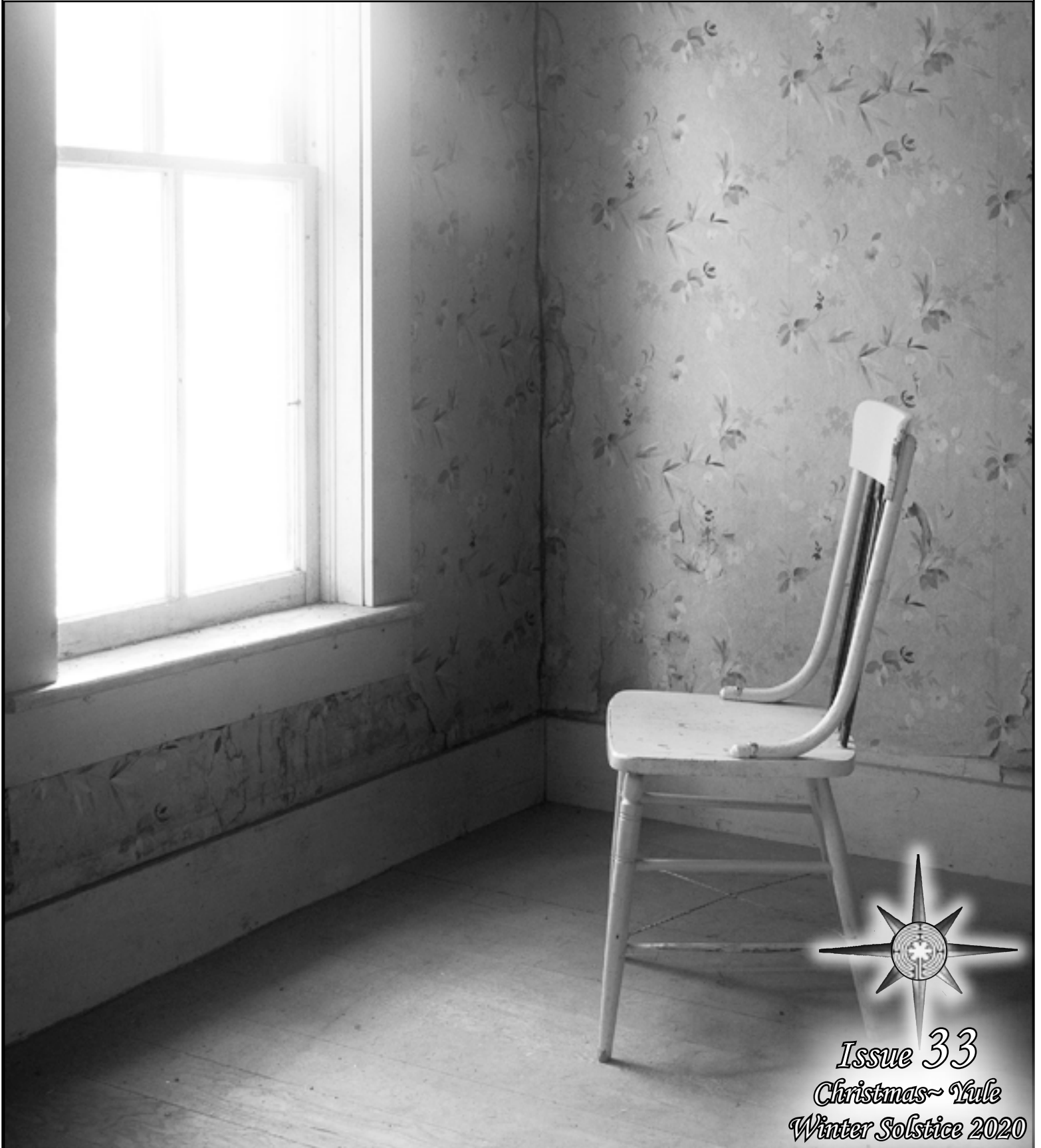


# THE ROSE

## IN THE WORLD

*Inviting wisdom into our lives and sacred spaces*



*Issue 33*  
*Christmas~ Yule*  
*Winter Solstice 2020*

## Pandemic Prayer

Holy Dreamgiver,  
Changeless One,  
Companion,

In this time of pandemic, our world has turned upside down,  
daily life resembles nightmares, even our nightly experiences are changed.  
Some of us, once prolific dreamers, now mourn the scarcity of our dreams.  
Others, who struggled to record a dream, are waking to vivid dream images.

Now we turn to you for comfort and inspiration.

If we have dream fragments to offer, teach us to see their preciousness.  
If we have new-found-joy in dreaming, encourage us to embrace this fullness.

Accompany us through these troubling times and let us be grateful for  
all dreams "that have been and all that shall be."

Amen

Pandemic Prayer by **Annette Thies** New York, NY Annette is passionate about dreamwork and dreamplay. A spiritual director who founded and leads St. Bart's church dream group, she was trained in dreamwork leadership by Dr. Montague Ullman. She teaches dream workshops, enjoys encouraging new dreamers and began dream journaling in 1984. For more information, please visit her website [www.dreamministry.us](http://www.dreamministry.us)

Note: This prayer voices the current concerns of my dream group members.

The closing phrase is from one of Dag Hammarskjöld's prayers, himself a dreamer.

## THE ROSE'S DREAM FOR THE WORLD

It seems fitting that *The Rose in the World* should begin with a dream. A dream for *The Rose in the World* and a dream for the world. In each issue this section includes a dream submitted by a reader and published anonymously, (if that is the contributor's preference). This dream serves as the guiding path of Wisdom for the issue. If this is *your* dream what does it mean to *you*? How does this dream and the subsequent articles, art, poetry and prose fit into *your* waking life? What is Wisdom offering each of us through this narrative and these images? The dream published below offers itself to you, please hold it lightly as you read. To submit your own dream for the next issue please visit [www.roseintheworld.org/join-the-rose](http://www.roseintheworld.org/join-the-rose).html and scroll to the bottom of the page OR mail your dream, with no return address, to *The Rose in the World* at 235 W. Rutherford St. Athens, GA 30605.

### IN MY DREAM...

Surrender

November 5, 2020

*I am traveling in a large airplane, flying over the ocean. The plane turns steeply, banks sharply, and it is clear something is wrong with the plane! I am very frightened and panic! I realize we are going to crash and there is nothing I can do about it! I relax into it and take some deep breaths. I wonder how it will be to die. I breathe, wait for the moment of impact. I hope it is quick and sudden at the end. The plane is diving into the water and I am ready and open to being in this moment of impact and death.*

*I wake up. I am calm and curious and my heart is racing.*

*To see more about this dream and explore it further, see the article in this issue on page 39...*

Our cover art is a photograph titled *Looking for Salvation* by **Lisa Rigge** Pleasanton, CA. Lisa graduated from the Haden Institute in 2010. She continues to work with dreams via poetry and collage. She belongs to two projective dream groups and facilitates a monthly dream collage group.

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## THE ROSE IN THE WORLD

Inviting Wisdom into our lives and sacred spaces

Christmas~Yule Winter Solstice 2020, Issue 33

### Editor-in-Chief

Sarah Dungan Norton

*The Rose* would not be here without the editors that gave us roots. The late **Wanda Krewer** was our **founder in 2002, and editor of issue #1.** *The Rose* continued to grow in the Natural Spirituality community thanks to **Joyce Rockwood Hudson** who was **editor of *The Rose* issues #2-15 and was contributing editor for issues #16-23.** **Peggy Thrasher Law** served as **associate editor for issues #14 and 15** and then nurtured *The Rose* as **editor-in-chief for issues #16-23.** The legacy of *The Rose* continues to flourish. May it bloom for many years to come.

### Assisting Proofreaders for this Issue:

Lane Norton and Jim Norton

### Graphic Design

Sarah Dungan Norton

### Become a sustaining donor:

*The Rose* in the World, as of 2020, is all digital. In our ever changing world we need your support now more than ever. We now offer recurring donations so that you can become a sustaining donor for the Rose! Please visit [www.roseintheworld.org](http://www.roseintheworld.org) to donate today or for more information. Once there, you can select the amount you would like to donate annually. Just set it up once, and each year, on that date an automatic donation will be made to help keep the Rose blooming in this new digital world.

### Donate to The Rose

Now that we have a digital format, we can offer *The Rose* to anyone who wants one, however, this mission can only continue thanks to our readers' generous donations. All contributions to this mission, large and small, are needed and appreciated. There is a link on the website to make a one-time donation of any amount or, if you'd rather, checks can be accepted through:

***The Rose in the World***  
235 W. Rutherford Street  
Athens, GA 30605

### Please share the word!

Please follow us on Facebook [@roseintheworld](https://www.facebook.com/roseintheworld) and Instagram [@theroseintheworld](https://www.instagram.com/theroseintheworld) and share with others!

### Archived Issues of The Rose

Please feel free to visit our website to view and print back issues of *The Rose* #1-24

[www.roseintheworld.org](http://www.roseintheworld.org)  
[theroseintheworld@gmail.com](mailto:theroseintheworld@gmail.com)

### Submissions Policy

Articles should be no more than 4,000 words, but can be as small as you like, and should be submitted as a final draft and as a word doc. Artwork and photographs should be submitted as a JPEG or TIFF file and as high quality as possible. *The Rose* in this digital form is in color but when printed, submission may be converted. Digital submissions are preferred. Material should be appropriate to the mission of *The Rose*. All submissions should be sent to:

[editor.theroseintheworld@gmail.com](mailto:editor.theroseintheworld@gmail.com)

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# Natural Spirituality Programs

**ALABAMA**

Auburn, Auburn Unitarian-Universalist  
Dothan, Episcopal Church of the Nativity  
Montgomery, St. John's Episcopal Church  
Troy, St. Mark's Episcopal Church

**ALASKA**

Anchorage, St. Mary's Episcopal Church

**ARIZONA**

Tucson, Grace-St. Paul's Episcopal Church

**ARKANSAS**

Conway, First United Methodist Church  
Conway, St. Peter's Episcopal Church  
Conway, contact [melinda\\_adams\\_teai@yahoo.com](mailto:melinda_adams_teai@yahoo.com)  
Eureka Springs, St. James' Episcopal Church  
Fayetteville, St. Martin's Univ. Ctr. (Episcopal)  
Fayetteville, St. Paul's Episcopal Church  
Fort Smith, St. John's Episcopal Church  
Harrison, St. John's Episcopal Church  
Hot Springs Village, Holy Trinity Episcopal Church  
Jonesboro, St. Mark's Episcopal Church  
Little Rock, Christ Church (Episcopal)  
Little Rock, Coffeehouse Grp. (nondenom.) [ph. 501-758-3823]  
Little Rock, Pulaski Hgts. United Methodist Church  
Little Rock, St. James' United Methodist Church  
Little Rock, St. Margaret's Episcopal Church  
Little Rock, St. Michael's Episcopal Church  
Little Rock, Trinity Episcopal Cathedral  
Russellville, All Saints' Episcopal Church

**CONNECTICUT**

Darien, St. Luke's Episcopal Church

**FLORIDA**

Apalachicola, Trinity Episcopal Church  
Gainesville, contact [bluefiresd@gmail.com](mailto:bluefiresd@gmail.com)  
New Smyrna, St. Peter the Fisherman Episcopal  
Pensacola, Cokesbury Methodist Church  
Pensacola, Water's Edge Group  
St. Augustine, contact Isobel McGrath, LMHC, CAP at 904-436-5576  
or at [www.isobelmcgrath.com](http://www.isobelmcgrath.com)

Tallahassee, Faith Presbyterian Church

**GEORGIA**

Albany, Epis. Church of St. John and St. Mark  
Athens, Emmanuel Episcopal Church  
Athens, St. Gregory the Great Episcopal Church,  
Atlanta, All Saints' Episcopal Church  
Atlanta, The Cathedral of St. Philip (Episcopal)  
Atlanta, St. Luke's Episcopal Church  
Atlanta, First Presbyterian Church  
Atlanta, Amerson House Spirituality Center  
Calhoun, St. Timothy's Episcopal Church  
Dahlonega, St. Elizabeth's Episcopal Church  
Dunwoody, St. Patrick's Episcopal Church  
Milledgeville, St. Stephen's Episcopal Church  
Morrow, St. Augustine's Episcopal Church  
Rome, St. Peter's Episcopal Church  
Sandy Springs, Ignatius House Jesuit Retreat Ctr  
Tifton, St. Anne's Episcopal Church

**IDAHO**

Idaho Falls, St. Luke's Episcopal Church

**ILLINOIS**

River Forest, Grace Episcopal Church  
Chicago, St. Michael in Old Town

**INDIANA**

Hammond Dream Group  
^ [new ph. 219-743-3514], [bethanyrh@sbcglobal.net](mailto:bethanyrh@sbcglobal.net)

**KENTUCKY**

Frankfort Dream Group (interfaith) [ph. 502-227-2297]  
Frankfort Christ Church Cathedral (Episcopal), Lexington

**LOUISIANA**

Northminster Church, Monroe  
St. Michael's Episcopal Church, Mandeville  
St. Matthew's Episcopal Church, Bogalusa

**MARYLAND**

First Unitarian Church, Baltimore  
St. Paul's United Methodist Church, Kensington

**MICHIGAN**

The Retreat, [rachelier.o@gmail.com](mailto:rachelier.o@gmail.com), Grand Haven  
Grace Episcopal Church, Traverse City

**MINNESOTA**

St. Nicholas Episcopal Church, Richfield

**MISSISSIPPI**

St. Andrew's Episcopal Cathedral, Jackson  
St. James' Episcopal Church, Jackson

**MISSOURI**

St. Cronan Catholic Church, St. Louis

**NEBRASKA**

Countryside Community Church (U.C.C.), Omaha

**NEW YORK**

St. Bartholomew's Church, New York City  
^ contact [stbarts.org](http://stbarts.org) [ph. 212-378-0222]

**NORTH CAROLINA**

St. Luke's Episcopal Church, Boone  
Unitarian Universalist of Transylvania Co., Brevard  
Davidson United Methodist Church, Davidson  
First Baptist Church, Elkin  
First United Methodist Church, Elkin  
St. James' Episcopal Church, Hendersonville  
First Congregational Church, Hendersonville  
All Saints' Episcopal Church, Southern Shores  
St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Wilkesboro

**OHIO**

Holy Trinity Episcopal, Oxford  
First Unitarian Universalist Church, Youngstown

**OREGON**

Congregational United Church of Christ, Medford

**SOUTH CAROLINA**

Liberty Hill Presbyterian, Camden  
St. Martins in the Field, Columbia  
Trinity Episcopal Cathedral, Columbia  
St. James' Episcopal Church, Greenville  
Lutheran Church By The Lake (LCBTL), McCormick

**TENNESSEE**

Church of the Ascension (Epis.), Knoxville  
Church of the Good Shepherd (Epis.), Lookout Mtn  
St. John's Episcopal Church, Memphis  
St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Murfreesboro  
Second Presbyterian Church, Nashville  
St. Mary's, contact [mcarnahan5@gmail.com](mailto:mcarnahan5@gmail.com), Franklin

**TEXAS**

St. Marks United Methodist Church, Houston  
^ meets 3rd Wed. 10a-12p, [velmarice@gmail.com](mailto:velmarice@gmail.com)  
Bay Harbour United Methodist Church, League City  
^ [ph. 832-385-4726], Connie Bovier [cjbovier@earthlink.net](mailto:cjbovier@earthlink.net)  
Nondenom. [ph. 210-348-6226], San Antonio  
Christ Episcopal Church, Tyler

**VIRGINIA**

Calvary Episcopal Church, Front Royal

**WEST VIRGINIA**

Unity of Kanawha, Charleston

**FRANCE**

American Cathedral (Epis.), Paris

**ONLINE**

\*Contact [Dianne Rhodes](mailto:DianneRhodes) (703)593-1034\*

Monthly Zoom meeting on the 4th Friday, 12-2p ET^

Listed here for networking purposes are the natural spirituality programs (dream groups based in churches or communities of faith), that are known to us. Each group is unique and organized in its own way. Groups that would like to be added to the list (or if you are on this list and would like to update your information or remove it) are invited to contact *The Rose in the World* at [theroseintheworld@gmail.com](mailto:theroseintheworld@gmail.com). If there is no group in your area, please consider starting one.

