

GOD IS ALL OVER THE PLACE

I shouldn't be, but I am still amazed how God brings things together through different people, at different times, through different means.

Into my daily readings came this from the American priest, professor and author Barbara Brown Taylor...

God is all over the place. God is up there, down here, inside my skin and out. God is the web, the energy, the space, the light—not captured in them, as if any of those concepts were more real than what unites them—but revealed in that singular, vast net of relationship that animates everything that is.

*At this point in my thinking, it is not enough for me to proclaim that God is responsible for all this unity. Instead, I want to proclaim that God is the unity—the very energy, the very intelligence, the very elegance and passion that make it all go. **This is the God who is not somewhere but everywhere, the God who may be prayed to in all directions at once.***

As I have, I'm sure you have heard and felt it yourself, the longing to meet again as God's people. A community of faith, joining together in praise and worship of a Holy God, who is with us in and through all things, even when we don't see or feel it. 'Emmanuel' - God with us!

The passionate cry in our hearts echoed by the psalmist

**How long, Lord? Will you forget me for ever?
How long will you hide your face from me?
How long must I wrestle with my thoughts
and day after day have sorrow in my heart?
How long will my enemy triumph over me?**

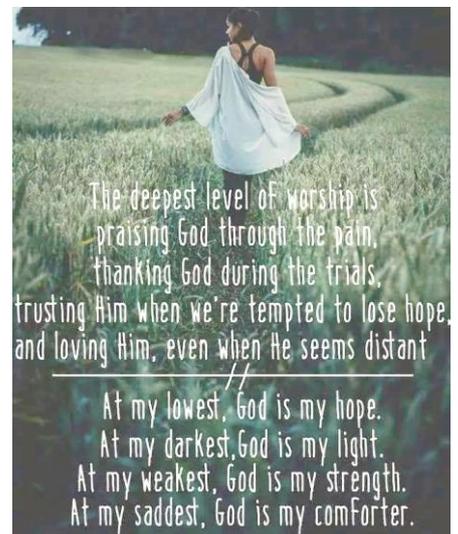
**Look on me and answer, Lord my God.
Give light to my eyes, or I will sleep in death,**

**and my enemy will say, 'I have overcome him,'
and my foes will rejoice when I fall.**

**But I trust in your unfailing love;
my heart rejoices in your salvation.
I will sing the Lord's praise,
for he has been good to me. Psalm 13**

When the Israelites found themselves exiled from Jerusalem, wandering in the wilderness we read their cry in psalm 137 'By the rivers of Babylon we sat and wept when we remembered Zion...how can we sing the songs of the Lord while in this foreign land?'

A foreign land could certainly describe where we now find ourselves. I'm sure we all feel the real sadness when we cannot meet and share in worship together. Our hearts may be crying out 'how long Lord?' and I would like to just be able to give you a date, but in all honesty, it isn't quite that simple. The Corps Council will be discussing options this week and we will let you know. To see and hear the frustration pulls at my heart, yet it is not something that can be eased immediately - but we have a God in whose unfailing love and presence we can trust. A God who, in Jesus, having been borne into the pain of humanity, is our healing and hope and in this our heart rejoices, and in this we CAN sing the Lords song - even if only as one! But *one* that is not alone - *one* that in Christ is united to the many, connected in heart and spirit if not, at this point, in body. Can we still lift our eyes and hearts to the one who says, I will never leave you nor forsake you? Whilst we are unable to worship God in community, God is still longing to meet with you in worship!



My reading went on....

we have a God problem

God is not the problem

*The problem is how we think about,
Even more how we talk about God*

*Our problem is we don't know how to talk about
God. I mean God is Transcendent, Big, Really big*

*And there is no way we can wrap our head around
this spiritual reality, this mystery
which is why it is a mystery*

*but we try and we do so by humanizing God
God becomes, a very old white-bearded man on a
throne, who stands above creation and
occasionally stirs it with a stick*

*worse, God becomes a vindictive old man "hitting"
us with a stick if we don't behave*

*what we do - unintentionally I am sure
is two very devastating things
we contain God, defining God (in our heads)
physically, spatially, we place this God outside
creation - up there, out there, somewhere
cranky old man, who intrudes to punish and bless*

*But in fact is God is everywhere
woven into the fabric of this earth
contained, immanent in the skies, the earth
the mountains, the trees, the deer, the birds
in you, in me*

*and here is the thing
if God is in the earth, the how we treat the earth
is how we treat God
(more than a little abusively if truth were told)*

*and if God is in each creature and more, in each
person, then how we treat people, is how we treat
God*

*when we dehumanize another because of race, or
creed, we are not just denying their humanity
we are denying God*

*If I look at the earth and see God
If I look at the creatures of forest and field
If I look in the face of a black brother or sister
If I look in the face of a frightened senior, terrified
by Covid 19
If I look at that person who refuses to wear a mask
and see God
that (should) change everything*

If we can see God here, there, everywhere then crying for Zion in the wilderness, could perhaps turn our hearts to praise, joining with the psalmist

Where could I run and hide from your face?

If I go up to heaven, you're there!

***If I go down to the realm of the dead,
you're there too!***

***If I fly with wings into the shining dawn,
you're there!***

***If I fly into the radiant sunset, you're there
waiting!***

***Wherever I go, your hand will guide me;
your strength will empower me.***

***It's impossible to disappear from you
or to ask the darkness to hide me,
for your presence is everywhere, bringing light
into my night.***

We praise God in that we *can* worship Him anytime, anyplace, anywhere, yet we pray for the day we can once again, come together in celebration as God's people. Lord, may it be so!

SB:812 v.4

**When we asunder part
it gives us inward pain;
But we shall still be joined in heart
And hope to meet again.**