

Seeds of Celebration ~ Via Positiva 2022 ~ Let the Rivers Run

June 19th 2022 – Let the River of Sustenance Run (Juneteenth, Solstice)

by John David Short

“But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a solitary broom tree. He asked that he might die: ‘It is enough; now, O LORD, take away my life, for I am no better than my ancestors.’

Then he lay down under the broom tree and fell asleep. Suddenly an angel touched him and said to him, ‘Get up and eat.’

He looked, and there at his head was a cake baked on hot stones, and a jar of water. He ate and drank, and lay down again.

The angel of the LORD came a second time, touched him, and said, ‘Get up and eat, otherwise the journey will be too much for you.’

He got up, and ate and drank; then he went in the strength of that food forty days and forty nights to Horeb the mount of God.

At that place he came to a cave, and spent the night there. Then the word of the LORD came to him, saying, ‘What are you doing here, Elijah?’”

~ 1 Kings 19:1-4, (5-7), 8-15a

“There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus.

And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to the promise.”

~ Galatians 3:23-29

“Jesus must have been a saint, I said to myself, looking for my lost car in the parking lot later, stumbling among the people who would have been lowered into rooms by ropes, who would have crept out of caves or crawled from the corners of public baths on their hands and knees begging for mercy.

If I touch only the hem of his garment, one woman thought, could I bear the look on his face when he wheels around?”

*~ from **The Star Market** – Marie Howe*

As it happens all of us are on the banks of big majestic rivers: the French Broad (and just *Broad*), Oconaluftee, Cooper, and Mississippi...

And here we are in a new and still bewildering season, asking the question ‘what will be the theme of this upcoming Via, this juicy Summer season, this ongoing experiment of spiritual beings having a human experience?’

Water.

The universal solvent.

The most abundant of elements.

Two Thirds’ of You, Me, and this big blue ball sailing through space are water.

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We have crossed the Threshold, into a New Day.

Now we ***Let the Rivers Run***.

Let us jubilant Dreamers, fisher kings and queens, on the banks of these flowing rivers...***Wake the Nation***.

June 26th 2022 – Let the River of Expression Run By Jay Joslin

“O send out your light and your truth; let them lead me; let them bring me to your holy hill and to your dwelling. Then I will go to the altar of God, to God my exceeding joy; and I will praise you with the harp, O God, my God. Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you disquieted within me? Hope in God; for I shall again praise him, my help and my God.”

Psalm 43:3-5

“[The people] found the man from whom the demons had gone sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in his right mind. And they were afraid. Those who had seen it told them how the one who had been possessed by demons had been healed. Then all the people of the surrounding country of the Gerasenes asked Jesus to leave them; for they were seized with great fear. So he got into the boat and returned. The man from whom the demons had gone begged that he might be with him; but Jesus sent him away, saying, “Return to your home, and declare how much God has done for you.” So he went away, proclaiming throughout the city how much Jesus had done for him.”

Luke 8:35-39

“Anything that’s human is mentionable, and anything that is mentionable can be more manageable. When we can talk about our feelings, they become less overwhelming, less upsetting, and less scary. The people we trust with that important talk can help us know that we are not alone.”

Fred Rogers

We have a lot to talk about. And text about. And tweet about. If you’ve seen “Monty Python’s Meaning of Life,” Death (as in the Grim Reaper) has a thing or two to say about Americans and our propensity to gab. Up for discussion is our willingness to express, communicate, to speak with candor while caring. There’s a bit of a gulf between chatter and going deep. Isn’t it interesting that studies consistently show that we perform better with positive reinforcement? What is spiritual positive reinforcement for you? Is it praise? Is it declaring the good things that [insert choice of higher power here] has done for you? Is it talking about your feelings, safely? While the talking will continue, let the river of expression run. What do you hear?

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July 3rd 2022 – Let the River of True Citizenship Run by John David Short

“After this the Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them two by two ahead of him to every town and place where he was about to go. He told them, “The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field. Go! I am sending you out like lambs among wolves. Do not take a purse or bag or sandals; and do not greet anyone on the road . . . I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you. However, do not rejoice that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven.”

~ Luke 10:1-4 . . . 19-20

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed people can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.”