Background image of Grace Cathedral by Sarah D. Norton

\*NEWLY ADDED/  
UPDATED DREAM  
GROUP\*



## Greetings from Your Editor



Dear Readers,

Every solstice marks the return of the light, the sun. We have made it through the darkest day here in the Northern Hemisphere. Now, every day until the summer solstice will grow longer and longer. However, in the Southern hemisphere it is just the opposite and their days now begin to wane. This is the way it works, balance holds, the earth spins, and we make our way through another year. This year the return of the light in this hemisphere seems much more poignant than in years past and the waiting that advent embodies is still not over.

Since the spring, we have all been practicing an advent of sorts, waiting for the light to return. Waiting for some moment of illumination, for a miracle cure, a vaccine, a shift in consciousness that will bring everyone together to work for a common good, anything to bring hope and give us a reprieve from this virus. This idea of waiting has been at the forefront of my consciousness in terms of this pandemic, the presidential election, and so much more. I saw an amusing tweet last week which referenced the extra doses in the vaccine vials being a modern Hannukah miracle, a potent, life giving substance lasting longer than expected could not be more fitting this time of year. Though we have a vaccine now, and hopefully it may help more people than originally anticipated, we are not through this trial yet. In fact, for many, now that there is a vaccine, the wait for normal may prove even harder to bear.

Nevertheless, we must continue to wait. Wait our turn for the vaccine, wait for enough people to be vaccinated or commit to mask wearing if we cannot get a vaccine. Wait for a new normal to find its equilibrium.

I went back and forth on the cover for this issue. In the end, the beauty of the solitude of the empty chair in Lisa Rigge's "Looking for Salvation" kept pulling me back in. There is something so comforting about that bright window. The scene was built for waiting. In my imagination, there is a snowy field beyond those panes. The sun is shining and the bright frosted surface outside is reflecting that bright, albedo light back into the

house. In my dream of this photograph there is a fire right behind the chair. Maybe this house is a fixer-upper. I'm standing looking at the one chair I have to work with right now, blanket wrapped around my shoulders, warmth of the fire filling the air, and my mind begins to wander. I think about the next project on the horizon, the book I want to read, the friend I'm looking forward to video chatting. It is a place to look forward to a future I cannot plan, but anticipate.

However, there is also an innate sense of longing in this photograph, one that permeates many of the offerings you will find on the subsequent pages. Longing for a life beyond isolation, longing for a loved one now lost, longing for connection, or hope, or just the rising of the full moon and the bright rays of the dawn. In this era of the pandemic so many things have changed for so many people. You can see these shifts reflected in the artwork and writing, and even in a beautiful song on page 19 (if you have downloaded the interactive copy, it should start playing on its own, or will ask for permission and, once granted, will play.) This song, "At the Crying Pole" by Jim Hutcheson is a beautiful example of the two-sidedness of this difficult time. We could never gift you Jim's soulful voice in a print edition of the Rose. The lyrics stand on their own, but his voice and the beautiful tune share something that the words themselves only hint at.

This issue is meant to be a companion to you as we wait. You will find familiar stories and images, collective dreams that I believe we all know a piece of. You will also find stories of sadness and inspiration that may differ widely from your own, this is the beauty of the growing Rose community. The overall theme that emerged as I was reading through all the soulful submissions and viewing the incredible artwork was "light from the darkness." It seems dreams have been a valuable teacher for those who have been able to remember theirs during this period. If you have been having trouble with recall, there are a number of dreams within these pages that I encourage you to view as your own. What wisdom is the unconscious offering you, if you are reading this

issue? These dreams are now yours. Every poem, every photograph, every piece of this issue can be viewed as a dream. There are enough dreams here to last a month and many will stick with you longer.

These "dreams," and our nightly dreams, can be like our very own miraculous lamp oil or vaccine. We read an article or wake with a dream which sits in our consciousness long enough to write it down or reflect, but it can last much longer. You will find certain images and symbols stick with you longer than others, offering life giving light from the unconscious for days, weeks, or even years. Dreams can be miraculous.

So, in this time of darkness, as the light slowly makes its way back into the world minute by minute, and the vaccine makes its way into arms, day by day, we will find ways to continue forward to a new and unrecognizable future. This future is one that we can shape with love, compassion, and renewed hope. In this holiday season, let us take lessons from the many holidays that the darkness of this time of year inspired in its desire for the light. Advent: be patient and wait, transformation takes time; Hannukah: selfless sacrifice can spark a miracle; The Winter Solstice: after the darkness there is always light; Christmas: the sacred is birthed from the mundane.

I encourage you to light a candle to remind yourselves of the light that will return, make yourself a hot beverage, curl up in something warm and comfortable, and enjoy this issue of the Rose at your own pace. The articles here will see you through this holiday season and well into the new year. While we all wait together, apart, I wish you a beautiful New Year, a merry Christmas, a happy Hannukah, a joyous Kwanza, a festive Mawlid an-Nabi, a jubilant Pancha Ganapati, an Enlightened Bodhi Day, and a wonderful Yule. Whatever your chosen holidays and holy nights look like in this strange and singular year, I wish you all the best and remind you that you are not alone. Dreams and archetypal images connect and enlighten us all, even in these difficult times.

~Sarah D. Norton, PhD





## In Memory

My first prayer  
each day is contained  
in three drops of oil  
placed in my aroma therapy diffuser.  
I give the stone-gray disk a turn,  
and plug it in.

[Johns Hopkins](#) reports  
76 million COVID cases;  
1.7 million deaths.  
[The Guardian](#) maps  
17 million infected Americans;  
[Harvard](#) assesses Missouri's red risk—  
at 57 cases per 100,000.

The oil is called Thieves.  
based on a legend  
from the Black Death.

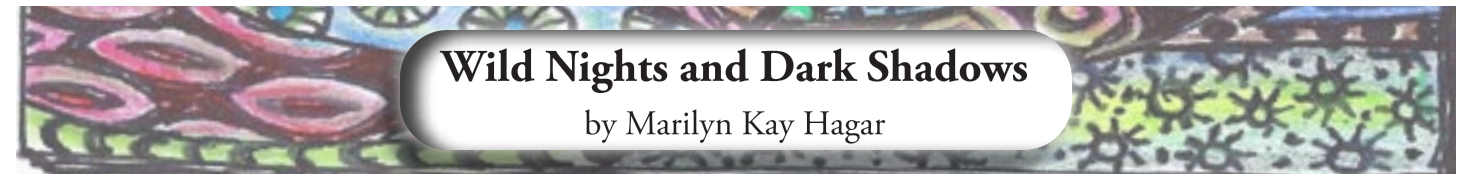
Six centuries ago.  
Four spice merchants  
reduced to robbing graves,  
avoided infection  
from the bubonic plague.

Dragged before the judge.  
Threatened with execution.  
Their secret forced from them.  
Herbal/spice infusions  
rubbed on hands, feet,  
ear lobes and temples,  
a beak shaped mask  
stuffed with saturated rags.

Today, clove bud, lemon peel,  
cinnamon bark,  
eucalyptus and rosemary leaf  
fill the air—an aromatic scent  
in memory of  
all who have died  
from every dreaded contagion  
in every age and place.

A spicy sent rises, a prayer  
in their honor.

**In Memory** by **Marge O'Gorman** *St. Louis, MO* Marge has been a Franciscan Sister of Mary for fifty-seven years. She spends her days during the time of the Coronavirus attending Zoom Meetings and Webinars. She enjoys reading, writing and being out in nature. She received a certificate in Dream Work from the Haden Institute in 2017. \*The numbers reported here are from 12/20/2020. The numbers when this was first written, at the end of October, were: 40 million cases, 1 million deaths; 8 million US cases, 30 per 100,000 in MO, links in the poem are active to see the most up-do-date numbers.



## Wild Nights and Dark Shadows

by Marilyn Kay Hagar

The first time my 3-year-old son saw snow, we were driving across the Sierra Nevada mountains. "Did this all come down in one big plop?" he asked. That is exactly how I felt when the shelter in place order fell down around me last March. It froze everything dead in its tracks, no more work, no more family visits, all the things I cared most about, erased instantly. Now it was just me here in my beautiful forest home, me, the deer, the bears and the beauty. I was so grateful for the beauty.

That first night, my dream world chimed in on my new situation, giving me pause about what might be coming our way.

*In my dream, I am out in my meadow which is completely encircled by the forest. I hear a rustling sound to my right and a short, disheveled looking man stumbles out of the forest, asking for my help. I know right away that he is up to no good as he is pretending to be my neighbor. A moment later, on the other side of the meadow, an old dilapidated car comes tearing down my driveway. A tall, lanky guy gets out and advances quickly across the meadow. "This is a set up," I think to myself. "They must have known I'm here all alone." The short guy is pulling at me now. I fight him off shouting, "No!" I'm trying to kick him in the crotch with my foot or my knee but to no avail. What would work in waking life isn't working in the dream, though I keep trying. The tall man is running toward us now. "Oh no, it is going to be two against one!" I scream for help though there is no one nearby who might hear me. Now fighting off both of them, the short guy grabs a hose with water pouring out of it. He tries to force it into my mouth.*

I wake up screaming, my heart pounding.

My dream left me fully embodying the terror this pandemic brings with it, though my waking mind had not fully imagined all of the disastrous possibilities or the horrors that would follow. I didn't yet know that a strong streak of independence in our country would leave us less capable of surrendering to the common good, or, for that matter, that we would fight over what the common good might be. I wasn't aware of the idea of herd immunity, a patriarchal idea, if there ever was one, based as it is, on the philosophy of the survival of the fittest. I didn't yet realize that as people were dying and dead bodies were

being stored in refrigerated trucks, we would turn our backs in denial, imaging ourselves stronger than Mother Nature, who, whether in her creative or destructive aspect, has no equal. This last, I should have known, as with much hubris, we as a society, turned our backs on Mother Nature long ago.

My dream served as an initiation into these pandemic times as Covid-19 ambushes us from all directions. When I shared my dream with my dream group of 30 years, we had many reflections, personally and culturally. Among the things that rose to the top, was a warning. Fighting this virus was going to be a confrontation with the aggression of the patriarchy, when what we need most is to care for one another. It won't work for each of us to go it alone. Working together, we at least have a chance. Otherwise, like being water boarded, too many of us will struggle to our deaths unable to breathe.

Just a short while after my dream, as people were gasping for air in New York City hospitals, George Floyd was killed and the chant, "I can't breathe" flashed around the nation and the world. The racial wounds at the root of our country called out to be reckoned with. It seemed for a time, and I hope it is still so, that in the chaos of the pandemic, a big step toward healing this deep wound



Drawing *Breath* by **Roberta Charbonneau**, see her bio on p. 10



might actually be possible. That is the thing about chaos and dissolution, in rearranging what is, cracks appear and something new can be born.

One of the things that I had to cancel when the shelter in place order obliterated life as usual, was a presentation at my professional association's yearly conference. A friend and I were going to be presenting on the Crone, the third phase of the Triple Goddess, the one who knows how to hold the unraveling of things. The Crone has witnessed many upheavals over time and reigns over dissolution and death. She accepts impermanence, knowing that when things fall apart wondrous things can emerge from chaos. Though our youth worshipping society turns away from the Crone's power, she holds an important place in the circle of life. Without her darkened eye, the circle cannot complete its ancient turning, taking us once again towards rebirth.

In those months before the virus sent us all home, I had been immersed in reading and writing about the Crone. Now she was reigning supreme in my life and spreading her energy around our whole world. My studying and the experiences my co-presenter and I planned to share at the conference seemed well intended,

but so very small compared to what we were now living. When we next came together, outside, and socially distanced, of course, my friend and I looked at one another wide eyed. We couldn't help but laugh. Even with our deep dive into the Crone energy we never imagined the extent of the dissolution we were experiencing. But as daunting as our lives had become, our preparations had gifted us. The promise held within, the ever-turning circle of life, was front and center in our consciousness. Whatever was in store for us, that had helped both of us to hold this incredible moment with more grace than we otherwise might have mustered.

The words of an old therapist rang in my ears. "We teach what we need to learn," he had said. I thought I had learned a lot about death and dissolution. I had just spent 16 years as a caregiver, accompanying my elderly parents through the end of their lives, my mother dying at almost 102 years old. Living to 102, means that she was alive at the time of the 1918 flu pandemic, though she was only 2 years old. She lived on a ranch in rural northeastern Nevada, just outside the tiny town of Palisade, now a ghost town. Her father died at the age of 36 in that pandemic, leaving my grandmother on the

ranch, alone and pregnant with their 5th child.

The story of his demise is one of the signature stories of my family history, so I didn't learn about pandemics from the history books, I learned about them because I grew up short one grandfather. I can't remember when I didn't know about his untimely death. I think that is one reason why I have responded with such respect for the virus, willingly surrendering to the advice of our public health officials. I assumed that everyone else would too. Of course, that hasn't happened.

