

WHEATLEY URC NEWSLETTER



March 2020

Covering Thoughts

Frost patterns on my window this morning. They catch the sunlight, sparkling and delicate, but they obscure the view over the field to the distant hills, and leave a feeling of isolation. I have things to do but they hold my attention as I know that in the growing warmth of the sun they will disappear and I will have missed their beauty. So I stop and compare the different patterns on each window. The mess of moss, bird picked and annoying before, has become the instrument of the most complex and intricate designs. Slivers of ice radiate from each obstruction growing outwards into sharp shards and curling feathers.

There has not been so much of this cold beauty this year, not like ten years ago with the weeks of snow which slowed the world, closing schools, stopping travel, and giving space to walk and stare. So these moments are to be cherished, as are the contrasting signs of spring.

*In his poem **Nothing Gold Can Stay** Robert Frost drew attention to the frailty of the passing moment which cannot be captured and held. Having recently watched dawn break over the sea in a fleeting splash of red and gold before a long day of soft grey mizzle, I feel that it was worth the early waking to experience and to store that moment in memory.*

Nothing Gold can Stay, by Robert Frost

*Nature's first green is gold,
Her hardest hue to hold.
Her early leaf's a flower;
But only for an hour.
Then leaf subsides to leaf.
So Eden sank to grief,
So dawn goes down to day.
Nothing gold can stay.*

Christine

PASTORAL LETTER

We are pilgrims on a journey,
we're companions on the road;
we are here to help each other
walk the mile and bear the load.

Are you planning your summer holidays? Will you be able to take a holiday this year? Do you like to 'get away' for a few days on your own or with friends? Do you prefer to sleep in your own bed? Are you the sort of person who doesn't feel they are on holiday until they arrive at some particular place, or does the holiday start the moment you close your own front door and set out?

Whatever your idea of a holiday, it will often include a journey. Whether that journey is a walk in the countryside, a trip to see an 'attraction' or to another place, the journey is a significant part of the experience. Many people (and not just the professedly religious) are now beginning to explore the concept, and the actuality, of pilgrimage, a special sort of journey with a special sort of intention.

Throughout history people have risen to the challenge of making a pilgrimage. Why? Was this just a bit of a 'jolly'? A medieval Gap Year? A personal challenge? or with a particular religious intention? Was it short — perhaps a Sunday afternoon walk to a local beauty spot or 'Holy Well'? Or was it an international expedition to Mecca or Jerusalem? (In the C15th you would have been well-advised to write your will before setting out across Europe!) Was it a journey made in youth or retirement? Would you need to be fit and healthy or in need of a miracle cure?

I have been thinking a lot recently about where we are as a church community. Are we on a journey? Are we on a pilgrimage? If so where are we going? Or have we arrived? Are we fit and healthy or in need of a miracle cure?

I have been looking back to a challenge given to our churches, perhaps 20 years ago, to become 'Healthy Churches' (The Healthy Churches Handbook by Robert Warren). This was a fascinating analysis of churches which concluded that there are 7 'marks' of a Healthy Church:

| | |
|--|--|
| It is energized by faith | It is operating as a community |
| It is outward-looking | It makes room for all |
| It is seeking God's purpose | It does a few things and does them well. |
| It is facing the cost of change and growth | |

But it didn't stop at an analysis. It developed a programme to help churches develop in healthy ways. Perhaps it is time we visited this programme to see how we are doing — a sort of spiritual check-up! Can we say 'Yes we are' to each of the seven marks? And, assuming that we could indeed be healthier (of course we could!): how can we improve our church's health?

Maybe we could plan a pilgrimage-at-home to take time out of our busyness and listen to God's purpose for Wheatley URC?

With Blessings, Phyllis

“HOT” FROM NEW SOUTH WALES – Part 2

The night of Wednesday 13th December 2019 saw our bush farmers sitting on their front veranda monitoring the grass fires creeping towards them from several different directions. Now read on.....

“Thursday was much the same with fire now attacking the second of the two neighbours' houses that we thought we had “saved” at the very outset. Then the helicopters arrived in what turned out to be a 6 hour marathon, initially two of them scooping water out of our main dam and dumping it on the second neighbour's house (most of which was saved) and finally just one of them with an impressive 3 minute turnaround time dealing with fires encroaching on homes further up the road. All the while we could hear the sound of damaged trees crashing to the ground and rocks tumbling off the mountain side. However, we did at least manage to get to our beds that night and only got up twice to check the proximity of the slowly advancing glow on the ridge from further up the valley on the other side of our road. That fire finally reached opposite our house on Sunday afternoon but stayed out of the canopy (trees) and didn't cross the road

down into the dry riverbed from where it could then have spread across our river paddocks. By nightfall it had run its course except for the smouldering logs and tree stumps that can burn for many days and then re-ignite if conditions take a turn for the worse. And finally, mains power was restored.