~ Margaret Mead

Here at Jubilee!, we have a pun that has become a sort of shorthand:

“I’m a recovering baptist, recovering jew (or as the song goes wandering jew?), recovering catholic, recovering this, recovering that.”

Some of us identify as being simply in recovery and let it go at that.

As we wander through this wild and precious gift of consciousness we call life we stumble into many attachments, many identities, behaviors and conceptions.

Many labels.

We bump into people that help us or hurt us and we may wear their labels for a while. Sometimes we run from those who would define us for their own ends. Jubilee!, like this nation we celebrate, arose from the desire to be a community of freedom. Realizing our true Citizenship as a wild and precious piece of Creation can’t be defined by what we were or even what we will be but maybe, just maybe, in the ongoing process of recovering and discovering how we contribute to this Community, how we contribute to this nation under God (there goes another label:) with liberty, and justice for all.

July 10th 2022 – Let the River of Courageous Love Run by Jay Joslin

“Just then a lawyer stood up to test Jesus. “Teacher,” he said, “what must I do to inherit eternal life?” He said to him, “What is written in the law? What do you read there?” He answered, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself.” And he said to him, “You have given the right answer; do this, and you will live.”

~ Luke 10:25-28

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*“to be deeply loved
by someone gives you
strength
but to love someone
deeply gives you
courage.”
~ Esther Huertas*

It seems unfair that language bestows us with so many words for this, so few words for that. Moist. Humid. Damp. In Thai, there are 39 different verbs to express ‘choice.’ The strongest, most powerful of which is “cetcǎng,” a choice willingly made. In English, when it comes to love... well... there’s a bunch of adjectives to throw in front of it. We’ll make do with what we’ve got, I guess. That’s where the stories come in, because these give love its lovable context. Remember the aptly docketed Loving vs. Virginia case before the Supreme Court in ‘69? That was all about Courageous Love, striking down laws against interracial marriage. Courageous Love creates change. Perhaps the most courageous of transformative love is to start where it all begins... your own dang self. It’s too apparent the infliction of pain on others doesn’t come from a place of self love. To love thy neighbor, you gotta love thyself. While that may take courage, it may be our imperative if we’re going to add more words- and deeds- to the spiritual thesaurus.

July 17th 2022 – Let the River of Transcendent Creation Run by John David Short

“So Jacob was left alone and a man wrestled with him till daybreak. When the man saw that he could not overpower him, he touched the socket of Jacob’s hip so that his hip was wrenched as he wrestled with the man. Then the man said, “Let me go, for it is daybreak.”

But Jacob replied, “I will not let you go unless you bless me.”

The man asked him, “What is your name?”

“Jacob,” he answered.

Then the man said, “Your name will no longer be Jacob, but Israel, because you have struggled with God and with humans and have overcome.”

~ Genesis 32:24-28

“As Jesus and his disciples were on their way, he came to a village where a woman named Martha opened her home to him.

She had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord’s feet listening to what he said. But Martha was distracted by all the preparations that had to be made. She came to him and asked, “Lord, don’t you care that my sister has left me to do the work by myself? Tell her to help me!”

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“Martha, Martha,” the Lord answered, “you are worried and upset about many things, but few things are needed—or indeed only one.

Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her.”

~ Luke 10:38-42

“For every thing that lives is Holy.”

~ William Blake, *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*

“Spare the world your ideas of good until you
Know all is good.” my teacher once said to me.
Spare the world your ideas of right, until you know
that all is holy.

~ Hafiz, *A Year with Hafiz*, translated by Daniel Ladinsky

Jubilee! was founded as a community that celebrates all creation, singing of wisdom and God.

Our headwaters form at the confluence of the Creation Spirituality movement touched off by the publication of Matthew Fox’s *Original Blessing*, for which Fox was forced to leave the Dominican Order of Roman Catholicism, and our founder, Howard Hanger, whose unrepentant practice of marrying anyone who professed love, true love, for each other- regardless of gender or sexuality- forced him to leave the United Methodist Church many years ago.

In her latest book *Atlas of the Heart* Brene Brown writes:

“Reverence is a human institution that brings in the sacred and that's inevitably going to cause problems.”

No s%@t, *Sherlock*.

In our community’s 30 years swimming upstream we have had our fair share of problems and controversies, wrestling with the divine.