I have been pained at the division we are experiencing as a nation. I have family members who I love dearly, that are politically on the "other side." When friends more simpatico with my political leanings talk about Trump supporters, I feel I have to say, "They aren't all like those you are imagining." That is most often met with uncomfortable stares, leaving me feeling like an outsider in my own tribe. What I'm trying to do, because I love people on both sides, is to be a bridge between two worlds that are drifting further and further apart.

I had hoped, naively perhaps, that the virus would be one place where we could see eye to eye. It is certainly something bigger than us all and because of that I thought it might put things in perspective. When the protests against the shelter in place orders and the resistance to wearing masks began, I remembered that my ranch uncle had removed the seatbelts from his truck when seatbelt laws were first enacted. This virus wasn't his first rodeo with the government telling him what he can or can't do. He and the rest of that family are rugged individuals in a way that my liberal friends can't even imagine. They live close to the earth, herding cattle, miles and miles from even the tiniest town. The men are among the most macho men imaginable, the women equally tough in their own way. My uncle, now 104 years old, has been struck by lightning twice! When sitting at their breakfast table, I listen as they pray to God for protection. They mean it in such concrete way, it makes me want to shout, "Amen!"

As a child, I was bullied by my cousins when we visited the ranch. Though I was a tomboy, I wasn't tough enough for them. They were relentless until I proved them right by crying. Only then would they move on, leaving me alone for a while. When I think about it now, I think I cried for us all. They needed to find my tears, as they were so far away from finding their own. We have managed to step through those childhood dramas and have found genuine respect for one another now. I'm not saying that all Trump supporters are like my ranch family because I don't think that is true, but as the

anti-virus protests mount, I recognize something familiar about who those people are and what they are saying. That gives me more context for their viewpoint than most of my Northern California friends have. To them it is all just crazy and insane. I'll admit that I sometimes feel that way too, the difference is, I know there is more to the story.

What worries me most is that we are confusing our personal identity with our political identity, but we are so much more than our politics. When we begin to feel that our way of life is threatened by the opposition, we panic. We stop seeing people as people. They become a monolithic group. We think we know who they are, what they all think. As our worlds clash, we become increasingly fearful of one another, and once our fear becomes existential, it is easy to feel like we are in a battle between good and evil. We all know, without question, which side we are on. Few of us consciously and intentionally side with evil, so that leaves most of us thinking, whether true or not, that we are on the side of good.

Evil is a big word that we throw around like we know what it means. For sure, we mostly see it out there in others, not here, inside ourselves. I'm concerned that that word jumps out of our mouths too easily. Certainly, history tells the story of the horror that follows when we no longer see human beings as people, but rather characterize them as other, place them beneath us, and then demonize that group as a whole.

This is not to say that evil doesn't exist, because I believe it does, but I think we are sloppy and unpracticed in recognizing it. On the Fall Equinox, my dream world took me out into my meadow again for another confrontation. With reflection, I think this one was about evil and our relationship to it. Here is the gist of my dream.

*Cars, trucks, and huge RVs begin driving into my meadow and setting up camp. They are running over my labyrinth and my newly repaired septic system and I'm furious. I run out to confront these invaders. They tell me they are here for a convention. There is much more to the story, but I tromp onto their stages, and interrupt their meetings. Instead of asking them to get out, I seem more concerned about their excrement. I'm screaming at them, "Tell me! What are you planning to do with your shit?!" I get increasingly frantic, going from meeting to meeting escalating my language as they all just passively stare at me. "Just tell me! What are you going to do with your f\*cking shit! I scream at the leaders, stomping my feet and using my whole*



Drawing *Evolution* by Roberta Charbonneau, see her bio on p. 10



body to shout as loud as I possibly can. “If you are thinking you are going to shit in this forest, forget it because if you do that, I’m going to be the one to step in it!!” This goes on for a long time, confrontation after confrontation. When I finally feel as if I have spent every last bit of rage in me, I go back inside my house.

I don’t want to tell the whole story but when I return to my house, I find myself in a situation where I am being nurtured with exquisite pleasure. When that ends, I am sitting with family and friends in my living room and it slowly begins to dawn on me that I have committed a horrible, horrible, crime. I didn’t intend to, but it clearly has happened and it is just unimaginable. As that reality seeps into me, revealing my participation in something truly evil, I am filled with more shame than I have ever felt in my entire life.

It is that shame that woke me up and made this dream my most disturbing dream in recent memory.

I took my dream to my dream group, worked with it some myself and then I just let it settle inside of me. Within days I synchronously came upon a [series of articles by Richard Rohr](#), OFM. I found his musings on the nature of evil enlightening and an interesting frame in which to hold my dream.

Here is what I made of what he said. When we are unable to imagine the nature of true evil, we use the word to describe a lesser darkness. We conjure up a little red man with horns, a pitchfork and a tail. Then we personalize the evil, making it all about individuals, rather than looking for it in our collective. Our lack of awareness of this process is a threat to our very survival.

My dream and Richard Rohr’s reflections have left me contemplating what true evil means to me. I certainly haven’t come up with a complete answer but I’m pretty sure that evil has to do with disconnection rather than connection, rigidity rather than flexibility, deadness rather than aliveness, and hatred rather than love. I don’t imagine evil as something outside myself, but rather something inside of me, inside of all of us. We are more practiced at seeing it individually, in ourselves and in one another, than we are at seeing how it plays itself out in our collective. Shockingly, in the collective, it is often hidden in the conventions of our time. As Richard Rohr put it, “Before it becomes personal and shameable, evil is often culturally agreed-upon, admired, and deemed necessary.” Slavery, the witch hunts, lynching, capital punishment, for example, are all glaring examples of our collective blindness.

My dream was using a play on words by having

a convention set itself up in my meadow. It was clearly speaking to me of our societal conventions, the ones where we allow true evil to spread its darkness without blinking an eye. We feel justified, self-righteous even. The audiences that I am shouting at don’t have the vaguest notion of what I’m talking about. They stare blankly, perhaps thinking, “What is wrong with her? What is she talking about? Our shit? What shit? We are only doing what is right. God is on our side.”

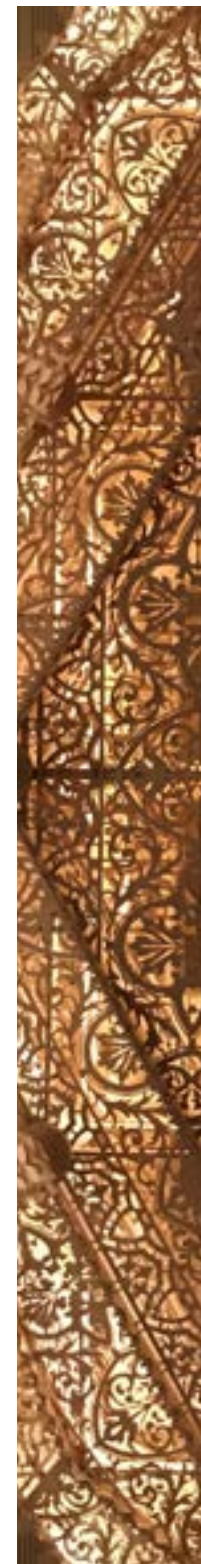
In the new age, we like to talk about all being “One,” however, we imagine being One in the light, not in the darkness. In our recognition that we are all in this together, we must acknowledge that we are not only One in the light side of human nature but also in the dark side. Without this recognition of the whole we will not find our way to a better future. Like in my dream, if those invaders shit in my forest, I will certainly step in it because it belongs to all of us.

Our problems are not going to go away because of a presidential election. Our leaders can help or hinder but it is “We the People,” who need to heal our collective wounds. This pandemic has provided a pause where so many of us are turning inward to re-evaluate how we are living our lives. I hope we can muster the same in our collective, but it won’t be easy. As a first step, it will be up to each one of us to stop demonizing those who oppose us, allowing more complexity in our thinking about who they might be and what they care about. We will need to open our hearts to both the light and the darkness that we are, individually and collectively, and with love and forgiveness as our guide, imagine a new and better path forward.



**Marilyn Kay Hagar** *Mendocino CA* is a Registered Expressive Arts Therapist and the author of *Finding the Wild Inside: Exploring Our Inner Landscape Through the Arts, Dreams, and Intuition*. She believes that a life lived from the inside out offers us a pathway to greater authenticity and reveals our deep belonging to the wild universe of which we are a part. Her book is available wherever books are sold. She has been in private practice and led groups and workshops at her forest retreat for more than 40 years. Her website is [www.marilynhagar.com](http://www.marilynhagar.com).

Artwork by **Roberta Charbonneau** *Adairsville, GA* Originally from western Nebraska, Roberta has lived in Northwest Georgia since 1999. As a recent retiree, she is devoting time to the Natural Spirituality Regional Gathering planning team, her church, and artwork.



## I Want to Know You

I Want to Know you.

You, there, beside me at the red light, in the blue minivan.  
Where are you going? Or from where are you coming?  
Do you have a sister? What does your kitchen look like?

I want to know you.

You, there, with the tired eyes, standing behind the cash register.  
Did you leave a sleeping child at home?  
Do you look like your mother? Or your father?

I want to know you.

You, there, holding the crumpled “Please help. I’m hungry” sign.  
When’s your birthday?  
What brought you here? Where do you sleep?

I want to know you.

You, there, a brown face in a sea of white.  
Do you feel alone? Or vulnerable?  
What’s your middle name? Are you your mother’s favorite child?

I want to know you.

You, there in the drafty refugee tent.  
Did you have flowers in the garden before the bombs?  
Were you a teacher? A doctor? A beekeeper?

I want to know you.

You, there, who shares my blood.  
What’s your hidden longing? What color is your soul?  
What’s your favorite song?

I want to know you.

You, there, looking back at me in the mirror.  
Who’s eyes do you see? What secrets do you carry?  
What are your biggest joys? Your deepest fears? Do you know you are perfect?

I want to know you.

You, there, separating the seas from the land, creating life.  
Which animal is your favorite?  
Did you laugh when you made the stink bug?  
Is that you in the blue van?  
Is that you behind the cash register?  
Is that you holding the crumpled “I’m hungry sign?”  
Is that you with the brown face?  
Is that you in the refugee tent?  
Is that you sharing the same blood with me?  
Is that you in the mirror?

I want to know you.

I Want to Know You by **Tina Cansler Clark** *MAcON, GA* is a Spiritual Companion and Hospice Chaplain who lives in with her three dogs and old cat. She has worked over 20 years as a companion to the dying and bereaved and is just beginning a spiritual direction practice after completing the training program at the Haden Institute. She has discovered that her gift to the world is love, or as her little grandson says, “love is my superpower.” She is still learning how to answer her calling to love the world just as it is. This poem was written as she was driving home from attending a Haden Institute Spiritual Direction Intensive in the North Carolina mountains. As she pondered the mystery and beauty of the Intensive, she came to an intersection on the mountain road and had to stop at a red light. Looking at the driver of the minivan in the lane beside her and a truck driver in the other lane, she suddenly had an overpowering feeling of love and wanted to know everything about them. As the light turned green and she began to move, she realized that she was in love with every single unbearably beautiful person passing on the road. It was a deeply powerful and mystical experience. Akin to Thomas Merton’s experience at the intersection of Walnut and Fourth.) The experience was so powerful that it caused her to pull over and write this poem. It just poured out, right there in the emergency lane on a country highway. This is the poem that was written that day. It speaks to this time of isolation and grief and stress because it reminds us of the deep connection we all share, that we so desperately need to hold on to right now.



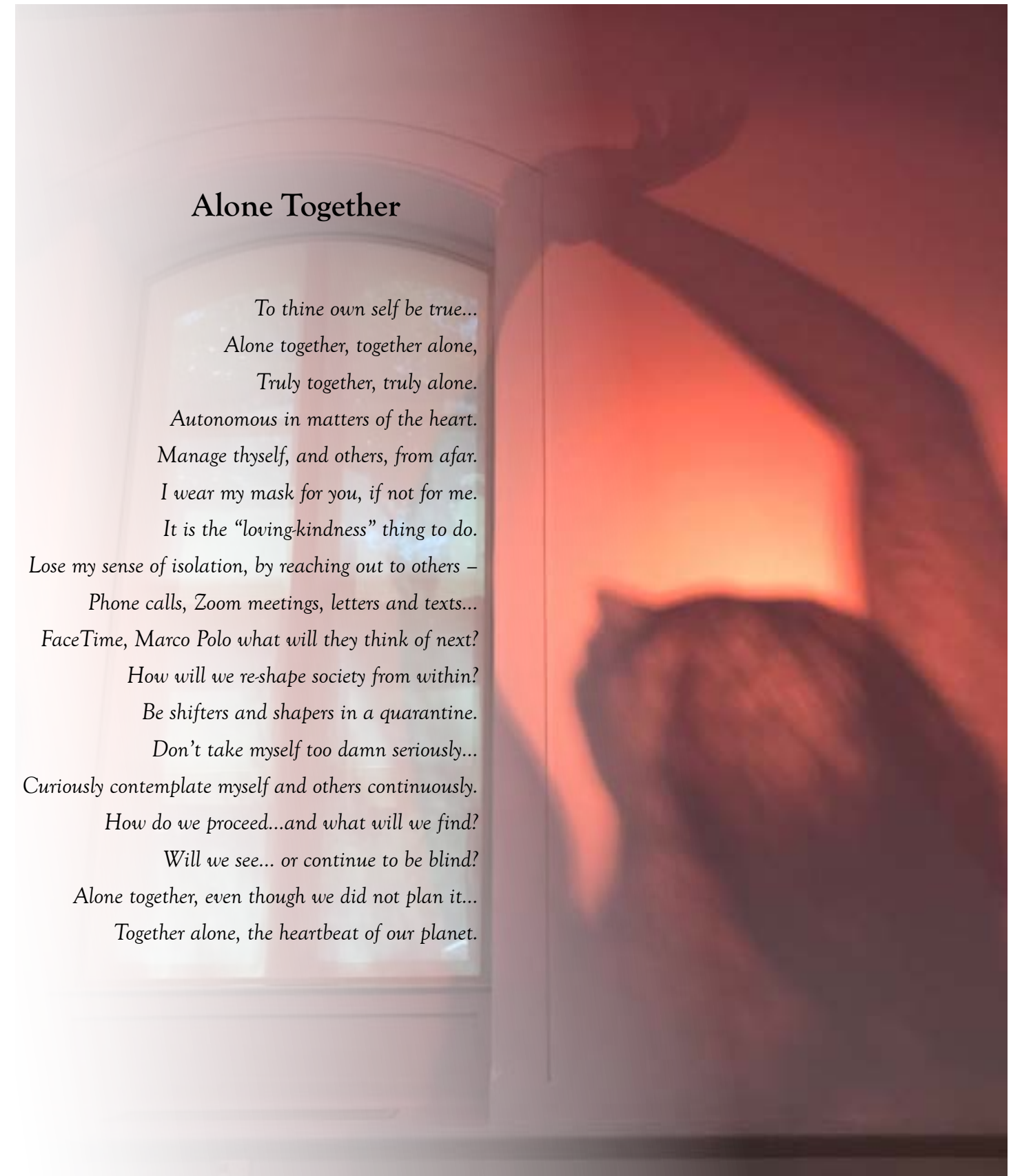


## Angels of Disruption

We never go in search  
of disruption or disease,  
or anything that changes  
our normal way of being.  
When these uninvited guests  
make their way inside  
our cozy little world  
we try to hide behind  
deception and delusion  
hoping fear will disappear  
and normal will return,  
but the troubling intruders  
start shaking us and breaking us  
and turning us around.  
These unsettling invaders  
come on our behalf  
although we never see it  
until they're done and gone.  
When they have come  
and had their way  
whatever once was normal  
will never be the same.  
The undiscovered they uncover  
refocus our views,  
reshape our souls,  
renew our lives  
and make us whole...  
for awhile, just awhile.  
The angels of disruption  
of course will reappear.