At last we could come off high alert although spot fire smoke further up the valley continued for another 3 weeks or so by which time the catastrophic fires had moved to the Sydney region, south coast NSW and then Western Australia and South Australia. In NSW alone over 800 homes have been destroyed and more than 4 million hectares of land has been burnt and it's not over yet and won't be until there is very substantial rain – not forecast before February. In the meantime we struggle to keep our much reduced herd in at least some grazing, utilising bits of 3 neighbouring properties and as much hay as we can spare but it does mean we spend a lot of time pumping and carting water to moveable troughs as the drought drags on interminably (and on 40+ degree days the cattle can get through almost a thousand litres between them). But at least the smoke haze seems finally to have cleared from us after nearly 5 months.

We fervently hope 2020 will be calmer and less stressful, for if the drought doesn't ease there's still the prospect of fires returning to our valley. We got off lightly this time when compared with the devastating conditions we see on TV.”

On Christmas Day they received 16 mm of rain in the area, which should have helped the drought conditions but on the 7th January they wrote again.....

“Evaporation has already taken all of that 16 mm (and more) as the wind (which keeps shredding our wind direction indicator aka flag) and the extreme UV and mid to upper 30's temperatures (which are killing our veg garden despite twice a day watering and 30% shade cloth over the entire cage) take their toll.

Only this afternoon we noticed smoke rising from, presumably, spot fires in bush beyond the far end of our road and the next 7 days are only forecast to get hotter, windier and lower humidity.

Return of fire is still a concern but of even greater concern in the longer term is the thought that these conditions may represent the new norm, in which case – despite our love of this location and its benign winters – we may be forced to relocate.”

Their decision to settle in this beautiful part of NSW 25 years ago was based on retrospective 1995/96 published statistics – similar stats available today would look substantially different and in another decade or so, if global warming continues at its present pace, very different again!

Tony Barry

SIMPLE LENTEN SOUP LUNCHESS 2020

DONATIONS IN AID OF CHRISTIAN AID

Once again soup lunches run by Wheatley Area Churches will be taking place in the recently re-furbished URC Hall, Crown Square, Wheatley, on each Saturday of Lent, between 12.30 pm and 2,00 pm. **All are welcome.**

The dates and the hosting church teams are:

Saturday 29th February - The United Reformed Church

Saturday 7th March – Our Lady of Lourdes & St Bartholomew’s Church, Holton.

Saturday 14th March - St Mary’s Church.

Saturday 21st March – Wheatley Community Church.

Saturday 28th March – St Mary’s Church.

Saturday 4th April – The United Reformed Church.

We look forward to seeing you and offering you shared fellowship and a choice of homemade soups each week.

For any who may not yet have seen the new Mulberry Room at the URC, this will be an opportunity to see what is now available for community use, after you have enjoyed your soup lunch.

Tony Barry

First Memory Café in the village

You know by now that we are starting a “memory café” for people living with dementia and their carers. This will take place on the first Thursday of every month from 10.30 am to 12.00 noon in the hall and the Mulberry Room, starting March 5th.

“Dementia cafés” or “Memory cafés” as they are now widely known, have sprung up all over the country in recent years, the first one having been organised in the Netherlands in 1997 by Dr. Bere Miesen, a Dutch psychiatrist. These cafés are part of a larger movement to destigmatize dementia and give people living with the disease purpose and a sense of belonging in the larger community.

Activities are varied but tend to focus on topics that are apt to cause one to reminisce about times gone by. That “connection” to the past can be as comforting as it is medically beneficial. What all Memory cafés have in common however is that it is a safe and comfortable space where caregivers and their loved ones can socialize over a cup of coffee, listen to music, play games, and enjoy other appropriate activities. They also provide mutual support and exchange information. Indeed while a Memory Cafe is beneficial for those living with dementia, it is also beneficial for their caregivers, as it is NOT a place to “drop off” the person living with dementia for a while like respite care, but a way to enjoy activities with them as a break from the normal shared routine.