In me, in you, in all creation.

Swim on Jubilant Israel! Hallelujah and O’Yeah!

July 24th 2022 – Let the River of Trust Run by Jay Joslin

“Then Jesus said to them, “Suppose you have a friend, and you go to him at midnight and say, ‘Friend, lend me three loaves of bread; a friend of mine on a journey has come to me, and I have no food to offer him.’ And suppose the one inside answers, ‘Don’t bother me. The door is already locked, and my children and I are in bed. I can’t get up and give you anything.’ I tell you, even though he will not get up and give you the bread because of friendship, yet because of your shameless audacity he will surely get up and give you as much as you need. “So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. Ten for every one who asks receives;

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the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened.”

~ Luke 11:5-10

“The ant was very tired, thirsty, and visibly dying. A bird perched nearby saw it and instead of feeding on it, picked it up and carried it to the river for a drink. A few days later, the ant saw a hunter aiming at the bird with his gun. The ant quickly climbed onto the hunter’s leg and stung him. As the hunter yelped in pain, he lost concentration and the bird flew away.”

~ African Proverb

Just as you never forget your first date, you never forget your first break up. The eighth grade dinner dance was at some forsaken Holiday Inn on one of those Tunnel Road-esque strips of road. But the romantic in me, in every budding on the cusp of their last summer before high school, it was a carnation-dotted carnival of identity. My date, with her perfect braces and nose like a macaw, gave me so much hope. I requested “our song” and waited with anticipation. Where was she? “I’ve... had... the time of my life, and I’ve never felt this way before...” The DJ who surely had better gigs called out our names. I’m at the edge of the dancefloor, she’s- dang- at the table with the guidance counselor. I loosened my tie, pounded a ginger ale, and watched the other kids slow dance. I seethed with betrayal. But. Yet. That song remained true, I’d never felt that way before. Trust is hard knocks, and it’s the knocks we give ourselves. She didn’t do anything wrong. I expected too much. Also, hello, gay boys dated straight girls to keep secrets safe. “I owe it all to you.” Thank goodness we didn’t have that dance. False trust is even worse than broken trust. It makes the dancing all these years later so much more worth it. But that song- nope.

July 31st 2022 – Let the River of Great Expectations Run (Lammas)

by John David Short

“Suffering has been stronger than all other teaching, and has taught me to understand what your heart used to be. I have been bent and broken, but - I hope - into a better shape.”

~ Charles Dickens, Great Expectations

*“My heart is changed within me;
all my compassion is aroused.*

*I will not carry out my fierce anger,
nor will I devastate Ephraim again.*

*For I am God, and not a man—
the Holy One among you.*

*I will not come against their cities.
They will follow the Lord;*

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*he will roar like a lion.
When he roars,
his children will come trembling from the west.
They will come from Egypt,
trembling like sparrows,
from Assyria, fluttering like doves.
I will settle them in their homes,
declares the Lord.”
~ Amos 8-11*

Expectation is a savory word isn't it?

How delicious is the anticipation of what we desire; and how bitter when we don't get what we desire.

Or worse, we get it, and like Peggy Lee find ourselves asking:

“Is that all there is?”

Nutritionists tell us that 90% of the pleasure derived from everything from a juicy steak (or beefsteak tomato) to chocolate mousse is delivered in the first couple of bites.

How much of the pleasure of your lover is conveyed in that first deep eye-to-eye, lip-to-lip, tongue-on-tongue kiss that you feel all the way down to your toes!

Psychologists at Penn State tell us that only 8% of our worries and fearsome expectations actually come true. Desired expectations fare about the same - 12%.

The website *Lion's Roar: Buddhist Wisdom for Our Time* (www.lionsroar.com) relates expectation to *dukka*, a *Pali* term from the Dhammacakkappavattana (turning of the wheel) Sutra. *Dukka* describes suffering on a spectrum ranging from faint unsettledness to downright anguish, of which expectation sits right in the middle. We need expectation to turn the wheel, to drive us forward, to live our lives, yet we need just as readily to let go of our expectations to enjoy and celebrate life for what it really is, for all it truly is. *C'est la vie, n'est pas?*

August 7th 2022 – Let the River of Vigilance Run (Jubilee's 33rd Birthday)

by Jay Joslin

“Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord, the people he chose for his inheritance. From heaven the Lord looks down and sees all mankind; from his dwelling place he watches all who live on earth— he who forms the hearts of all, who considers everything they do. No king is saved by the size

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of his army; no warrior escapes by his great strength. A horse is a vain hope for deliverance; despite all its great strength it cannot save.”