**Angels of Disruption** by **Alice Smith** *Chattanooga, TN* lives with her husband Alfred and their dog Leroy. Together they have four children and four grandchildren. Alice has done dream work for many years, is an incurable introvert and the author of five collections of poetry including *That Little Girl*.

Drawing *Chaos and Possibility* by **Marilyn Kay Hagar** (see her bio on page 10)



## Alone Together

To thine own self be true...  
Alone together, together alone,  
Truly together, truly alone.  
Autonomous in matters of the heart.  
Manage thyself, and others, from afar.  
I wear my mask for you, if not for me.  
It is the "loving-kindness" thing to do.  
Lose my sense of isolation, by reaching out to others –  
Phone calls, Zoom meetings, letters and texts...  
FaceTime, Marco Polo what will they think of next?  
How will we re-shape society from within?  
Be shifters and shapers in a quarantine.  
Don't take myself too damn seriously...  
Curiously contemplate myself and others continuously.  
How do we proceed...and what will we find?  
Will we see... or continue to be blind?  
Alone together, even though we did not plan it...  
Together alone, the heartbeat of our planet.

**Alone Together** by **Shannon Adams** *New Smyrna Beach, FL* is an author, poet and singer-songwriter. She found her passion 5 years ago when she began writing songs. She has been writing poetry since she was a little girl. She works as a Pastoral Care Coordinator at a local church. She is married to her husband of 33 years and is the mother of two adults and Oma to five children who are just enough in her book.

Background photograph *Shadow Dancer* by **Sarah D. Norton**, taken at the "Wonder" exhibit, Renwick Gallery, Washington D.C.





## Dreams in the Time of COVID

by

Jean Correll



When the novel corona virus appeared on the worldwide scene, Covid-19 became a pandemic that quickly infiltrated our lives and our dreams. Its invasive power was like a collective nightmare that provided more fodder for the production of dreams.

As the world shut down, our lives became more insular. Days loomed, unstructured. A heightening fear and anxiety brought a sense of chaos and uncertainty to the forefront of our waking lives. Each of us began an existence tucked away in our own cocoon. We are all reliving our same day, but it is not the same day from one person to the next. For some of us that cocoon is safe, but incredibly lonely. For others who are stuck with intense partners, hyperactive children, and demanding employment situations, or lack thereof, our lives are fraught; the tensions of isolation, crowded living situations, plus economic hardships take their toll and the tollbooth is paid in dream equity.

In dreams which were reported to me, I began to notice that dreams changed for us radically and quickly. Dreams reflected our stress. We reflected on the inside what we were experiencing on the outside. It seemed no one was immune from the effects of the sudden shift in dreaming. It became even more important to turn off the noise, decrease the input, and allow a good night's sleep. Better sleep and better dreaming (we instinctively know) are important to manage stress.

I noticed the following themes: There was an initial sense of grimness and desperation, as we stared into the abyss of uncertainty. Many of our actions seemed futile, unimportant, when we became sidelined by it. In regions experiencing a total lockdown and an accompanying stay-at-home order, the first wave of dreaming was often characterized by wild dreams, evoking fear, confusion, or humor. Nightmares became more common. Fire-breathing dragons swooped down from the skies. Ghoulish figures appeared. Typical dreams involved pursuit by monsters, murders, explosions, floods, disasters, giant bugs, and strangely..... celebrities. Famous people often appeared in the same dream with exaggerated dreamscapes that looked like animation. The appearance of these figures signaled, to some degree, feelings of equality of experience, although the reality was not quite like "being in the same boat," as the saying goes. Some boats were less sound than others. Some of us were without a boat.

In these dreams, the appearance of celebrities, alongside our fears, made sense, in that we were living in a world that did not make sense in the usual ways, anything now seemed possible in its oddity. Figures, such as Jackie O occurred prominently in dreams reported in the early weeks of the lockdown. Perhaps

it was the case that these valiant souls of the past who also experienced "grace under pressure" were bubbling up to the surface in our dreams to escort us.

Our dreams turned to those we witnessed in the news and on the news as our "bedfellows" and comrades in the "new normal." Television personalities became closer, more familiar; albeit through the myriad zoom-induced rectangles. Singers, personalities, historical figures, and politicians popped into dreams nightly to say, "Hi, isn't life crazy, these days?" In some cases, these figures appeared to provoke wonder at how the heroes of past generations would have fared under similar conditions. The appearance of celebrities in dreams was the great equalizer of the mind.

Scenes of the fill-in-the-blank variety seemed to fit the COVID-19 dream formula such as:

"I saw \_\_\_\_\_ (name of well-known person) at \_\_\_\_\_ (public event) sitting on \_\_\_\_\_ wearing \_\_\_\_\_ (item made of cloth) singing \_\_\_\_\_ (children's song) to a bunch of \_\_\_\_\_ (plural noun)."

I heard this dream format repeated early on, yielding something like: "I saw Napoleon at Comic-Con sitting on a toilet wearing a flag singing "Baby Beluga" to a bunch of sewer rats."

From what I observed, dreams progressed rapidly through a wild cartoon phase, from fears for loved ones, to fears for ourselves (replete with solutions as to how to pass the time), to messages of peace or hope, and finally, perhaps a return to universal themes. Dreams being reported then became less of the overblown animated variety, but of our place in a larger cosmos. The craziness of the early Covid dreams provided their own outlet and required no interpretation: life does entertain its crazy moments. Indeed, dreams were entertaining, providing the diversion from monotony that were required.

After those initial dreams jumped out, (that I began to call "Covid dreams"), dreaming patterns I saw became layered and more complex, as the focus returned to our interior dimensions, rather than our external circumstances. The stages of Covid dreaming looped and circled, with overlap from preoccupation to preoccupation. The subsequent phases offer a rich foreground for interpretation and connection to what we hold dear.

Some weeks, I heard dreams told, almost the same dream, from different quarters. Other times, it seemed that we (collectively) reverted back to our primal fears.

Dreams entered a second type of Covid dreaming as more dreams coalesced around remembering a brighter day. People dreamed of winning the lottery, with the obvious connection to winning against the odds of getting the virus, or the prospect of surviving if they

succumbed. People confined to home began to consider what home meant. They began to consider how they might have handled this crisis at different points in their lives, or how their parents/grandparents might have handled the shut-down. Dreams began to be inhabited by family members, including those who had died. Dreaming of one's parents or siblings, or settings from their childhood began to emerge, then predominate.

During this second phase of the pandemic, reported dreams proliferated about childhood times and places, taking the dreamer back to a time of greater security and nurturance, but in some cases, to a place of trauma, which is also familiar in these times. Dreams of fulfilling duties washed over some people night after night. Personal fears segued into fears for those closest to us. Dreams began to coalesce around reaching out to siblings, but being unable to get to them in a crowd or on the street; we could be so close but they were always just out of reach. Sometimes the sibling was across the room, but could not see us. Sometimes the loved one disappeared in a crowd. On one occasion, a dreamer was traveling on a bus with her sister, but they were separated by several seats. The interval of spacing kept getting farther and farther apart as she tried to hand her a note.

This second stage of dreams involving the fear for loved ones quickly began to overlap with a third stage involving fears for oneself. We have been stuck in this stage of self-induced mania for months. Covid jolted us; Covid dreams galvanized us. Obsessions with repetitive acts jumped out in dreams as we continue to relive the sameness day-to-day: lather, rinse, repeat. The blandness of our daily existence broke out in our dreams as we went through the motions in our sleeping world, or in the alternative, provided a crazy quilt of diversion amid our daily restraints. Descriptions abounded of dreamers bouncing a ball against a wall repetitiously or running up an infinite series of steps. People envisioned lawnmowing in a field of rocks, a variation that played in my own dreams.

Repeating activities still litter these dreams like a leftover habit. Some dreams involve being forced to participate in never-ending cleaning projects or to redo an activity until the task is completed perfectly. Dreamers report driving the wrong way on the interstate; others are watching two trains about to collide in slow-motion.

One dream of my own pointed to the inevitable futility of going outside amid the prevalence of the virus. In this dream, I was sitting at a table stacking an endless supply of leaves into towering piles. In separate stacks, I matched leaves, maple with maple, magnolia with magnolia, red oak with red oak, sycamore with sycamore, ever careful to make the leaves in each pile match the orientation of outline to outline. The supply of leaves seemed unlimited. Like a miser piling his coins, I was reliving the sameness of each day, making things as neat as I could at the edges. I was also bringing nature into my shut-down experience as I touched each leaf.

Perhaps the sense of going through the motions every day preyed on our psyches as we toiled in and out of dreamland. Repetitive actions occupy our daily activity with the novel corona virus. Is it any wonder that we may

spend our dreamtime, filling a hole or digging a hole, like any other Groundhog Day-affiliated reckoning with our daily existence? For me, I preferred to think of the repeating day as a chance for do-overs. I could perfect that chicken parmesan recipe or make the perfect loaf of bread, get rid of every useless thing in my closet. As I reframed the daytime perspective, the dreams became less like drudgery.

Dreams in this third stage began to suggest solutions to the dreamer as a way to counteract stress. Activities in dreams involving art and gardening were commonly reported. When dreamers saw themselves participating in these activities, it fulfilled a psychic need and the dreamers brought these activities into the daylight, creating gardens and watercolors, ordering supplies online or repurposing what they had around the house. In such cases, we are prodded by our dreams, nudged toward solutions.

Vivid (non-sensical) Covid dreams seem to still be pervasive, but they have taken several turns. Instead of wild characters and bizarre juxtapositions of famous people with real life events, some vivid dreams involved receiving messages from beyond. Some people feel they are reporting messages as coming from God; others feel they are being judged. Messages are often short or Biblical, like "love, only love," or "repent, turn around." One man, continually received the dream message, "make it right," early in the pandemic.

Another person had a recurring dream in these months of Covid, but would always wake before hearing the answer. It was a voice whispering, "God has a message for you."

"What is the message?" he wanted to know. A friend listened to his complaints and told him, "In these times, God has a message for everyone. What we are living through is the message. We need to work together to make it better."

We manifest images in our dreams through unconscious mechanisms as surely as we engineer our lives through our conscious efforts. Our fears explode (and implode) in dreams, made larger by anxiety. For me, I had weeks of dreams where I imagined being attacked by nature. One night a swarm of bees stung me so successfully that I could still feel the sensation on waking. Flocks of birds swooped down from the trees scaring me mightily as they pecked and tore at me. Hitchcock could have not created more frightening terrain. Another night, I would have back-to-back dreams of tigers attacking, a large reptile-type creature zeroing down from the skies or a bear mauling me. These seemed obvious manifestations of the virus, where it was brought to life as the fearful beast it is: wild, unpredictable, primal. Doesn't it make sense that dreams "right-size" the monster, a tiny virus, by attributing it with characteristics of a larger entity that could be fought? After all, the steps we could take for self-protection did not seem equal to the task, a mask and hand-sanitizer? We dramatize our adversary in dreams by making it a more familiar beast in order to grapple with them in combat.

It is easy to see how the unconscious can render the virus a more concrete attacker, such as an animal or person. Few of us are able to prevent the thought of how we would fare if we had to tangle with the virus first-hand. Men, in particular, reported dreams of



witnessing murders. The virus was “picking on someone its own size” and men intervened, as attackers appeared suddenly in dreams killing someone in front of them. The outline of that dream repeated with scanty details. “I was at a resort. As we walked out of the bar, my girlfriend and I saw one man grab another and strangle him off in the shadows. I had to decide what to do quickly as we might be next.” Any number of dreams were a variation on that pattern. Sometimes they witnessed a man’s throat being cut. There was method to this dream’s madness as each murder victim died from wounds to the throat or head where corona virus symptoms initiate.

At times, the virus is a bully, threatening a playground of children: we are the children being bullied, infants in our understanding of this disease. At another time, the virus is a gambler, playing with a loaded deck, cleaning out the table as we lose our livelihood. Many people who felt “the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune” in their dreams also report imagining themselves as faring unfavorably if they were to succumb to Covid. Destruction and death outside, destruction and death mirrored in our dreams. The idea of the imminence of death, that death could be only a calendar page away from a casual encounter with the virus, beset many a dreamer.

It seems we are still dramatizing the virus in these dreams, but we are opening up to cosmic answers again. We are identifying conflict on the cusp of coping with ever-widening challenges of hierarchical needs, until we see that there is only the forward progression toward mutual understanding. Our dreams are hiding messages “incovito” for us to resolve. We are only partway there in the field of Covid dreams being unveiled.

Recently, I had a vivid dream that I was a dried bean dumped in a pressure cooker with other beans. As the lid was put on, we heated. One by one, we went splat against the pot. I exploded around the sides of the cooker. I was no longer intact, but I could observe the shreds of my fibrous entity thrown about the pot as I disintegrated. For a moment, I could feel the core that I had been still powerfully existing as empty space and see parts of me splattered against the side, diffusing into something else. My awareness shifted from sharp and bright, to dim and restful. The moment persisted outside the factor of time as the depths of my awareness melted into the emptiness. Upon waking, I thought of the term “human beans” as we said in grade school. The pressure had gotten too much and I was zapped into the void of existence, “beanlessness,” a pun of dream humor.

