

“Steadfast love and faithfulness will meet; righteousness and peace will kiss each other. Faithfulness will spring up from the ground, and righteousness will look down from the sky. The Lord will give what is good, and our land will yield its increase. Righteousness will go before him, and will make a path for his steps.” Psalms 85:10-13 NRSV

It's not always comfortable, God,
but it is certainly good,
that you go straight for the heart.

You do not allow us to skate over the surface of life,
filling our days with dry legality,
and pretend righteousness;

No, you come at us from the inside,
challenging our thoughts and attitudes,
our motives and perceptions;
and shaping them into the fuel for change
that gives us hearts like yours,
and lives that are lived from the inside out.

None of this is normal.

None of this is new, even as so much is and feels unprecedented.

All of this has been building for a long time.

Repairing/restoring/healing is long, slow labour.

Some losses can never be made right.

Here we are.

May we: breathe. create. harbour. share nourishment. savour the joy that finds us. cultivate beauty
where and how we can. disrupt the shit that's killing us, collectively and unequally. tend life with fierce
and tender care.

We praise you, O God,
for your uncomfortable grace,
your transforming Spirit,
and for the gift of lives
lived with integrity and compassion
from the inside out.

It feels like madness to stand before the giant
with nothing but faith and a few small stones.
It seems insane to believe that anything but brute force
can match the challenge of the powerful.

But, in the stillness a different voice whispers,
speaking of crosses and empty tombs,
of justice and God's concern for the weak;
In the stillness fear and insecurity can be heard
in the bellowing of the bullies;
And in the stillness the temptation in each of us
to cling to our power at all costs
becomes clear and transparent.

And so we find ourselves once again in prayer, Jesus,
that the gentle persuasion of your cross
may change how we do power in our world;
that the strong and wealthy may find life
in sharing and empowering;
and that we each, in our own small way, may remember
that our storms are most often stilled
when we allow your authority to lead us,
and your justice to teach us how to live.

Amen.

Nicole Terblanche CMM
2023 08 13