

Scripture

John 1 John 4: 7-21

Healing Creation

Okay, let's get real. If there has ever been a time in my life where I have heard creation groaning it is now. At the beginning of this pandemic I was overjoyed with accounts of creation reviving and I thought. This is it maybe we will not be so drastically impacted by climate disaster maybe this is the good news coming out of Covid-19. That was then.

This week as we now wear masks to prevent smoke inhalation along with disease. As we move from keeping our windows open for better air flow and forcing our children to only play outside we are shutting our windows tight and letting our children play in confined spaces because there is a new and different danger out there. I've not dared to complain about the smoke because just the thought of what it must be like to live on the West Coast of the US right now keeps me silent. I have broken down in tears worried about families and friends evacuating. I was speaking with my aunt this week and she said the entire landscape we grew up with is gone....destroyed.

Do you remember how 2020 began? We thought the epic news for the year was Australia's black summer. Fires burning that hit the world news like never before. My daughters school had children doing huge amounts of fundraising to save the Koalas and Kangaroos. Then in February we had a tragic death of a young girl in our community. There were other tragedies that happened for many and our hearts were heavy and we were all looking for a reset of 2020. And then March began to give us whispers of danger until on March 15th 2020 our country and much of the world shutdown with a pandemic equaled to none we have seen in our lifetime.

I am going to jump ahead because quite frankly the stress of every detail of every month is just too much to bare. So where is the hope? It is there and we must keep it alive but I also believe it is time to lament and pray for the healing of our world. Creation is groaning and the Spirit is calling upon us to pray and act in justice and truth. Romans 8 keeps running through my head vs. 19 says "creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God" and vs 22 : We know that the whole creation has been groaning in labour pains until now; **23** and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly " I hear those verses today and I relate in a deeper way as I look out my window and see the air consumed with smoke and I feel my eyes sting and my throat going raw knowing it is the smoke and praying its not covid. And then I go back to our passage in John and I think YES more than ever YES! WE need to love one another, care for one another, support one another even if we cannot be in the same room.

People are stressed and they are grieving businesses have shut down and continue to do so, people have lost loved ones from covid and other causes, some have had funerals, many have not, just the overlying stress of Covid has raised the level of anxiety for many. Then this week hit and the forest fires, and the fire in New West and the train derailment and of course closer to home the vandalism of the Gondola. People are overwhelmed, depressions and rates of drug abuse and overdose are skyrocketing - it is no wonder. So what are we to do?

Here is what I keep hearing in my heart "make healing a priority." Healing of my own worries, healing of the stresses and concerns of those in my life, and healing of creation. WE are all called to be healers of the planet and of each other. It is not enough to just experience ritual and believe in God and sing of our faith, we are called to be active in the healing process of the world and one another. Creation Spiritualities sixth essential states "Ecological and social **justice** are our priority as imperatives for the healing, sustainability and harmony among our species and the entire Earth community." Anytime the connectedness of our society, humanity and/or creation is diminished, challenged or interrupted it is our task to bring healing and reconciliation.

With so much going on in the world it is easy for us to look at this and simply give up. After all, I can't stop the fires, I definitely can't stop covid and there is no way I am going to bring healing to this broken, broken world. But the healing of the whole world isn't our task alone. We need to focus on the world in front of us and trust that others will do the same. The work that I am doing and you are doing is essential and as all of us do our part the healing takes place. Start with your family, your neighbourhood, your parish,, your town and see where healing needs to take place.

Listen to God's call on your spirit so that you might discover where your passion might be. Frederick Buechner wrote "The place God calls you to is the place where your deep gladness and the world's deep hunger meet."

Sometimes what makes hearing this call so difficult is that God's voice is not the only voice calling out to us. The challenge is to hear God's voice in a cacophony of voices.

"There are all different kinds of voices calling you to all different kinds of work, and the problem is to find out which is the voice of God rather than of Society, say, or the Superego, or Self-Interest" (118).

How is one possibly to discern God's voice amidst the noise? Buechner offers some advice:

"By and large a good rule for finding out is this: the kind of work God usually calls you to is the kind of work (a) that you need most to do and (b) that the world most needs to have done. ... The place God calls you to is the place where your deep gladness and the world's deep hunger meet" (118-19).

Calling involves both a look inward and a look outward. My call might be entirely different from yours. I may be passionate about caring for the environment or Black Lives matter, or farm workers rights, or fisheries, or living wage or, lbgtq2 rights and each one of those things is important. We are all called to different places of healing parts of global change but here is how we heal the whole of the world. We support one another in the cause and passion while we remain connected to God's call on your life.

That is exactly what church and community is all about. Caring for the world and supporting others as they do the same.