Like a psychic discernment, it was a dream that kept on giving. There had been a peace in the dream and an objectivity. (Afterall, I was not a person, just an object.) Ironically, the day of the dream brought the loss of a relation and an emptiness that matched the dream. The sense that my consciousness persisted in the dream after my shell exploded, gave me a personal reference for a unified presence. My consciousness was continuing, but all evidence of my existence had exploded away. The term “with every fiber of my being” seemed to apply to the fibrous deconstruction that took place. I was empty and yet ever present. It was the

universal response to death, an emptying, a nothingness. In life, my senses exploded with my personal loss and at the same time my consciousness persisted. This dream brought a deep awareness of what remains after loss: the emptiness of being in which all things exist.

The heating of the pot could be interpreted as the heating or explosion of the relationship. Or, in an alternate interpretation, the heating up of the pot was coded to be the fever that preceded the full-on infection of a corona-type illness or an emotional experience where your life explodes in pain. When our old life explodes away, through loss, through Covid, through re-opening, through the mist, we are left with an invisible core that is a memory of what was and what will be.

During the period of complete isolation, I dreamed that I was standing in a long line at an airport with my parents and my young children. After a monotonous wait, we were allowed to enter a convention-sized room. Hundreds of people had entered ahead of me were still milling about the room, uncertain how to exit.

I had walked almost completely around the room, when I noticed an obscure podium with a man issuing “exit visas.” I requested one and he handed one to me. Thus rewarded, I asked for papers for the rest of my family. Suddenly, there were sirens and a news reporter interviewing me on how I had discovered the way out when so many of us were stuck in the room.

On waking, the meaning seemed literal. We are all looking for an exit door in this pandemic. “Just lucky,” I remember saying, about finding an exit in the dream. In some cases, there is a sense of luck. That insecurity of being in control also leads to the feeling that there is a lack of fairness in who lives and who dies.

In a subsequent stage of Covid dreaming, as the economy reopened, dreams were being reported of volatility and change. We anticipated, experienced, and were moving forward to a normality which was unfamiliar. We came out from the storm shelter to evaluate the damage. A predominant dream I am told, was that of packing a bag. That is often the sum of what the dreamer remembers. For some the meaning is clear: they are getting ready to leave Covid behind.

Certainly, dreams in the time of Covid have taken on a dystopian view of the world. I dreamed that I was struggling alone in a hot desert where a blistering sandstorm had kicked up. It was stinging my arms and burning my eyes. As I bend down to avoid breathing in the sand, a loudspeaker competed against the wind. My skin was raw from the assault. I thought of the term, “death by a thousand cuts.” The sound of the wind was louder than the voice on the public address system, which I was giving advice on how to get back to civilization. How futile the efforts seemed to be by whoever was blowing advice to me in the wind. Futile, too, were my efforts to stand against the sandstorm or to figure out my options against a world where the best the society could do was call out to me by loudspeaker, rather than come out in person to help me. There are loudspeakers today that call out without offering much help. In life, it is easy to be distracted by the noise, but it can also be dangerous because we may

not be getting the clarity of the information we need.

The sand etching into my skin provided death by a thousand cuts and I wondered if I would be lucky enough to survive. I wondered if the sand particles represented Covid particles in the air and the distance with which I might be treated by others if I get the disease. The loudspeaker promoted a distance between myself in the dream and rescue or medical attention.

I would be remiss, in the time of Covid, to fail to mention that dreams about situations spinning out of control, are for want of a better word—pandemic. That out of control feeling leads to stress hormones building in the body, sleep being impacted, and dreams becoming loud enough to get our attention.

In all the small and large ways Covid has shifted our conscious existence, it has also taken a toll on the quality of sleep. The problems of the day have created an angst, a dark night of the soul that expresses itself in dreams. In some cases, we are being conditioned by the virus to have lower expectations for the immediate future. An “elderly” friend recently told me she would probably never see me again. When I asked why, she said that the virus will probably outlive her because of her age and her decreasing health. She no longer remembers

her dreams due to her diagnosed memory issues. Instead she awakes up with memories of “little sadnesses” that remind her of her life. She says sometimes on waking she has a flash of what once was. The nostalgia versus the reality of old times is like going through stages of grief. We mourn our withdrawal from the world and from who we were in happier times. Thus, dreams can fill us with agonizing doubts about our ability to withstand the virus and come out whole on the other side.

For all the dreams presently where dreamers find themselves walking out of caves into the light, a substantial number of dreamers will be left behind in the dark to sort out their future. With long, cold winter nights looming, we are just getting started with Covid dreams.

**Jean Correll** *Kensington, MD* has written 3 books in the Dream Whisperer series. This article is adapted from her most recent book, Dream Whisperer III: COVID Dreams. She has been a dream practitioner for many years and belongs to a Dream Journey group at her church. She learned about the importance of dream work as a child from her grandmother and has recorded dreams since she was a teenager. She lives in Maryland and has been an educator, writer and counselor who has led dream groups and participated in Bible study where prayer, meditation, and dream analysis are explored.



Artwork, *Corona the Virus* by **Marsha Carnahan**, painted at the start of the pandemic, see her bio on p. 18



## Expurgation

Your hallowed words stir our souls  
yet their wild beauty frightens us,  
shy little birds that we are  
scurrying into hedges at  
the slightest perceptible intrusion.

What must one make of such  
sublime soundings, sparkling  
like glittering stars sprinkled  
across the far distances of the sky,  
dazzling diadems masking mystery.

How awesome one finds  
your sagacious statutes.  
Who would not desire  
to reap the harvest of  
their ethereal wisdom?

But, oh, the responsibility  
to reconstruct one's self,  
heed the inarguable injunctions  
of your immortal mandate  
in this fearful, feverish land.



Expurgation by **Mary Ann Goodwin** *La Marque, TX* spends much of her retirement writing poetry and short stories as well as participating in and facilitating spiritual direction and dream work. She spent the previous 45 years helping develop and maintain parts of the massive trajectory software required by the Johnson Space Center. Her poetry book *Aliens and Strangers* and children's story *Migi on the Mountain* are available online.

Painting *Feather* by **Marsha Carnahan** *Chapel Hill, TN* At Dream Tree Awakening. Marsha, a licensed massage therapist, brings together personalized elements of spiritual direction, dream work, and creative healing energy. Her compassionate approach is one that meets clients where they are physically and emotionally. Marsha has been described by those who love her as gifted in her intuitive method. It is wise, transformative, professional, and effective. For more information visit [www.dreamtreeawakening.com](http://www.dreamtreeawakening.com) or email her at [mcarnahan5@gmail.com](mailto:mcarnahan5@gmail.com).



## The Crying Pole (song lyrics)

Magpies gather at the Crying Pole,  
And settle out along the lines.  
Sunset slips behind the hills,  
And slowly sighs goodbye.  
From high above the dew descends,  
And brings a crystal chill.  
You take a breath and catch yourself.  
It makes your mind stand still.

The choir sang a song of wings,  
While I sat heavy in the pew.  
Their words went by like wind-blown leaves,  
As I stared down at my shoes.  
I could not look up at the box,  
That held what's left when the music stopped.  
It was like the time we lost the crops.  
But you can't replant what you haven't got.

You can't keep your seasons in a jar upon the shelf.  
You can't stop the rain from falling, especially on yourself.  
You stand up to the mirror, and demand an answer why.  
But reflections never tell the truth; they just fortify the lies.

Now I'm at the Crying Pole.  
The magpies all have left.  
They sang their ancient song of grief,  
A cacophony for the bereft.  
In looking back, I might have saved my wife,  
And done the simple thing she asked.  
But I was just too proud and strong.  
I wish I'd worn a mask.



If the song will not play, please visit:  
[www.roseintheworld.org/media](http://www.roseintheworld.org/media)

The Crying Pole, written and performed by **Jim Hutcheson, PhD** *Greenville, SC* Jim is a retired counselor and spiritual director. He now spends his time writing songs and enjoying his grandchildren. This song arose from a dream. Jim recalls that he woke up one morning this autumn with these lyrics and images lingering like the fading credits of a film.

Painting *Connected* by **Marsha Carnahan** see her bio on page. 18





Suffering is an isthmus no one wants to visit—a narrow strip of anguish between your old life and the one ahead, the foreign land where you don’t want to go. It’s easy to go astray there when you lose your traveling companion. When you feel traumatized.

*Trauma: being left alone, unable to make sense of what happened*

From December 26, 2018—the day my husband learned he had cancer—Dick’s illness became a liminal misplace. No blazes marked our trail, no relief map reassured our fingertips, no GPS talked us turn by turn through this terrain. Bewilderment stranded us on hospital time, trepidation beached us between longing for the doctor/the scan/the biopsy to arrive and dreading what each one would tell us. Overnight we woke in a place as alien as all the isthmuses we had never heard of: Tehuantepec, Darrenjoey Headland, Rongotai, Avalon.

Our easygoing marriage and peaceful routines vanished. We faced his disease together but differently. Dick grew angry and withdrawn, as combative toward cancer as the Viking warriors in his favorite fiction. He shunned survival statistics, while my terror took root in data. WebMD and the American Cancer Society website implied his cancer was a lost cause. Early on, the most I could pray for was mercy.

*Mercy: “the willingness to enter into the chaos of another” — James F. Keenan, S.J.*

Successive shocks numbed me: An ultrasound revealed the adenocarcinoma was advanced. Two days later, our beloved border collie had a stroke and died. Seven weeks of waiting for a biopsy put flesh on fear. One day I let Dick off at Emory Hospital’s Winship Cancer Institute and circled back to parking. On my walk through the garage, I saw an elderly couple ten feet ahead. She perched on a cherry-red transport cart with large wheels, which the man pushed with his left hand while pulling a small pink suitcase with his right. Moving slowly, he looked shaky. Why hadn’t they used the free valet parking? I ran to them. “Can I help you with that, sir? It looks like you need two hands to steer.”

Surprised, he relinquished the suitcase. I walked

a little behind, entranced, as his wife—round-faced, merry looking—beamed up at her white-haired husband. At the garage entrance, the cement apron sloped and, as cart tilted down, she cried, “Wheel!” as gleeful as a child. Until the cart hit a bump, and woman and cart and man went over—a slow-motion plunge, just out of my reach, which slammed their heads into the street.

“Ma’am, are you all right?” I bent over her. She only moaned. I looked across at the valet, who gaped. “Help!” I cried, feeling like someone in a movie.

People in scrubs and suits converged. A regal, dreadlocked nurse took charge, ordering civilians away, calling for a gurney as the woman groaned and her husband insisted, “No ambulance! No ambulance!”

I stared at the couple, toppled in an instant, and thought, “This is my life.”

An extremely private man, Dick did not want anyone to visit; I told him I would do it his way as long as I could, but at some point, I might need help. Managing practicalities packed my days. Evenings, I watched news footage of migrants streaming toward the U.S.—Mexico border, desperate to find security and grasp hope. I felt like a refugee cut loose from our former carefree existence, agonizing over what lay beyond the cancer staging, the radiation, the chemotherapy. In two months my tall, broad-shouldered husband, still strong as a bull at 67, grew gaunt, weak. His ability to swallow dwindled.

*Esophagus: narrow passageway that conveys food from the facial isthmus (back of mouth) to the stomach. (About 1% of all cancers in the US according to the American Cancer Society)*

Vats of soup I made went into the freezer. Dietitians twittered the importance of nourishment, bestowing cartons of organic smoothies he could not get down. The oncologist warned us that Dick’s throat muscles could atrophy.

Dick began radiation treatments on Valentine’s Day. Nausea exacerbated his weakness, dehydration disoriented him. Hunger shriveled, his daily calorie intake declining from 1500 to 1200, 900, 600. On February 23, I asked him what he had eaten that day, and despaired.

“Honey, that’s only 500 calories. It’s not enough.” “I know,” he said.

The next morning, Dick carefully sipped a four-ounce carton of apple juice from six a.m. to eight a.m. He vomited it all.

“I’m taking you to the E.R.,” I declared.

My dedicated homebody spent the next two weeks in the hospital. His gentleness, mislaid like a memory two months earlier, turned to rage. Words that could comfort him disappeared. Self-doubt assailed me. Yet one day I looked in the mirror and saw, without understanding why, that everything in my life had prepared me to endure this. Accompanying the man I loved in his suffering was a torment. But there was no other place I wanted to be.

*Mercy: both words derive from the proto-Indo-European root “bher”—to bear/endure, also to bear children. As in suffering can produce new life*

Surreal and disorienting, our eleven-week sojourn from Dick’s diagnosis to his death governed my waking life. Asleep, I wandered through dreams like a lost soul. At first recall they unsettled me. Later, lingering with them restored some of my long-lost equanimity.

Dream 1

*Dick stands walled within a glass box, in a forest clearing. He looks relaxed and composed, but his eyes don’t meet mine. The inner walls sprout a vertical garden of turf, thick and covered with soft green ground cover like shamrocks. The turf lines one glass wall behind him, and it has crept up halfway or so on the other three walls. I’m glad Dick feels peaceful, but I know this turf is growing fast. I’m afraid it will climb to the top of the glass. That I won’t be able to see him anymore.*

I woke from this dream shaken: the glass box too much like a coffin, my husband’s remoteness true to life. Yet as each day cast us adrift in chilly waiting rooms, I saw how life-giving mercy can bloom in sterile places. A former colleague, leading his frail wife tenderly into the infusion lab, told Dick to “fight the good fight.” The night nurse conspired with Dick to buy flowers for my birthday. On Dick’s last day of radiation, when he told his doctor, “Thank you for helping me beat this,” her eyes filled with tears. Most of all, after his feeding-tube operation, when I asked the surgeon, “Will my husband be here in a year?” he replied “probably not”—honesty that freed

me to concentrate whole-heartedly on supporting my soulmate.

Dream 2

*My gentle, generous, adventurous friend, Steve, and I are traveling by train on the outskirts of Paris. The landscape is pastoral: sunlit green fields on a spring day. On our left a stream winds, about twenty feet from the tracks. Water lilies cover most of the surface, but there are areas of dark water. The lilies are not blooming, but the heart-shaped green pads fill me with peace and happiness.*

To the ancient Tamil poets, I read later, water lilies symbolize the grief of separation. The only thing sadder than losing your longtime love, my sorrow told me, is to lose the angry, bitter stranger he has become. That changed two days after Dick’s surgery. When he learned the cancer had spread to his liver and his stomach lining, my husband made the decision to end treatment and begin hospice care. Opening like a lotus, he spent his last week putting his life and soul in order in his methodical, peaceful way. The way he had nurtured me for twenty-five years.