Our café will be “staffed” by volunteer helpers from our congregation, but also from the 3 other churches and hopefully soon, by people not linked to any church. Even if the initiative comes from the URC, it should be - and WILL BE - a village/ community endeavour, both in terms of the participants and in terms of the helpers.

Basically, the café will comprise 4 elements: It will start with a refreshment component (of course!) with coffee, tea and biscuits. Then a period of “activities” will follow with specialised games, “reminiscence bags” to trigger conversations, clips of old events on the TV, memory boxes, puzzles, painting or craft, etc. Not all these activities will happen every time of course as we will vary them every month. Same for the next component of the morning: music, singing or gentle movement which will be present every month but taking different forms. And finally, for those who are willing, we will finish the morning with a short prayer helped by prayer dice or little crosses to keep in hand.

We will inform you of how the café is progressing, but it will probably take a few months to get fully organised and “to find our feet” so you might be asked to help from time to time! Thank you in advance!

Laurence

**MEMORY CAFÉ
WHEATLEY**

**1st THURSDAY EACH MONTH
(Starting 5th March)
10.30am to 12noon**

**café, activities, music
friendship**

*people living with dementia
and their carers*

at Wheatley United Reformed Church
Crown Square, Wheatley, OX33 1UE

*for more information please contact:
Laurence Devlin – 01865 874003 or
Ellen Webster – 01844 698267*

ACE Lent Study 2020

Janet Morley's *'The Hearts Time'* is a book of poems for Lent. There will be readings and discussion based on the book.

The selected dates are: Tuesday 10/03, Thursday 19/03 and Tuesday 31/03. Pauline Main is organising the leaders for each evening. There is a sign-up sheet on the notice board in the hall together with some more information about the book.

Those interested will be able to attend all of the sessions or selected dates as each evening will stand alone. The material can be used as an individual guide for study and prayer during Lent, for group study or indeed both.

A big thank you to the Barrys who have generously opened up their home for this series of discussions. The book can be ordered online through Blackwell's and SPCK. Please do come if you can.

Time: 7.30pm

Venue: Liz and Tony Barry, 13 Beech Road

Tom Goss

Prayers

Please remember in your prayers the members on Laurence Devlin's pastoral list: Malcolm & Wendy Benson, Ann & Roger Bettess, Martin & Emma Jee, Allison & Colin Towner, Pat Simpson.

We also ask you to pray for the members of the Pastoral Care team: Ann Bettess, Jean Boxall, Angela Holdaway, Rob Holdaway, Barbara Joiner, Pauline Main, Frances Simpson.

Disclaimer: The Editors welcome letters, articles and announcements from individuals and organisations but reserve the right to publish or not.

Deadline: Wednesday 18th March is the deadline for the April edition. Send copy to newsletter@wheatleyurc.org.uk and not to individuals. But paper copy can be given to Jim Watson.

CHURCH CALENDAR FOR MARCH 2020.

Everyone is invited to stay for coffee or tea after 10 am Sunday services.

| Date | 1 st March | 8 th March | 15 th March | 22 March | 29 th March |
|----------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|----------------------|------------------------|
| Service | Morning Service with H.C. | Morning Service | Morning Service with H.C. | Morning Service | Morning Service |
| Time | 10 am | 10 am | 10 am | 10 am | 10 am |
| Worship Leader | Rev. Pauline Main | Richard Bainbridge | Rev. Colin Thompson | Rev. Pauline Main | Rev, Cara Heafey |
| Vestry Elder | Catherine Harding | Tom Goss | Malcolm Benson | Moira Watson | Tom Goss |
| Welcomer | Peter Devlin | Laurence Devlin | Moira Watson | Catherine Harding | Laurence Devlin |
| Steward | Charles Bennett | Angela Holdaway | Pauline Shelley | Robert Harding | Sybil Beaton |
| Reader | Laurence Devlin | Ann Hardiman | Robert Harding | Barbara Joiner | Zena Knight |
| Prayers | Ann Bettess | Tom Goss | Ann Hardiman | Christine Bainbridge | Liz Barry |
| Flowers | Lent | Lent | Lent | Lent | Lent |

Elders' names in **Bold** are on Communion duty

Simple evening worship in the style of Taize at Barns Close, 8th and 22nd March

COMMON LECTIONARY READINGS FOR MARCH 2020

Note: leaders may choose to use other readings.

