifying and beautiful.

(You could hardly deny it now.)
Know that our lives
are in one another's hands.
(Surely, that has come clear.)
Do not reach out your hands.
Reach out your heart.
Reach out your words.
Reach out all the tendrils
of compassion that move, invisibly,
where we cannot touch.

Promise this world your love—
for better or for worse,
in sickness and in health,
so long as we all shall live.

—Lynn Ungar 3/11/20

God's works

*“Neither this man nor his parents sinned;
he was born blind
so that God's works might be revealed in him.”*

—John 9.3

Sooner or later someone is going to say
God sent the coronavirus to punish
somebody (gays, probably, or maybe old people).
Baloney.

God is not a guy who does things like that.

God is not a guy.

God is Love.

Love is not a guy who causes things to happen,
like giving you a disease or a mishap
or a lottery ticket or a recovery from illness
as a test, lesson, punishment or reward.

Love doesn't manipulate,

doesn't force you to experience something.
Love isn't in the past, settling accounts.
The pure, positive, life-giving energy of love is God.
Love doesn't play games.
It just blesses, nourishes, provides, connects, delights.
In our difficulties Love is with us, suffers with us,
gives us energy to prevail.
And sometimes that energy overflows in healing.
Love's works are revealed in blessing amid brokenness.

Ah! So Love will cure my troubles?
No. Love will love you though your troubles.
But what good is a god who can't fix things?
A god who suffers our suffering and doesn't stop it?
That is the question, and the answer, of the cross:
a God who will not stop crucifixions, but be crucified.
Such a suffering, forgiving, loving presence
is deeply healing, miraculously life-giving.
It puts us in touch with the very force of life
that causes us to live, to be healthy, to be whole.
And it opens our eyes to the work of Love.

We are experiencing the coronavirus
so that the work of love might be revealed.
If our eyes are open, we will reveal it.

Steve Garnaas-Holmes
Unfolding Light
www.unfoldinglight.net

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