Each day, swabbing morphine inside the mouth I longed to kiss one more time, I came to know my essence, too: like the floating, ephemeral water lily, anchored by deep roots, I am made of love and resilience. At Dick’s side, in that narrow passageway between life and death, I asked him: “When you get where you’re going, send me a sign in a dream. Can you do that?”

He nodded.

Dick died March 17, 2019, slipping away quietly while his sister, Carole, and I ate supper upstairs. Two months later, shock ebbed. Grief staggered me. I was like a bloodhound who had tracked prey and lost the scent, and I begged my husband to help me. That night I dreamed:

Dream 3

*I am waiting to board a plane, excited to be leaving on a journey. The space is liminal—not a conventional gate area. I bend down over my purple duffle bag to retrieve my travel documents. I find three previous passports, but not my current one. I panic. Then Dick is there, calm as ever. He says, “Maybe it is on a table in the next room.” In my mind’s eye I see the passport on a console table next door, but I tell him, “It can’t be. I would have packed it at home. It can’t be there.” Anxiety about missing the trip wakes me, and I remain anxious for days.*



Fretting over this dream, I asked myself, “What did he mean by the next room?” Yet my imagination kept returning to the console table, that versatile piece of furniture one can place in entryways or behind sofas, a table that can simply invite one in or that serves a purpose. Then one day after a nap, I sat bolt upright and thought of the verb console—to comfort the grieving. Profound inner peace filled me.

Since his death, I feel grateful that Dick did not suffer any longer than he did. At the same time, I ache for the life we shared. How he would lift his hand from the steering wheel, take mine and place it to his lips. How the dog would stretch at our feet and snuffle into sleep. How our bodies sang together, and our thoughts sparked. A life lost, except for the palpable presence of his absence. Loss I must learn to live with.

These days, I am learning, too, how our life together strengthened me to move into a life I could never have imagined. Like a dream, this life will take its own shape. All I can do is open, as Dick did, to the great mystery of being human. Grief—like an isthmus—narrows like a birth canal, bearing me away from the nurtured and beloved, into territory that has not yet come into view.

**Gail Tyson** *Roswell, GA* feels grateful every day her husband did not endure a solitary death during the 2020 pandemic. Her projects during the past year include *The Vermeer Tales*, a chapbook of prose published by Shanti Arts, and a series of mysteries inspired by her walking holidays abroad. Recent and upcoming work appears in *Rathalla Review*, *Romar Press*, *Sheila-Na-Gig*, *Sin Fronteras/Writers Without Borders* and *Still Point Arts Quarterly*. An alumna of Stanford’s Creative Writing Program and the Dylan Thomas Summer School at the University of Wales, she has attended juried workshops at Collegeville Institute, Looking Glass Rock Writers Conference, and Rivendell Writers Colony.



Painting *Rising from Troubled Waters* by **Rita Marie Houck** *Rabun Gap, GA* A heart born in the pure water region of the northern Great Lakes, she viewed life with a sense of awe and wonder that could be seen in her eyes. Life would lead her south to the rivers and streams of the North Georgia Mountains. Into valleys with waters wild, rushing in many directions; calm pools would be intermittent. Searching for tranquility from placid lakes to white waters, in her heart she found it. Rising from troubled waters a sense of awe and wonder could be seen in her eyes.

## Candle-Prayer

“Light your candles quietly, such candles as you possess,  
wherever you are.”

~ Fr. Alfred Delp, martyred in Nazi Germany, age 38

In the small still shadow of a darkened morning  
before the screeching of this broken world repeats,  
I strike a match and set it to a stub of wick:  
an offering of light being birthed yet again.

Before the screeching of this broken world repeats,  
I breathe sacred flame-glow into heart, psyche, soul  
an offering of light being birthed yet again,  
a single, slender candle singing prayer.

I breathe sacred flame-glow into heart, psyche, soul,  
imagine the brilliance of a hundred million candles  
burning quietly on the edges of every dawn  
before the screeching of this broken world repeats.

I strike a match and set it to a stub of wick,  
my hope for this wounded world one fluttering flame,  
a single, slender candle singing prayer  
in the small still shadows of a darkened morning.



Candle-Prayer by **Rosemary McMahan** *Huntsville, AL* has been writing poetry since childhood. Over the past two decades, as an ordained minister in the Presbyterian Church (USA), she has written more sermons than poetry but is now returning to her first passion. She has a WordPress blog, Spirit-Reflections, where she ponders the spiritual, the mystical, the wisdom of guides, and how all are interwoven in life.

Clay votive holder created by **Lane Norton**



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*The Rose* is funded fully by the donations of our wonderful readers. Now that we have moved to a digital format *The Rose* can once again move freely through the world like grace, like a gift. Because *The Rose* is free, it is easy to pass along to friends and colleagues.

If you are a current donor, thank you so much! We appreciate it more than we can say. You will receive the link to the new issue as soon as it is posted. If you have not donated to *The Rose* we hope you will consider making a donation to keep the Rose blooming.

Finally, what we need more than anything is to spread the word of *The Rose in the World*. If you have a dream group, a congregation, a natural spirituality group, a social media presence, a website, or an email list please share our website and the new issue with them! When you share it please encourage them to sign up for our mailing list and/or to make a donation. You can also follow and share on Facebook @roseintheworld, Instagram @theroseintheworld.

Thank you so much. **You are *The Rose*.**

## THE ROSE IN THE WORLD

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Please submit your original work: photographs, essays, artwork, pieces of fiction, poetry, prose, inspired academic writing, or any other creation you believe fits our “Rosey” mission to spread Wisdom to our readers lives and sacred spaces. No matter your religious or spiritual background, your personal experience of the numinous can touch the lives of others in any form.

Our next issue #34 will be the first issue of a brand new year! It will be published online on Earth Day 2021. When submitting your work, please keep in mind the time of year, Spring, and current events. What have climate crisis, nature, aspects of our environment, and connected issues meant to you. How have they effected your dreams and spiritual practices? Submissions do not have to conform to these topics but if these strike a chord in you, please let them inspire you.

**SUBMISSION DEADLINE: MARCH. 25, 2021**

For more information on what kinds of submissions we accept, and for our full submission guidelines. please visit: [roseintheworld.org/submissions.html](http://roseintheworld.org/submissions.html)

Please send your submissions today to: [editor.theroseintheworld@gmail.com](mailto:editor.theroseintheworld@gmail.com)  
Thank you! We can't wait to see your creative contributions!



Usually this event takes place in the beautiful north Georgia mountains. There, we spend an enlightening and enlivening weekend with Natural Spirituality veterans and inquirers alike. This year, due to COVID-19, we have opted to move the gathering online. We are excited to offer a line-up very similar to what you would expect if we were in community at Camp Mikell in front of the roaring fire and the crisp cool winter air. This year you will be able to enjoy all of our offerings from the safety of your own home. We will offer lectures, workshops, small-group dreamwork, discussions of Natural Spirituality issues, introductory sessions for inquirers, advanced sessions for old-timers, meditative movement and contemplative prayer opportunities, worship, and time for relaxation and fellowship.

### OUR SPEAKERS THIS YEAR ARE:

**Dr. Catherine Meeks** is the retired Clara Carter Acree Distinguished Professor of Socio-Cultural Studies at Wesleyan College and the Director of the Absalom Jones Center for Racial Healing. She has long been a strong advocate for social justice, community, and wellness. She is the author of several books, including *Living Into God's Dream* and *Standing on Their Shoulders: A Celebration of the Wisdom of African-American Women* (bio from her book *Passionate for Justice: Ida B. Wells as Prophet for our Time*)

**Robert Pullen** *Building Beloved Community through Story*

**David Palmer** *Yearning for Beloved Community* (An Audio-visual presentation)

### WORKSHOPS:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| • <i>The Highly Sensitive Person</i>                   | • <i>Full of Grace</i>                                   |
| • <i>Dream Divina</i>                                  | • <i>Introduction to the I-Ching</i>                     |
| • <i>The Six Shaman Questions</i>                      | • <i>Complexes in Dreams: Welcome and Greet them All</i> |
| • <i>The Dream Work of Mary Oliver</i>                 | • <i>Fairy Tale Writing with Dreams</i>                  |
| • <i>Holding the Light</i>                             | • <i>Creative Collage with Virtual Labyrinth Walk</i>    |
| • <i>Simple Ways to Nourish Mind, Body, and Spirit</i> |  |

As in all other years we will have the wonderful all volunteer band “The Unconscious,” contemplative prayer, small dream groups, a great bookstore, and even a Saturday night movie!

Follow us on Facebook @NSRGathering, Instagram @NSRG 2021

Visit our website [www.NSRGathering.org](http://www.NSRGathering.org) and sign up for our mailing list for updates! Registration will be open through the week of the gathering, the link to register is live now so make sure you visit the website and sign up! Then, the link will remain open throughout the gathering. Check the website often for updates.

If you have any questions or concerns, please email us at:

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# "She: The Divine Feminine Rising"

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## THE CONFERENCE WILL BE ON-LINE AND IN-PERSON AT KANUGA (IF POSSIBLE)

Sophia, Mother Earth, Mary the Mother of God, Quan Yin, The Great Mother - these and many more are names for the Divine Feminine. The need for healing, compassion, connection, unity, balance, and empathy is bringing many of us to seek solace and wisdom from the Feminine Divine. Mirabai Starr will share her own story and stories from other women mystics to give us access to this eternal and treasured source of knowledge and comfort.

Mirabai is an award-winning author of creative non-fiction and contemporary translations of sacred literature. She teaches and speaks internationally on contemplative practice and inter-spiritual dialog. Her latest book is *WILD MERCY: Living the Fierce & Tender Wisdom of the Women Mystics*.

We look forward to exploring all of these topics with Mirabai Starr and all the Presenters at our 2021 Dream & Spirituality Conference. And we invite you to come experience this magic yourself in 2021!

## OTHER 2021 PRESENTERS INCLUDE:

Catherine Meeks  
Kathleen Wiley  
Pittman McGehee  
Bruce Barnes  
And many more...



*Yes we call it a Conference. Yes we have speakers and workshops and all the proper "Conference" things.*

*But we also engage with the unconscious, make meaning of our dreams, become more fully who we are created to be, and embody the inner work of integration.*

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Sharing the stories our nightly dreams tell is an age-old practice for increasing self-awareness and discerning meaning and purpose in life. Dream work is a valuable tool for spiritual directors, therapists, clergy, and individuals who wish to enhance their practice and deepen their work with others through creative embodiment, integration of dream messages and tenets of Jungian psychology.

Our Dream Work Training Course teaches how working with dreams opens a communication channel between the conscious and unconscious worlds, allowing us to translate the metaphor and symbol of dream language into a language that is helpful for problem solving in our waking life.

## DREAM WORK TRAINING

### INTENSIVE SCHEDULE

Dec 03-07, 2020	Dec 02-06, 2021
Feb 11-15, 2021 (Entry Date)	Feb 10-14, 2022 (Entry Date)
Aug 19-23, 2021 (Entry Date)	Aug 18-22, 2022 (Entry Date)

The Spiritual Direction Training Course integrates spirituality and Jungian teachings. Psycho-spiritual education in the Jungian, mystical, and Christian traditions is the program foundation. Participants develop knowledge and understanding of the art and practice of spiritual direction in contemporary spiritual life by learning mystical, creative embodiment and contemplative practices of Christianity and other ancient religious and spiritual traditions. Tools for self-discovery and transformation such as Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, the Enneagram, and dream work are introduced to deepen the experience of spiritual companionship.

## SPIRITUAL DIRECTION TRAINING

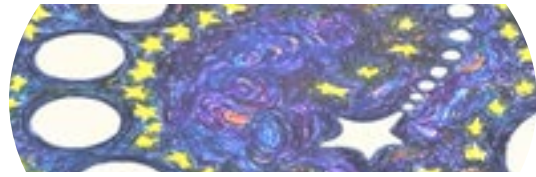
### INTENSIVE SCHEDULE

Jan 14-18, 2021	Jan 13-17, 2022
Mar 18-22, 2021 (Entry Date)	Mar 24-28, 2022 (Entry Date)
Sept 9-14, 2021 (Entry Date)	Sept 15-19, 2022 (Entry Date)

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## Expanding the Circle:

Re-Imagining a Parable  
by

Mary Ann Archer



### Parable of the Ten Bridesmaids:

*“Then the Kingdom of Heaven will be like ten bridesmaids who took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were foolish, and five were wise. The five who were foolish didn’t take enough olive oil for their lamps, but the other five were wise enough to take along extra oil. When the bridegroom was delayed, they all became drowsy and fell asleep. At midnight they were roused by the shout, ‘Look, the bridegroom is coming! Come out and meet him!’ All the bridesmaids got up and prepared their lamps. Then the five foolish ones asked the others, ‘Please give us some of your oil because our lamps are going out.’ But the others replied, ‘We don’t have enough for all of us. Go to a shop and buy some for yourselves.’ But while they were gone to buy oil, the bridegroom came. Then those who were ready went in with him to the marriage feast, and the door was locked. Later, when the other five bridesmaids returned, they stood outside, calling, ‘Lord! Lord! Open the door for us!’ But he called back, ‘Believe me, I don’t know you!’ So you, too, must keep watch! For you do not know the day or hour of my return.*

~Matthew 25: 1-13

(New Living Translation, 2015)

During this time of COVID and sheltering at home, a new community has unexpectedly sprung up and welcomed me in deeply spiritual ways. Previously, I was facilitating at my church a women’s group that uses Ignatian-style imagination to enter the Biblical stories and readings for the coming Sunday. Our pool of people consisted of around seven women, with usually only two or three in attendance at any one meeting. When I had to switch to Zoom meetings, things gradually and almost miraculously changed. Not only did more women from my own church start attending, women from other denominations heard of our group and joined. One woman I had known in Virginia joined from her current home in Pennsylvania, along with a friend of hers from a neighboring church. Several women of color joined us, again from different churches and denominations. Soon our number of attendees at each gathering was up to 9-12 women.

The increased number and diversity of our group has been a source of joy, as we share our life and meditation experiences - big and small events, spiritual highs and

everyday lows. Hearing from women of color during this pandemic has increased my awareness of how much more difficult it is for them to live and thrive in our society. We deliberately steer clear of politics in our conversations, but I suspect we do not all share the same political views. Nevertheless, we have become deeply connected by our faith in God and our growing friendship with each other.