| Date | 1 st March | 8 th March | 15 th March | 22 nd March | 29 th March |
|---------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| First Reading | Genesis 2: 15-17 | Genesis 12: 1-4a | Exodus 17: 1-7 | 1 Samuel: 16: 1-13 | Ezekiel: 37 1-14 |
| Psalms | Psalms 32 | Psalms 121 | Psalms 95 | Psalms 23 | Psalms 130 |
| New Testament | Romans 5: 12-19 | Romans 4: 1-15, 13-17 | Romans 5: 1-11 | Ephesians: 5: 8-14 | Romans: 8 6-11 |
| Gospel | Matthew 4: 1-11 | John 3: 1-17 | John 4: 5-42 | John 9: 1-41 | John 11: 1-45 |

OCCASIONAL EVENTS IN MARCH 2020

| | | | |
|------------------------|----------|--------------------------------|--|
| 1 st March | Sunday | 2.30 to 4.30 pm 6.30 pm | Food Bank Afternoon tea in Hall Pulse Group Games in Hall |
| 2 nd March | Monday | 2.00 to 4.00 pm | Not So Young Club |
| 5 th March | Thursday | 10.30 am to 12 noon | Memory Cafe |
| 6 th March | Friday | 2 pm | World Day of Prayer URC |
| 8 th March | Sunday | 6.30 pm 7.30 pm | Pulse Group, Discussion, Mulberry Room Taize Service, Barns Close, Holton |
| 10 th March | Tuesday | 1.00 pm | Lunch Club Two |
| 12 th March | Thursday | 3.00 pm | 'Dance Chapel' in the URC Chapel |
| 15 th March | Sunday | 8.00 am 6.30 pm | Morning meditation and breakfast Pulse Group Worship preparation |
| 16 th March | Monday | 2.00 to 4.00 pm | Not So Young Club |
| 17 th March | Tuesday | 1.00 pm | Lunch Club |
| 22 nd March | Sunday | 11.30 am 6.30 pm 7.30 pm | Church Meeting Pulse Group Worship in URC Taize Service, Barns Close, Holton |
| 24 March | Tuesday | 2.15 pm | St Mary's Guild |
| 29 th March | Sunday | 6.30 pm | Pulse Group Film in Mulberry Room |
| 30 th March | Monday | 2.00 to 4.00 pm | Not So Young Club |

WEEKLY EVENTS

(NB several activities are term-time only)

| | |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| <i>Mindfulness Sitting Group</i> | <i>Monday 8.50 to 9.40 am</i> |
| <i>Brownies & Rainbows (Term time)</i> | <i>Monday 5.30 to 7.00 pm</i> |
| <i>Choir Around the Piano (Term Time)</i> | <i>Monday 7.30 to 9.00 pm</i> |
| <i>Wheatley Singers (Term Time)</i> | <i>Tuesday 7.10 to 9.00 pm</i> |
| <i>Pre-School Music Group (Term time)</i> | <i>Wednesday 9.30 am and 10.30 am</i> |
| <i>Guides (Term time)</i> | <i>Wednesday 7.00 to 8.30 pm</i> |
| <i>Prayers and Breakfast</i> | <i>Thursday 8.00 am</i> |
| <i>Mindfulness Sitting Group</i> | <i>Thursday 8.50 to 9.40 am</i> |
| <i>Table Tennis</i> | <i>Friday 10.00 am to 12 noon</i> |
| <i>Hymn Practice</i> | <i>Sunday 9.30 to 9.45 am</i> |

DREAMS CAN COME TRUE!

'The National Lottery is bad!' - some people say -
upon which I will spend too much of my husband's pay!
I am told that wanting to win is just plain greedy,
and I ought to think of other people they call 'needy'.

Don't 'they' know that if I win and have all that cash.
I have many plans simmering in my mind
which I do not think are rash:
The Maternity Home nearby requires a Special Baby Ward,
and with all my winnings I could get them this,
which I could afford.

I see so many children who, for want of medicine, are so ill:
with a win coming my way, charities will take them what they need - oh,
what a thrill!
Then there's my Mum who is so crippled with a stroke:
there will be a new bungalow for her, and I still will not be broke.
I would have a holiday abroad: blue skies and water for this girl!
Now I must admit, my head is really in quite a whirl.
For Dave, my husband, I would buy what he's always wanted:
a beautiful basset hound.

Now all of these dreams may come true if I pick the right numbers,
for just one pound!

