

Morning Prayer – Thursday, December 17, 2020
St. George's Anglican Church, Cadboro Bay. www.stgeorgecadborobay.ca

Opening Words

“Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say, rejoice.” (Philippians 4:4)

In the midst of sorrow and challenge, loneliness and longing, contentment and ease, may I invite gratitude for life into my heart. May I give thanks for all that I am and all the relationships that sustain me. And may the joy of Jesus be with me, increasing my love for the world and for all beings, so that my joy might be complete.

Be still and aware of God's presence within and all around

Romans 8:18-25 (The Message)

That's why I don't think there's any comparison between the present hard times and the coming good times. The created world itself can hardly wait for what's coming next. Everything in creation is being more or less held back. God reins it in until both creation and all the creatures are ready and can be released at the same moment into the glorious times ahead. Meanwhile, the joyful anticipation deepens.

All around us we observe a pregnant creation. The difficult times of pain throughout the world are simply birth pangs. But it's not only around us; it's *within* us. The Spirit of God is arousing us within. We're also feeling the birth pangs. These sterile and barren bodies of ours are yearning for full deliverance. That is why waiting does not diminish us, any more than waiting diminishes a pregnant mother. We are enlarged in the waiting. We, of course, don't see what is enlarging us. But the longer we wait, the larger we become, and the more joyful our expectancy.

A moment of silence to reflect on the reading

Canticle

The songs of prayer lodge in our mouths.
Let us sing through the snow.
At the dinner table.
On the rooftop where we dance.
May these sounds heal our hearts
and those distant hearts that hear.

Hawksley Workman

Poem “Brother, I’ve seen some” by Kabir

Trans. from Hindi by Arvind Krishna Mehrotra

Brother, I’ve seen some
Astonishing sights:
A lion keeping watch

Over pasturing cows;
A mother delivered
After her son was;
A guru prostrated
Before his disciple;
Fish spawning
On treetops;
A cat carrying away
A dog;
A gunny-sack
Driving a bullock-cart;
A buffalo going out to graze,
Sitting on a horse;
A tree with its branches in the earth,
Its roots in the sky;
A tree with flowering roots.

This verse, says Kabir,
Is your key to the universe.
If you can figure it out.

PRAYERS FOR OTHERS, THE WORLD, AND ONESELF

Closing Prayer

Lord Jesus,
Master of both the light and the darkness,
send Your Holy Spirit upon our preparations for Christmas.
We who have so much to do seek quiet spaces to hear your voice each day.
We who are anxious about many things look forward to your coming among us.
We who are blessed in so many ways long for the complete joy of your kingdom.
We whose hearts are heavy seek the joy of your presence.
We are your people, walking in darkness, yet seeking the light.
To You we say, 'Come Lord Jesus!'

Joel Mason

Sources

Celtic Daily Prayer: Book Two, Farther Up and Farther In, Northumbria Community, London:
William Collins Books, 2015.

Poem: translation appeared in *Poetry* (March 2011).