



## Reflections by the Lake Devotions for an Unordinary Time

July 14, 2020

Home

Carol Boseman Taylor

“Home is where the heart is.” “Home Sweet Home.” Home is many things to many people. I have a t-shirt from Tractor Supply (much to my daughters’ chagrin) which says “Home is Where the Farm Is.” Can you tell that I have been contemplating “home” a bit lately.

During this pandemic, we have been encouraged to stay HOME. Shelter in place. Only go out when it is absolutely necessary. For the most part, Chuck and I have tried to do that. Our children have been part of our “pandemic bubble” and we have spent time with them. That has been a saving grace for me—a social animal, an extrovert. Home on the Farm is a happy place for me, even if I do feel slightly constrained from time to time.

Over the Fourth of July, our family decided to rent three adjacent condos at Sunset Beach and spend a week together vacationing. We were careful. Masks were worn. All our food and supplies were carefully packed up and unpacked at the beach, insuring that we would not have to spend time in unfamiliar stores. That part of our trip went well. Our treks over to the beach went well. People were social distancing, if not wearing masks. We did not feel unsafe. But, I was glad to get home.

One humorous moment at the beginning of our vacation kept me smiling. When our three-year-old granddaughter arrived in Sunset Beach, it was clear that she didn’t have a good picture of what it meant to vacation at an unfamiliar location. She popped out of her car seat and headed for me, Gigi. Her first words were: “Where’s the Farm?” Confused, I replied that the Farm was in Rocky Mount. She then asked: “Don’t you want it anymore?”

Her literal brain couldn’t connect going to spend time with Gigi and Bubbie with anything but the Farm. After all, two weeks prior they had all come to the Farm for Cousin Camp along with their moms. We had a blast and they had cousin meetings in order to negotiate ways to keep from returning home. She thought the Farm just accompanied Gigi and Bubbie wherever they went. If we were going to the beach, then the beach must be at the Farm. I think she finally understood by week’s end, but I am not sure.

The point is that to Mary Charles Rice, the Farm is a second Home. She knows her Gigi and Bubbie are there. She knows she is happy there. She knows there will be chocolate milk and Cheez Its and lots of fun. She knows Gigi will let her “watch” things on TV that she might not get to watch at home—Frozen II, Sing and Coco. But she knows the joy and peace that is found in this place we call Home—the Farm.

Maybe I have been frustrated at being relegated to staying home for so long. Maybe I miss my friends and socializing. Perhaps my shopping entertainment has been hampered. Surely, I am so weary of coming up with ideas for meals three times a day, seven days a week. For certain, the loss of control of our lives has had an impact. We live with a cloud of anxiety that someone we have contacted may indeed be carrying the virus. We deal with frustration and anger when others do not take care to protect others by wearing a mask. We even have made this virus political. We are living in uncomfortable and uncertain times. But we are Home.

I hope that Home has come to mean something special to each of us. I hope that we have been able to find peace at Home. My prayer is that you have found a place at Home to call your Bethel—a place of prayer, a place where you feel close to God. I have. I have begun to “listen” to God again. I have knitted and crocheted so many shawls for our prayer shawl ministry. I have read and painted. I have gardened. I have treasured the quiet and the peace. May peace and blessings be with you until this crisis lessens. And, may you be at home.

*1 Samuel 7:27—But he always went back to Ramah, where his home was, and there he also held court for Israel. And he built an altar there to the Lord.*

*Leviticus 26:6a—I will grant peace in the land, and you will lie down and no one will make you afraid.*

*Lord, in these turbulent times where lack of control, fear and unkindness assails us, grant us peace and remind us that our Home is with you. Amen.*