'Gillian Long Powell'
(Gillian Herring 12-05-1934 - 07-03-2019)
Much missed. Rest in peace and joy.

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER – Friday March 6th at 2pm

A reminder that all are welcome to this service which this year has been compiled by the women of Zimbabwe. They have also composed one of the hymns which will be used. The service begins with a power point presentation of life in Zimbabwe today and the theme of the service based on John 5:2-9a is entitled 'Rise, take your mat and walk'.

Ann Hardiman

Just a Moment A Reflection on Fair Trade

It starts with a change
So outwardly insignificant
That no one would notice
Except the person
Behind you in the aisle.

Just a moment
When instead of seeing
Rows of labels
On a supermarket shelf
You imagine the people
Behind them,
Tilling the earth,
Sewing the seed,
Gathering the crops.

And you pause,
Wondering,
What their names are,
Where they live,
What difference it will make
If your hand picks up
This box instead of that,

Wondering: how do I
Love these neighbours?
Can I help change
This child's long journey for
water,
Her mother's lack of
healthcare,
The prospect her father faces
Of another year unable
To feed his family well?

Just a moment.
And the person behind you,
Her impatient baby
Squirring in the trolley,
May never realised
That in that brief hesitation,
A life hung in the balance.

*Printed from Christian
Concern for One World*

Ordination and Induction of Cara Heafey Associate Minister at Summertown URC

25th January 2020

For those who were not able to be with Cara Heafey at her ordination and induction on 25th January here is the text of the sermon preached by Revd Carla Grosch-Miller. While the first part is very much directed to Cara, the second part is directed to us, whose minister she now is. Carla has a strong message for us, “the adult children of a living God” Let us read and understand her call to us to be partners in Christ and as she repeats *Breathe*.

Sermon at Cara’s Ordination at Summertown URC on 25th January 2020

Psalm 139:1-18; Ecclesiastes 1:2-14; John 13:1-17:

Revd Dr. Carla A. Grosch-Miller

My heart is full and overflowing to be a witness to this day, so long coming. Perhaps coming from the day you were born. I remember your first appearance at St Columba’s, the first conversation we had at the Manse, the way you fell in love with Cumnor, your and Carolyn’s embrace and transport of Jon which added so much to our life together there, your contributions to worship and community (fantastic party planners), your woodland wedding, how both of you have been a gift to me over the years. I think about the wonder of your journey – your meeting Carolyn, your deep wrestling in Port Meadow and elsewhere, your guardianship of Maybe, the death of your mother and later your father, your courage and integrity every step of the way, your creativity, your kindness.

It is no surprise to me that you picked scripture passages that are a compass and a template for the leadership to which you have been called and to which you said *Yes*.

Psalm 139: Intimacy and wonder. Being known and loved – our deepest need, the necessities for growing into who we are meant to be. The Anglican solitary Maggie Ross – who lives in Oxford and is the author of several books including *Silence: A User’s Guide* – speaks of life lived under the gaze of a loving God. It is our deepest need, yet we resist it. Old notions of the Holy - judgmental, patriarchal – block the way; new notions – God as energy, depersonalised – make a loving gaze seem impossible. Life’s vagaries and challenges – pain, suffering – decry it. Yet the psalm reveals an impossible possibility: that Love is the energy and life flow of the

divine, always pulsing and surging through the universe, inciting the good and the true. I believe this more strongly than ever. A long journey through a dark night, grace leaking over the lintels of my closed heart door, convince me. We are known and loved, even when we don't feel it. We are held when we turn away. We are gently nurtured and nourished back to life.

Our job as ministers is to live out of that love, share it wisely as best we can, trust it. Trusting God does not mean believing that pain and suffering won't happen to us. Rather it means that we can trust that the flow of Love continues, with and without us. God is alive. Thanks be to God.

And trust your call. You, Cara Heafey, in all your wonderful particularity, with your courage, creativity and kindness, are called. Ministry is not just a job; it is a role, a way of being in the world. A way you have already been being in the world – ear cocked to the rush of the Holy, hands and heart ready to serve. Your ordination and induction are the Church's recognition of your call and your gifts. Trust that. Don't try to be anyone but who you are.

