

Dreaming

In the night, I dreamt of a world made better by our
togetherness.

Of reaching toward never before imagined horizons,
Made knowable and possible only by living in mutuality.

I saw distant lands made out like visions of paradise,
Replenished and remade through a courage that embraced
interdependence.

We dwelt in fields of green together,
Fertile valleys nurtured by trust.

We built visions of love and beauty and justice,
Nourished by partnership, cultivated through solidarity.

I dreamt of lush forests thriving with life,
Oceans teeming with vitality,
Mountains stretching toward majesty,

Our world made whole again.

These things we had done together.

These things we had brought to pass with each other.

These dream world imaginings seemed possible in the boundless creativity we only know through our unity.

I awoke,

And still, the dream continues.



Embraced

They sat, alone on a pew, surrounded by what seemed like dispiriting vastness.

There, in that sacred space.

She let the hurt and grief wash over her. He let the tears come.
And slowly, slowly but also as if it had been there all along, they began to feel
some comforting presence.

He felt held.

She sensed the fullness of true divinity.

They experienced God transcending finite forms of love or being.



And the vastness became an all-loving embrace.

There, in that sacred space.

Finally, they rose, ready to face what they must, A vast sacredness glowing within them.

Grace

When she was a young girl, they told her that Grace was only available to her, a child of original sin, through the forgiveness and whim of an all-powerful God.

Then, she sat with her grandfather as he was dying. She held his hand, as she and the ones she loved stayed with him through his great passage.

And she felt Grace arise among them.

Later, during her college years, she volunteered for the local refugee shelter. And one day she witnessed the counselor work with young children traumatized by war.

She heard the children begin to speak their truths with one another, in that language that is only fully understood by such children, and she watched the counselor put his plans aside and let the children begin to heal one another.

And she felt Grace radiate between them.

And as over and over again through her years, she witnessed this same emergence between and among people, she came to understand Grace as something we co-create, and, sometimes, something we allow to happen by simply getting out of the way.

Heaven?



We, Unitarian Universalists, or UUs, as we say because it's a heck of a lot easier just to say UU than to keep saying Unitarian Universalist over and over again until our tongues get twisted and we forget what it was we were discussing...

Where was I?

Oh, yes, we UUs talk a lot about how we don't believe in Hell.

We don't really believe in heaven either, and I am so glad.

Because I worry that spending eternity in heaven would be boring.

Maybe sitting around all day, day after day, listening to Angels pluck out elevator hymns on harps and some omnipotent being sharing how wise and, well, omnipotent, they are is better than fresh apple pie with ice cream to some folks, but it sounds WORSE than hell to me.

No challenges. No struggles.

It just sounds like a lot of bland, if vaguely pleasant, nothing to do forever and ever.

Bored for all eternity. No thanks.

No heaven.

No hell.

Just the extraordinary reality we have been given. I'm good with that!



The Source

I walk among tall grasses, peering out and through like a seeking predator or hiding prey. There is buzzing all around me.

Distant vehicles on roads unseen.

Insects and small creatures much nearer and yet also unseen.

And falling on listening ears also, the calls of feathered friends and the stirring and whisking and crunching of furry creatures hidden within the grasses and behind tree limbs and stones.

And within, the eventual settling of running commentary into a quieter hum that blends and harmonizes.

Green of leaves.

Blue of sky.

Gray and white of floating clouds.

Gold of sun.

Browns of coming fall.

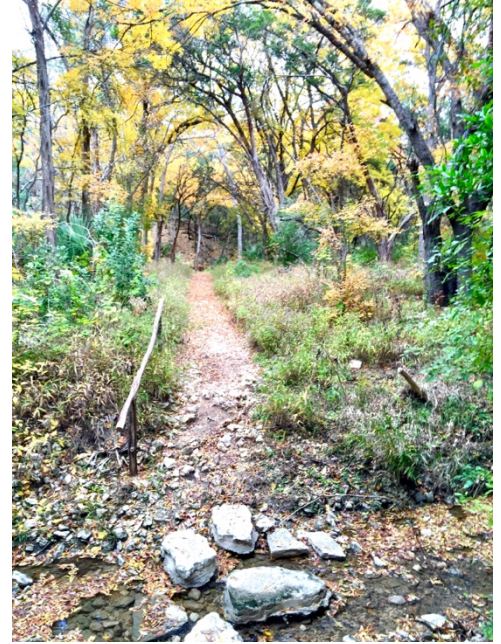
And space surrounds and blends and comes within and spreads out infinitely and at once.

And time is still and yet flowing together, all times at once.

And for a time, the creative source is knowable.

Blessed

In moonlit shadows,
At the edge of night-darkened oak trees
I see it.
Across sunny pathways,
In the buzzing of insects, amongst the flowering forest greenery,
I hear it.
From the touch of ones loved,
The embraces of those gone before me,
I feel it.