~ Psalm 33:12-17

“Be dressed ready for service and keep your lamps burning, like servants waiting for their master to return from a wedding banquet, so that when he comes and knocks they can immediately open the door for him. It will be good for those servants whose master finds them watching when he comes. Truly I tell you, he will dress himself to serve, will have them recline at the table and will come and wait on them. It will be good for those servants whose master finds them ready, even if he comes in the middle of the night or toward daybreak. But understand this: If the owner of the house had known at what hour the thief was coming, he would not have let his house be broken into. You also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him.”

~ Luke 12:35-40

“The genius of poetry must work out its own salvation in a man; it cannot be matured by law and precept, but by sensation and watchfulness in itself. That which is creative must create itself - In Endymion, I leaped headlong into the sea, and thereby have become better acquainted with the soundings, the quicksands, and the rocks, than if I had stayed upon the green shore, and piped a silly pipe, and took tea and comfortable advice.”

~ John Keats

It's summertime and, at the time of this writing, the living is hopefully easy. Fish are presumably jumping, and the kudzu is definitely high. Relaxation can easily be on the agenda. And it's our birthday and that means celebration, too. It's a good time to be reminded- be present and watchful in the world as we become a third of a century old. There's a lot that can sneak up on us- and so much we can miss- if we're not paying attention. One of Jubilee's cartoon patron saints is Foghorn Leghorn, and if you've been around long enough you've seen him on the altar, heard him thunder from the pulpit: “Pay attention son! Pay attention daughter! I say! How are you going to learn if you don't pay attention?” You might not prefer to take your spiritual directions from a charismatic rooster, but haven't the mystics and revered masters been crowing the same message since civilization's sun up?

We've been through a lot. All the forms of We. Here's to hoping that Jubilee's next year is attentive, insightful, and has much more to celebrate.

August 14th 2022 - Let the River of Strange Fire (Divine Kinship) Run

by John David Short

“Now Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, each took his censer and put fire in it and laid incense on it and offered unauthorized fire before the LORD, which he had not commanded them. And fire came out from before the LORD and consumed them, and they died before the LORD. Then Moses said to

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Aaron, "This is what the LORD has said: 'Among those who are near me I will be sanctified, and before all the people I will be glorified.'" And Aaron held his peace."

~ Leviticus . 10:1-3

"I have come to bring fire on the earth, and how I wish it were already kindled! But I have a baptism to undergo, and what constraint I am under until it is completed! Do you think I came to bring peace on earth? No, I tell you, but division. From now on there will be five in one family divided against each other, three against two and two against three. They will be divided, father against son and son against father, mother against daughter and daughter against mother, mother-in-law against daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law against mother-in-law."

~ Luke 12:49-53

"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding."

~ Proverbs 9:10

Amanda Jane sang right along to *Indigo Girls, Retrospective* in the CD player stuck on repeat of the aging minivan they inherited when Mom passed into the pathless woods beyond cancer's reach. Out of her wistful reverie of mid-90's cool kids, Converse All-Stars and non-ironic flannels, gathered around the boombox outside the auditorium on a spring night she heard her niece Mary ask thoughtfully,

"Kiki, what is strange fire?"

"Hmmm, well that's a stumper, a good question, Dear One, a very good question.

I am not sure . . ."

The day was warm and perfect for the task ahead of them, picking up fresh bread and honey as a housewarming gift for an elder's new home at Givens Estate. So Amanda Jane pulled into a shady parking spot as that same infernal chorus began again for a closer listen:

I come to you with strange fire

I make an offering of love

The incense of my soil is burned

By the fire in my blood . . .

"What do you think it means, Mary?"

"I think it means, like, when you give a friend a present, like some Legos or something, but they don't know how to play with it right so you have to show them how to play with it- before you get mad and they get bored!"

A stunned smile crept over each of their faces,

Mary, sweet child, I think you may be absolutely right . . ."