Today, I’d like to expand this gathering to include you, the reader. I’ll illustrate a recent imaginative meditation I facilitated, in the hopes that you can join into the experience in your mind, heart, and spirit.

For this particular Zoom gathering of women, I used two readings from the Lectionary for that Sunday. One reading extols the virtues of Wisdom. The other passage contains Jesus’ parable of the ten bridesmaids. In that story, only five of the bridesmaids are wise enough to bring sufficient oil for their lamps while waiting for the bridegroom. The other poor bridesmaids run out of oil, are refused help by the wise five, and are not allowed into the bridal chamber with the bridegroom. I decided to turn this story on its head! Accordingly, I let Wisdom, often known as Sophia, reinterpret that parable.

Here is the text of the guided meditation:

Let’s imagine that Wisdom speaks directly to you with new ideas about this parable. Wisdom can be thought of as one sparkling facet of the whole diamond that is God. According to scripture, Wisdom was at creation with God as a master co-worker. Wisdom is often thought of as Sophia, a feminine image of God, but Wisdom can also be the deep knowledge and love of the Divine. Choose what works for you.

Wisdom speaks: *Hello dear disciples. You are all here and you all, ALL MINE. Rest in that knowledge and in my love.*

*Dear ones, sometimes you may feel like the bridesmaids who have run out of oil; you may feel you are running on empty, that the problems of life are overwhelming you. At happier times, you may feel like the bridesmaids with plenty of oil; life is going well; you are filled. I suggest you are BOTH.*

*Sometimes you may feel that you are waiting for the Lord to come. Like the bridesmaids felt as they waited for the bridegroom, you may feel that God is tarrying a long time, that God seems absent or distant in your life. At other times you may feel that your prayers have been answered, that God is present with you NOW. I suggest that God is both COMING and HERE NOW. BOTH.*

*Today I suggest that you, individually, you, (insert your name), each of you is a LAMP in this story. What type of lamp do you look like? Are you like an Aladdin’s lamp? Are you an 18th-century lamp, hanging from a chain or sitting on a table? Are you a different vessel? You might have a flower vase shape or a ginger jar shape, or something else altogether. Imagine what shape and material you are as a vessel to be filled. Is your vessel transparent or opaque? What color or colors do you contain? Is your vessel static or changing? Take your time. What comes to you may say something about how God created you and continually re-creates and re-fashions you as a unique individual.*

*Now, think on what fills you/your vessel up. What experiences from your past - people, loved ones, animals, joys, hopes, dreams - have contributed and still contribute to filling you and your lamp? What loves and passions comfort you, give you the most joy, the deepest satisfaction, inner light and peace, happiness, elation? Again, take your time to recall and experience what most enriches you.*

*Now imagine filling your lamp/yourself even more, right now, with your passions, your blessings, your experiences. How is your lamp looking now, taking shape, overflowing? How do you shine, SHINE because of this in-pouring? Does your lamp image change or gain a new item or design? You might become a flower vase with a lighted tree coming out of it. Your lamp may project bright images on the ceiling. Watch and imagine as your lamp fills, as you receive what you treasure most. Let yourself shine outwardly as you accept inwardly what enriches you most deeply.*

*Keep filling and keep shining. Bask in the loving gaze of God pouring into you, while you shine back at God and at the world. Try experiencing your in-gathering and out-pouring with all five senses. What do you/what does your lamp look like as you accept in and reflect out? Do you see yourself doing anything- dancing, flying, growing, singing, writing, baking? What feeling arise? What aromas come forward - maybe lavender, or incense, or ocean saltiness, or chocolate-chip cookies? Do you hear words or songs? Can you taste past family feasts, holiday feasts of love and bounty? Keep filling and shining, receiving and giving, feeling light reflecting back and forth between you and God.*

When you have basked and gazed enough, hold a conversation with God, or Jesus, or Wisdom about this prayerful experience. Has anything changed deep within you? Have some feelings stayed the same, but intensified? Were there moments of discovery of your own unique gifts or of more opportunities to shine? Did you simply bask in the mutual gazing between you and God?

End with thanks for today’s experience and for your amazing uniqueness, which is continually gifted to you moment by moment in love by God – love never-ending and always new.

When you feel quite ready, I invite you to open your eyes and become present in this room again.

For each woman connected online that evening, the results of the contemplation were a renewed sense of self – one’s exceptional gifts and experiences, along with an overwhelming sense of comfort, affirmation, and love from God.

You, the reader, could not join in our meeting’s initial ‘how are you doing?’ conversation or the ending ‘what came up in meditation?’ time. However, I’m hoping this imaginative portion might have opened up new insights and consolations for you. Perhaps you’ll want to start your own gathering or join ours to experience, even during the pandemic, a deep, spiritual enfolding in community.

May the circle keep expanding!

**Mary Ann Archer** Charlotte, NC is an author, spiritual director, retreat leader, and professional flutist/piccoloist. Her book, *Shared Imagination; A Channel to God and with Each Other*, uses first-person stories to illustrate the wondrous benefits of using Ignatian-style imagination in meditation. Her newest book is a children’s story, lavishly illustrated by Lena Shiffman, that imaginatively connects three donkeys in the Bible. *Zeesha’s Tale: A Story for Christmas and Easter*, has just been released in December 2020. Connect with Mary Ann on FaceBook at Mary Ann Archer, Spirit and Imagination, at website [maryannarcherwriter.com](http://maryannarcherwriter.com), or through email at [mspiridir@kinex.net](mailto:mspiridir@kinex.net).

*Mandala Magic is in You* by **Mary How** MA, ATR-BC Columbia, SC developed her Create MORE Signature Program of online courses and transformation coaching to help people decrease their emotional suffering. Mary is an artist, art therapist and coach with 20+ years of experience helping people cope. Find out more about her program and inspirational products at [maryhow.com](http://maryhow.com).





### Ghazal\* on Lines from “At Dusk”

*Every nearness  
Is too far for us.*  
—Abraham Joshua Heschel\*\*

Draw the shade, draw love to a sweet space, set apart.  
Let the world rest. Love and ambition: best apart.

Deadbolts long since stood guard on the bedroom door.  
Night fears ruled the neighborhood, when we slept apart.

Such cold sacrifices love-lust requires of us!  
Call the plague what you will, we are closest apart.

Dust motes crowd together, drift down to the floor.  
One stroke of the broom, and they are swept apart.

Love is a prison; love is a house of learning . . .  
No. Yes. Both. Neither — love but loves, precepts apart.

Friendship and enmity, love and hate, life and death —  
mockingbird and mourning dove, one jest apart.

Who can fully know one’s own, or another’s heart?  
Roots clinging to dirt may still feel bereft, apart.

We may be closer than skin on skin, breath on breath.  
Even so, Muse, we are whole worlds yet apart.

\* Ghazal (in Middle Eastern and Indian literature and music) a lyric poem with a fixed number of verses and a repeated rhyme, typically on the theme of love, and normally set to music.

\*\* (At Dusk by Heschel can be found online in [The Ineffable Name of God translated from the Yiddish by Morton M. Leifman, 2007](#))

Ghazal on Lines from “At Dusk” by **Susan Luther** Huntsville, AL Enchanted by the moon at an early age, Susan has composed poetry since before she knew how to write it down. She is grateful to the universe, to her husband, to her family and friends, to the earth, books and inspiring poets past and present who have shared their gifts with her and encouraged her passion for words. Photograph *Crescent Moon at Dusk* by **Sarah D. Norton**

### DREAM A NEW DAY

DREAM A NEW DAY  
JOY, SORROW, HOPE?  
DANCE TOGETHER AT SUNRISE  
THE UNIVERSE AWAKENS

JOY, SORROW, HOPE?  
THE DREAM MAKER KNOWS  
THE UNIVERSE AWAKENS  
A MORNING GIFT REVEALED

THE DREAM MAKER KNOWS  
CONNECTION WITH DIVINE  
A MORNING GIFT REVEALED  
ISOLATION, DESPAIR, OR HOPE?

CONNECTION WITH DIVINE  
DANCE TOGETHER AT SUNRISE  
ISOLATION, DESPAIR, OR HOPE?  
DREAM A NEW DAY



DREAM A NEW DAY poem and photograph by **John Spiesman** Thompson, OH is a Spiritual Companion and Dream worker in the Jungian Christian Mystical Tradition from Northeast Ohio. He is interested in nature photography, capturing all aspects of creation and symbols in creation throughout the seasons. John enjoys honoring dream images through photography and may be contacted through his website: [www.drjohnspiesman.com](http://www.drjohnspiesman.com).



## The Return of Light in the Midst of Winter

There is a return  
such a surprise  
a secret door  
a light in the heart  
the mystery of  
your own soul-self  
is so dear  
and the earth all  
that delight dawns  
and beauty captivates  
passing understanding  
and it's all  
going to be ok.  
planets and stars know  
and their light  
is a smile  
that reflects one.  
no beginning  
and no end.



The Return of Light in the Midst of Winter by **Linda Ann Suddarth** Dallas, TX has published poems in *Parabola*, both in print and web, and in many literary journals. She has a micro-chapbook published on the web through Origami Poems, it is called, *Wandering Barefoot*. <https://www.origamipoems.com/poets/334-linda-ann-suddarth>. Her first chapbook, *The Hidden Wilderness*, was released March 2019, through Finishing Line Press. <https://www.finishinglinepress.com/product/the-hidden-wilderness-by-linda-ann-suddarth/> Linda is currently training at Haden Institute to be a Spiritual Director. She lives in Dallas, Texas, and teaches Art Appreciation, Humanities, and English at the College Level.

Photograph *Yule Log* by **Sarah D. Norton**

## A Christmas Letter to Joseph by Harriett Richie



Dear Joseph,

I'm trying to imagine how it felt 2,000 years ago when you got the devastating news that Mary your betrothed was pregnant and the baby wasn't yours. According to Jewish law, you had the right, even the responsibility, to send her away or have her stoned. You decided, however, to save her from shame - or worse - by divorcing her quietly.

According to the story, an angel came to you in a dream and told you not to be afraid - that the baby had been conceived by the Holy Spirit. Mary was pregnant by the Holy Spirit? Don't be afraid? Yet, the dream was so powerful it led you to reconsider. You changed your mind and took Mary as your wife.

The story, as we have it, was written down many decades after the baby's birth. In the country where I live, once a year around the time that Jewish people celebrate Hanukkah, people named Christians celebrate Jesus' birth with a religious holiday called Christmas. In every town, children dressed as shepherds, wise men and women, and angels, with halos falling off, gather around a makeshift manger and reenact Jesus' birth. There is always a doll or a baby lying in the manger and a little boy dressed like you and a little girl dressed like Mary, and before it's over one of the angels yells, "Don't be afraid! I bring you good news of great joy!" Sometimes, grownups, especially grandparents, get tears in their eyes as they watch and listen. Most of the time, it helps to have a sense of humor. As I tell you this, I hope you do.

Joseph, this Christmas I'm trying to imagine how it felt to be an expectant father those centuries ago as you led Mary on a donkey over 80 miles of dusty roads to Bethlehem, finding no place to rest your exhausted bodies, and the terror of birthing a baby during the night, in a cave perhaps, with no one to help. Then another dream told you to take Mary and the baby to Egypt because King Herod intended to kill him. "Kill the baby? King Herod? Egypt?" You were surely terrified, but once again you listened to your dream. You took Mary and Jesus to Egypt. After the death of Herod, another dream told you to go home to Nazareth. And you did.

The story tells us that you took Jesus to Jerusalem for the rite of purification before old blind Simeon. Then it fast-forwards to the time you traveled to Jerusalem for the Passover and the boy Jesus, whom you must have loved as any parent loves a child, was lost from you and Mary for three days. After all your worries that he was wandering alone in the hills or had been killed by a wild animal, surely you felt unspeakable relief when you found him talking with the teachers in the temple. I wonder how you felt when Jesus said, "Why were you searching for me? Did you not know that I must be in my father's house?"

Except for a couple of minor references, the story never mentions you again. Do you ever want to shout,

"Hey, wait a minute! I'm the one who took Jesus to the synagogue. I'm the one who told him about Yahweh's justice and love!"

And did you remind Jesus often that his mother was a good woman? Was it from you that he learned to honor women in a stone-serious patriarchal religious tradition and culture? Was it from you that he learned forgiveness? To love his neighbor - and his enemies? To feel compassion for everyone from little children to taxpayers and harlots?

Did you tell him stories while he played in your carpenter's shop? Was that how he became a master storyteller? Did you tell him about your dreams? Did you say to him, "Pay attention to your dreams, Jesus"? Did you say to him, "Do not be afraid"?

Were you still alive when Jesus left home to follow his cousin John into the wilderness - John, the rabble-rousing preacher who ate insects and wore clothes made from camel's hair? Did you worry where it might lead? That his wilderness experience would be so life-changing he would leave your family? Were you at the wedding in Canaan? Were you still alive when Jesus rode the donkey to Jerusalem? Did you watch them kill him? Did you have other dreams, Joseph?

We don't know, of course, because you were written out of the story long before the Council of Nicaea decreed the Divinity of Jesus. And we leave you out still. Why? Is it because Christians would rather not remember that Jesus had an earthly father? Or that Jesus was a Jew? My questions cause me to wonder what else was left out. Nevertheless, I hope you can tell that I believe that you got Jesus off to a very good start.

Joseph, 2,000 years later, the world is still filled with refugees forced to flee their countries. The world is still filled with pestilence, violence, hatred, and prejudice. The world is still filled with fear and uncertainty. We need you in the story, Joseph. We need you to show us how to honor and care for each other - and to have the courage to trust the unseen hand that guides our destiny as we travel the rocky roads to our own Bethlehems, Egypts, and Nazareths.

Joseph, this Christmas I long to trust what the angel said to you: "Be not afraid." And if I remember and honor your story, perhaps I will listen to my dreams.

- **Harriett Richie**, Flat Rock, NC  
December, 2020

Harriett Richie's stories have won regional and national writing awards. Before moving to Flat Rock, NC in 2017, she taught classes in fiction and nonfiction writing for Anderson (SC) School District Five's Community Education program and creative writing for Anderson University's Lifelong Learning program. She also led a course, "Reading Poetry for the Joy of It," for AU's LLL program. Harriett was a member of the founding committee for Greenville Friends of Jung. She attended her first Summer Dream Conference 15 years ago after Bob Haden told her about the Haden Institute and suggested that she "sign up for something."