In the poems I love dearly, the songs that speak to my heart, the sculpture that catches my imagination,
The discoveries still to be made, I sense it.
It is in the fire of distant suns, the cool drip of waters, the slight chill in the breeze,
The laughter of children, no matter what their age, old and young, grown and still small;
It is the breath of life, the stardust of souls, the magic of remembrance.
Who am I not to surrender to it in gratitude?
Who am I to not be blessed?

Moments

The instances that capture us,
hold us in stillness, rootedness, timelessness:
A glimpse of an eagle soaring high above,
The gentle touch and soothing words of a loved one just when we need them,
Sunsets, rainbows, waterfalls, mountain vistas, peaceful shorelines,
The surprise visit, the surprise act of kindness, the unearned blessing, the offering of a blessing to another.
These and so many more are the powerful moments that are waiting for us to recognize them and immerse ourselves within them.
And beyond these, are the momentous moments we have yet to co-create together.

Paradox

I am in the leaves glowing green from backlit sun. I am in the freshly mown grass, and I flow throughout all in drops of water. I expand through distant galaxies and rise upon stormy winds.

And yet, I am not.

I am one and many. Here, where time has no meaning, or perhaps, all times exist at once. Here, where place has no meaning and yet it is possible to exist in all places at once.

And yet, I am not.

I cease, melting into nothingness and yet into everything.

I know the heart of the raven and the swift reflexes of the dolphin, even as these, too, blend into the whole.

Light. Darkness. Movement. Stillness. Glowing fires. Freezing snow. Hurricane. Blizzard. Stones. Mountains. Sand. Oceans.

Unity.

I am.

The After Times

They gathered in the midst of their confusion and sorrow.

They sang and listened and held one another.

Outside, a cold wind was blowing under a grey-darkened sky.

They lit candles of sorrow and joy.

And as music played, a river of love washed over and through them.

And they went out again, ready to change their world.

Infinity

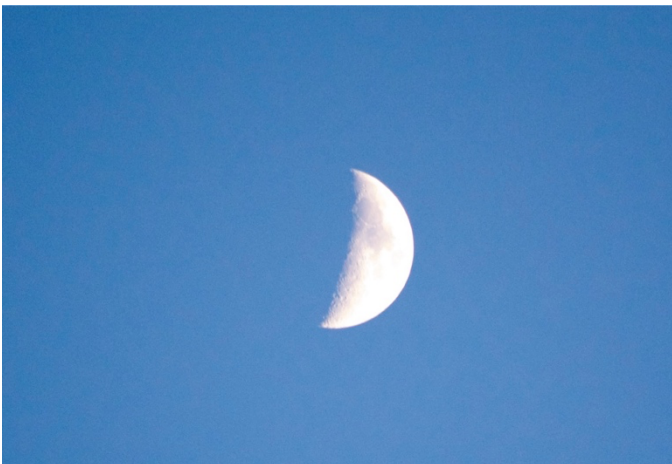
Looking up at the night sky

If you hold a pencil up and mark just one tiny part of that sky equal to the pencil tip.

And then you point a powerful telescope at that section of the sky, so infinitesimal from our point of view.

That telescope would discover billions upon billions of planets and stars and countless other celestial bodies.

And here we are in the vastness of it all.



Tiny pencil points in the enormity of stretching and whirling time and space.

Looking up at the night sky.
Seeking, struggling to understand.
Filled with wonder and awe.

Filled with grace in the creative potential of it all.



Valley

It is cold in the valley.

White skies and bitter winds.

Bare branches and brown leaves blowing overhead.

Yet there are warm hearths and warmer hearts along the way.

Candles lit in windows to remind those still pushing against chill winds that comforting dens and warming fires await them.

And through the cold, we find our depths, we renew our will, we press on toward destiny.

And the spirit of life surrounds us and holds us until love leads us into sunlit fields of green, together.

Words

We sit across from one another on my living room couch, each with a leg crossed under us in an imitation of comfort.

It is cold outside. The wind howls –
So much ancient remorse finding voice.
And the words begin.
So many words spoken.

So carefully chosen, these words of ours.

They flow between us.
They fly over us.
They bounce off of walls and surround us.

Me attempting to listen first, then you.

The words somehow absorb the cold, howling winds, drawing them in through walls, chilling us to our cores and yet also planting a spark of something potentially warmer.

And still the words come.

Now being drawn into the fire that is burning in my hearth, set within such a lovely stone wall.

The fire incinerates our words, sends them drifting up and out into the winter sky in wafts of slightly ill-tempered smoke, until all that is left, lying in charred remains amongst the other ashes at the bottom of my fireplace, are things much deeper, more basic and yet that all along had been held within the yawning chasms formed by so many words.

Our great shared fear.

And also, our great shared love.

These are all we find the words have left to us.

And from these, a glimmer of hope arises.

