



A Lenten Mosaic - Living In Grace Lent 2020

**Devotion for Saturday,
March 14, 2020**

Pandemic

By Rev. Lynn Ungar

What if you thought of it
as the Jews consider the Sabbath-
the most sacred of times?

Cease from travel.

Cease from buying and selling.

Give up, just for now,
on trying to make the world
different than it is.

Sing. Pray. Center down.

And when your body has become still,
reach out with your heart.

Know that you are connected
in ways that are terrifying and beautiful.

(You could hardly deny it now.)

Know that our lives
are in one another's hands.

(Surely, that has come clear.)

Do not reach out your hands.

Reach out your heart.

Reach out your words.

Reach out all the tendrils
of compassion that move, invisibly,
where we cannot touch.

Promise this world your love.

Romans 8:28-39

We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose. For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn within a large family. And those whom he predestined he also called; and those whom he called he also justified; and those whom he justified he also glorified.

What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? He who did not withhold his own Son, but gave him up for all of us, will he not with him also give us everything else? Who will bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is to condemn? It is Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us. Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written,

“For your sake we are being killed all day long;
we are accounted as sheep to be slaughtered.”

No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Prayer

God of the present moment,
God who in Jesus stills the storm
and soothes the frantic heart;
bring hope and courage to all
who wait or work in uncertainty.

Bring hope that you will make them the equal
of whatever lies ahead.

Bring them courage to endure what cannot be avoided,
for your will is health and wholeness;
you are God, and we need you.

Adapted from New Zealand Prayer Book