Ecclesiastes: I love this book, the centrepiece of the wisdom literature. The passage you chose speaks to me of cultivating open eyes and a wise heart, acceptance for what is, the capacity to hold lightly to one's conclusions (we are always learning). These are the hallmarks of that illusive state of being commended to ministers: the nonanxious presence. Ah, another impossible possibility. After working in the area of congregational trauma, I now say *less anxious presence*. To be present to reality as it unfolds its terrors is to court anxiety. The world is as it is; awful things happen. How do we become less anxious? Breathe. Remember who we and whose we are. Breathe. Recall our role – to be calm and curious and compassionate, things impossible to be when we are highly anxious. Breathe. I love that God words like YHWH and Allah are breath words. Breathe.

Finally, John 13. The basin and towel. The teacher kneeling at the feet of his disciples. *Do you know what I have done to you? Not for you, but to you.* By his actions, Jesus made us servants of the flow of Love whooshing and surging through the earth, people of humility and mutuality, washers of dirty feet and dirty faces, wiping away shame, restoring dignity, believers in impossible possibilities. The towel a symbol of Jesus' authority: a woman's symbol, practical, daily, unglamorous. The minister's stole has its symbolic origin in the towel (and in the yoke). I recently read Melissa Raphael's book *The Female Face of God in Auschwitz* (Routledge 2003). She writes movingly about the way some women tended to one another in the most degrading and horrific of circumstances – sharing a rag, wiping a face, offering an arm; all means of reclaiming the image of God within and amongst them. God takes on flesh in our service, in our attending to one

another's vulnerability, in doing what we can with what we have – no matter how impossible a possibility that seems.

There we have it, the compass and template: Intimacy and wonder, living under the gaze of a loving God, accepting that what is is, serving the flow of Love throughout the earth with the unique self you are, wiping the shame from the faces of those who bear the image of God (which is every human being on the planet), trusting that it is enough. It is more than enough. You have all that you need.

And now a word to you who will be ministering alongside Cara in your shared baptismal calling. We – human beings and the Church – are on the edge of a new world. It is a scary and dangerous place. The rate of change is exponential; poorly understood feedback loops accelerate it. In the chaos, old certainties are dying, must die. The new is struggling to be born, in the church and in the world. As children of the living God, whom the earth is longing to see and hear, we are midwives to new ways of being. God is alive; that will not change. But the existence of the human family is at stake. And surely the way we've always done things in church will change. Our desire to cling to our comfort will only lead to our demise. We need to stop arguing about inessentials and open up to possibilities we can scarcely imagine, to wrestling the reality that swirls around us. You don't like this hymn or that change, tough. It's not about us "enjoying" worship or liking things the way they are or preferring pastoral care from a "real" minister. It's about being the adult children of a living God, willing to submerge ourselves in the rushing flow of divine Love that seeks to save the whole human family and the planet. We need to get over ourselves, to broaden our perspective, to try new things, take big risks (if we are doing it right, most of those will fail but we will learn from those failures). Simply because of her age and even more so, of course, because of her unique gifts, Cara will know things you can't know, imagine things you can't fathom, risk things you'd rather not. Trust her. Support her. Work with her. If you want the church as it is to survive (now I'm going to say something crass my dear departed father would say), blow your nose and get that idea out of your head. Us old fogies, our day is over. It's our turn to support and encourage the young to dream and to do what seems impossible. Change is coming whether we like it or not – things cannot stay the same, in the way we live or in the way we do church. So make the most of it and respond to the gift that God is placing amongst you in the form of Revd Cara Heafey. Not that she is the Messiah; she is not. But she does have something we oldies don't have. And she needs our prayers, our love and our partnership – not our petty gripes or whining or preferences. Bigger things are at stake.

We're running out of time, friends. But, as Archbishop Desmond Tutu and the Dalai Lama say in *The Book of Joy*:

No dark fate determines the future. We do. Each day and each moment, we are able to create and re-create our lives and the very quality of human life on our planet. This is the power we wield.

Hear too something Arundhati Roy wrote:

Another world is not only possible, she is on her way. On a quiet day, I can hear her breathing.

Breathe. We are the adult children of the living God, swept up into the flow of divine Love that seeks and seeds our salvation. The whole creation longs for our revealing. We can do this...together, by the grace of God.

God bless us and God use us, taking who we are, who we want to be and what we can do, and using it for purposes greater than ourselves.¹ Amen.

¹ Prayer of Revd Dr Martin Luther King, Jr.: *Use me, God. Show me how to take who I am, who I want to be and what I can do, and use it for a purpose greater than myself. Amen.*



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