## Lee Reading Motherpeace Tarot

Pam clutches the Shivalinga,  
rocking, cradling - radiant and glowing.  
LeAnne sighs into Kim's healing touch,  
as tired feet are restored by caring hands.  
Kim nourishes with a select few comments,  
the wisdom of Sophia, words chosen  
as carefully as the Tarot cards.  
Rik lounges against the fur-lined pillows,  
completely at ease,  
surrounded by women, wise and seeking.  
Lee, white blond halo  
gently falling in soft waves illuminating her face,  
reads, guides, leads, nurtures...

The cards choose us  
even as we  
shuffle,  
rub,  
caress,  
and, finally,  
point.

The Past card,  
philanthropy card,  
giving to family through service,  
while healing circles back  
as surely as it flows outward to them.

The Present card,  
a community of support and a transition,  
an end and, yet, the promise of a beginning,  
all celebrated by a group of midwives  
easing and guiding the metaphorical birth  
of what is being born.  
The Future card,  
creativity and solitude (yes, please!)  
a sanctuary accessed only by invitation,  
stability breeds stillness, inspiration - peace.

Me, open and laid bare,  
weeping at the wonder of it all,  
of mothering and being mothered,  
of acknowledging an end while welcoming a beginning,  
of giving and receiving,  
of grieving yet celebrating.  
Grateful, ever grateful,  
for those I parent but soon will wean,  
a solitary experience and yet, tonight -  
communal.

The cards, the Motherpeace deck,  
round like the round belly  
protecting the unborn child in the mother's womb,  
how perfectly at home they must feel  
here in Rik's Womb Room,  
wisdom born and nurtured  
surrounded by the Sacred Feminine.



Mandala *Let the Light* by **Mary How**  
see her bio on page

## Devotion

Transcendental poetry series inspired by the mystic Indian poet Kabirdas  
by Monita Soni



### Where

Take me to the sanctuary, my friend  
where my wholeness is celebrated.

The temple of neither sin, nor virtue  
a circle of radiance without source.

A rosary of love without meditation  
rhythm, rhyme or repetition.

A home without home or homeless  
just a vibration of primordial sound.

Where my beloved sits with absolutely  
nothing, that's where you will find  
Kabir.

Lee Reading Motherpeace Tarot by **Becky Hambrick** Cary, NC is a graduate of the Haden Institute of Spiritual Direction and a SoulCollage® facilitator. She is an Enneagram Approach certified practitioner. Becky has a spiritual direction practice in Cary, North Carolina where she lives with her family, including a Golden Retriever/Corgi mix named Winston. In her private practice, Becky offers individual and group spiritual direction, Enneagram coaching, dream groups, and SoulCollage® workshops/retreats. Becky can be reached at [BeckyHambricksd@gmail.com](mailto:BeckyHambricksd@gmail.com). Her website, [www.sacredspaceforyou.com](http://www.sacredspaceforyou.com), will launch any day now!



### Remember

I am sitting right beside you  
my arm is on the same armrest

Kabir, I am not in the glorious alters  
I don't spy on you through stained glass

I don't applaud you for turning vegan  
nor do I care about your portfolio

There are no brownie points for  
chanting my name as God or Allah

If you lift the jacket from the  
empty seat in the theater of life

You will hear my breath inside  
your breath and I will be laughing

At the jokes you did not get and  
weeping when you forget about me.



### River

Now you have reached the shore  
of life, a tiny boat caught in a tempest

Where will you go? They're no maps  
no one to guide you on your journey

No earth, no sky, no time, no memory  
the breath and body will leave you

Be conscious of this, Kabir says  
for what you are, you would be.

### Prepare

Don't plant a garden of flowers  
hydrangeas, hibiscus, honeysuckle

Contemplate on the hand of Buddha  
your body is the Garden of Eden

You don't need to sprinkle Miracle-Grow  
nor do you need Round-Up weeds

If you make Kabir, your gardner  
He will till your soil to perfection

A thousand petal lotus will bloom  
in your heart and fill your gaze.

### Swing

Kabir: Have you seen me on the  
swing of ecstasy wrapped in his arms?

Pin your ears to his heartbeat  
rejoice in the vision of your beloved

Drench your heart with rain clouds  
of longing and weep relentlessly

Still your monkey mind and settle  
only to the cosmic communion.



### Cage

You sing with a gay abandon when  
you win, you weep when you lose

But in this case of visible matter  
there is an invisible bird that sings

Only one song, pay attention to  
that song, Kabir urges because

If you listen, you will learn that  
her song is the one worth singing.

*Devotion* a transcendental poetry series (p. 36-38) by **Monita Soni** Huntsville, AL With one foot in Huntsville, the other in her birth home India, and a heart steeped in humanity, writing is a contemplative practice for Monita Soni. Monita has published many poems, essays and two books, *My Light Reflections* and *Flow through My Heart*. You can hear her commentaries on [Sundial Writers Corner WLRH 89.3FM](https://www.sundialwriterscorner.com/2020/01/31/monita-soni/).

Mixed media frames *Tea Time 1* (p. 36) and *Tea Time 2* (p. 38) and mosaic *Homage to a Tea Pot* (p. 37) by **Lynn Weekes Karegeannes** Asheville, NC During these difficult times, Lynn is sustained by her creative practices and by tea. Sometimes she likes to combine these two comforts. Lynn studied art history as an undergraduate and graduate, relishing the images and symbols which appear across cultures and through time. She later came to create her own images and symbols as a self-taught visual artist. These days, when Lynn is not creating in her studio, her creative and spiritual journey is intertwined with the edifying everyday of family. You can learn more about Lynn at <https://full-life-arts.com/>



## Practicing Surrender: A Community Dream

by  
Tracy A. Stone

In our last dream group a member had a dream titled “Surrender.” Upon reflection, I was struck by the feeling that some of our dreams are also meant for the larger community not just the individual dreamer. I believe “Surrender” is such a dream (see the dream on p. 2).

With RN’s permission I offer her annotated dream below as an invitation to us to find a ritualized way to embody it for whatever may be “up” in our lives (in my experience I have found that planes can signify that which is ‘up in the air’).

In this time of global uncertainty, as hidden fears rise up, and old ways of doing things feel constricting or are disintegrating, we all face many deaths, endings, and grief. Given the pandemic many of us face these losses alone.

To harbor hopes of returning to how it used to be, will not move us forward. As our society is being forced to look at its shadow aspects, so may we offer up our personal shadow aspects to the light for healing, integration and transformation.

I believe shadow work helps us find our wholeness, our authentic power and a creative infusion as we release the energy it takes to judge and suppress parts of ourselves.

The following is an example of how our dream group worked this particular dream. You may have other ways of interacting with your dreams, no way is the only way, all are valid and important.

I offer the following with much love and wonder:  
(Please read the original dream on page 2 first)

### Key:

Dream narrative  
symbols underlined  
RN’s spoken responses  
others questions/comments  
possible pun?

### I am traveling

There are others on the plane but no one I know  
We are on this journey together with people beyond our immediate circle.

### in a large airplane,

It’s a large 747, an international flight.  
On a plane over the ocean is where I feel least amount of control. It is obvious I have none, unlike the illusion of control I have in my car or life.

Realm of ideas, spiritual /transcendental. Perspective from higher “plane”;

### flying

What in your life is “up” to reach another place, another level of healing or integration?

Healing the Mother/Daughter connection.

Might we be re-integrating the Divine Feminine?  
over the ocean.

Collective unconscious? Vast mystery – mostly unexplored and unknowable?

Ocean is literally Earth’s life support system.  
(covering 70% of the planet it provides climate regulation, as well as 50% of our oxygen and absorbing 50 times more carbon dioxide than our atmosphere.)

The plane turns steeply, “banks” sharply  
Unexpected turn of events? or “\$” downturn?

It is clear something is wrong with the plane!

Are you experiencing a sharp shift?

How do you know something is wrong? Hear, see, smell, feel or intuit?

Is there a structure or mode of transport in your life breaking down? (e.g., faith, control, finances, outlook, belief system) Ready for transitioning/transforming?

I am very frightened and panic!

What does panic look like, feel like for you?

I grip the seat arms

Bear down to birth, to push out new life form?

I realize we are going to crash

Going down (dive deep)

and there is nothing I can do about it!

Are you currently struggling with anything where you fear a ghastly end/outcome?

What is yours to do and what can you do nothing about?

I relax into it and take some deep breaths.

At this moment there is nothing except breathe in life itself and trust?

I wonder how it will be to die.

What are you dying to do/experience?

What are you dying to leave, to end?

Do you wonder about death itself, as a threshold and transition?

I breathe, wait for the moment of impact.

What is breath? What is moment of impact?

Breath is life itself.

Impact is the moment of change.

I hope it is quick and sudden at the end.

Is there an ending for which you are impatient?

Do you harbor a hope change comes quickly and painlessly?

What is the specific fear/dread if the ending is not quick and sudden?

The plane is diving into the water

Deep dive? Return to Source? A breakthrough?

and I am ready and open to being in this moment of impact and death.

An affirmation for life? To look directly at death and be ready for what is next?

Might ‘moment of impact’ be a breakthrough, clarity, a

clear message?

Might ‘death’ be the end of an old pattern, belief, position, viewpoint that no longer serves us?

I wake up.

I am calm and curious and my heart is racing.

Another affirmation?

“I awaken from this illusion calm, curious and alert.”

We can answer above questions for many layers of the dream – our inner self; our support network; our work in the world; our society; and the transcendental.

As an example, for me:

*On the level of my work in the world* as a dream-worker, the dream affirms “I’m with a group of fellow travelers, as we dive into the vast and deep mystery of our unconscious mind and the collective unconscious with dreams.”

and ...

*On a global and societal level*, given it is an international plane of public transport – “I recognize we are in this together beyond national borders and we are on the verge of a breakthrough into something life-sustaining yet vast, unknown and of great depths.”

and ...

*On the level of connection with myself*, “I rededicate myself to be present to my fears, projections, the unknown, not being in control of the outcome; and to be open and alert to the changing forms of life, including the

many endings and losses.

This dream also stands alone as an experiential lesson – of calm in face of fear, endings and death.

To surrender is to pause, breathe, hold hope and intention, to do what is mine to do, then let go into nonattachment. “I surrender to what is dying so the next form can be born.”

*I ask myself:*

How can I participate in the releasing of my old attachments, beliefs, stories?

How can I participate in the creation of what is next for me, my community and society?

When we come out of this pandemic, life will have changed and so we too will be different. May the contractions of this birthing process provide a new life better than we could have imagined while ensconced in the old paradigm.

**Tracy A. Stone** *San Diego, CA* is a certified Spiritual Director, Soul Collage Facilitator, and Dream Circle Facilitator. Over the last 30 years, she has led dream workshops, retreats, and facilitated more than 15 different dream circles that have lasted 5 to 20 years in continuous bi-weekly and/or monthly meetings. A member of International Association for the Study of Dreams (IASD) she has attended over ten IASD conferences and co-sponsored a regional conference. It was attending the Haden Institute Conference where she first discovered and subscribed to *The Rose* (now *The Rose in the World*).



Photograph *Night Flight* by **Lisa Rigge**, see her bio on pg. 2





Vision by **Rosemary McMahan** *Huntsville, AL* has been writing poetry since childhood. Over the past two decades, as an ordained minister in the Presbyterian Church (USA), she has written more sermons than poetry but is now returning to her first passion. She has a WordPress blog, Spirit-Reflections, where she ponders the spiritual, the mystical, the wisdom of guides, and how all are interwoven in life.

Painting *Night Bird* by **Nancy Carter** *Athens, GA* is an artist and educator. She has been led by dreams since she discovered dreamwork through a Centerpoint group and Journey into Wholeness in the 70's and 80's.

## Vision

*For those who have eyes but cannot see.*  
Mark 8:18

Did you notice the moon last night?  
The full moon rising above oak and hickory  
above heated crowds and worried hospitals  
above anger and destruction  
above the unease of the city?  
Did you notice the moon?

Did you sit on your stoop  
in the stillness of the evening  
and gaze upward? Feel the warmth  
of a breeze that caresses only  
in that liminal space  
between seasons?  
Did you allow the moon to bathe  
your skin, your bare arms, your legs  
and wonder at the amber light  
washing across you like the blessing  
of a mother?

Did you notice the moon? Or  
were your eyes full of discord?  
Your ears tuned to fear? Did you turn  
from the heavens to fill a screen  
with your screeching, to spit  
out vitriol like snuff, to stroke your  
hard heart and down the glass  
in your hand in homage  
to the serpent eating its own tail  
while above you the sacred  
held steady?

## Jacob's Pillow

She steps across time  
into an ancient design,  
a labyrinth with no  
false turns, no  
dead ends.

Here stones curve grace  
like streams bend light,  
nudge her to lift  
one foot  
then the other.  
Her soles skim gravel  
smooth as hour-glass sand.  
Mica glints like winking stars,  
whispers she is stellar dust.

As she glides,  
one boulder,  
clay  
and pillow-width,  
pulses audibly  
tugs at her heart.

She stops,  
kneels to lay hands  
on the sun-warmed granite  
and dreams.



**Jacob's Pillow** by **Karen Luke Jackson** *Flat Rock, NC* Karen's oral history background and contemplative practices provide a latticework for her writing. Her poems have appeared in The Broad River Review (Ron Rash Poetry Award), Ruminant, The Great Smokies Review, The Friends Journal and Christian Feminism Today. A facilitator with the Center for Courage & Renewal, Karen resides in a cottage on a goat pasture in Flat Rock, North Carolina, where she writes and companions people on their spiritual journeys. GRIT, a chapbook chronicling her sister's life as a clown, is forthcoming in 2020. For more information, visit [www.karenlukejackson.com](http://www.karenlukejackson.com)

Photograph *Listening Stones* by **David Lindsay**, *Athens, GA* After retiring from the University of Georgia Faculty, Dave Lindsay took up photography - nature, abstracts, scenic, closeup, black-and-white. Everything to follow his muse. He works in Georgia, the Smokey Mountains, Maine, and Canada.



## Mother Moon

Shall I take up this conversation again?  
A question from me  
that rises to mother moon.  
Yet if I cannot believe her  
who can I believe?  
She speaks of hope  
of beauty  
of change  
in nightly perspective.

“Remember, I reflect,”  
she says . . .  
the conversation  
doesn’t stop here  
it continues  
in whoever gazes  
who chooses to see  
to hope, to reflect.



Mother Moon by **Linda Ann Suddarth**, see her bio on p. 32

Photograph *Full Snow Moon* by **Sarah D. Norton**