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August 21st 2022 – Let the River of Perseverance Run by Jay Joslin

‘By faith the walls of Jericho fell, after the army had marched around them for seven days. And what more shall I say? I do not have time to tell about Gideon, Barak, Samson and Jephthah, about David and Samuel and the prophets, who through faith conquered kingdoms, administered justice, and gained what was promised... since God had planned something better for us so that only together with us would they be made perfect. Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us.’

~ Hebrews 11:30, 31-33, 40, 12:1

“Crazy Horse dreamed and went into the world where there is nothing but the spirits of things. That is the real world that is behind this one, and everything we see here is something like a shadow from that world...It was this vision that gave him his great power, for when he went into a fight, he had only to think of that world to be in it again, so that he could go through anything and not be hurt.”

~ Black Elk

Thomas the Tank Engine, Eeyore, and Miss Piggy walk into a bar. The bartender does a double take. It's a little early in the day and he's never served these kinds of characters before. He looks around- there are no signs indicating that there's an imminent punchline. He serves them their beverages of choice (what they do in their own free time), and they begin to talk. Thomas has been getting feedback about "Right Use of Will" and whether his newfound assertiveness ought to be more deferential. Eeyore fired his therapist because he didn't have a happy part of himself to talk to. Miss Piggy, on the other hand, just listened. She'd been around the block. She didn't want to give unsolicited advice- that's so Kermit- but what if Thomas knew he could instead of just thinking about it? And she knew a thing or two about being manipulated by others as a puppet. If you get hung up on how others judge you, you can't be in the moment. Then there's Eeyore, the kid's a professional misanthrope. She never backs down from a challenge. "Listen, kiddo," Ms. Piggy said "Depression sucks. You're at least trying. Doing something that isn't working is better than doing nothing that isn't." Dang it. She felt a wave of Kermit-shaded green wash over her. It's complicated. Everyone perked up a little and sang show tunes late into the night.

August 28th 2022 – Let the River of Humble Humility Run by John David Short

*“The beginning of man's pride is to depart from the Lord;
his heart has forsaken his Maker.*

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*For the beginning of pride is sin,
and the man who clings to it pours out abominations.
Therefore the Lord brought upon them extraordinary afflictions,
and destroyed them utterly.
The Lord has cast down the thrones of rulers,
and has seated the lowly in their place.
The Lord has plucked up the roots of the nations,
and has planted the humble in their place.”*
~ Sirach 10:12-15

*“When he noticed how the guests picked the places of honor at the table, he told them this parable:
“When someone invites you to a wedding feast, do not take the place of honor, for a person more distinguished than you may have been invited. If so, the host who invited both of you will come and say to you, ‘Give this person your seat.’ Then, humiliated, you will have to take the least important place. But when you are invited, take the lowest place, so that when your host comes, he will say to you, ‘Friend, move up to a better place.’ Then you will be honored in the presence of all the other guests. For all those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.”*
Then Jesus said to his host, “When you give a luncheon or dinner, do not invite your friends, your brothers or sisters, your relatives, or your rich neighbors; if you do, they may invite you back and so you will be repaid. But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, and you will be blessed. Although they cannot repay you, you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous.”
~ Luke 14:1, 7-14

Why humble humility you might ask? Well, anyone familiar with the 21st century's version of the office water cooler that is social media can tell you what a humble brag is.

The “oh look at me” humility. Performative Humility.

You don't hear much from the humble kind.

The kind that volunteers the graveyard shift at the Salvation Army shelter, then showers in the gym, pulls on their scrubs, and goes on rounds at 7am like they just rolled out of bed.

The kind that picks up trash all day on a city sanitation route, then studies all night for their CPA or CACD-I.

The clerk at Aldi's with three kids and a mom with dementia at home.

The kind that bums quarters on the corner all day, then comes home to a tent in a woods surrounded by red-tailed hawks they are nursing back to health.

You don't hear much about these people, God's people, Jubilee! people.

But make no mistake, these misfits make the world go 'round.

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September 4th 2022 – Let the River of Self Knowledge Run by Jay Joslin

“You have searched me, Lord, and you know me. You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts from afar. You discern my going out and my lying down; you are familiar with all my ways. Before a word is on my tongue you, Lord, know it completely. You hem me in behind and before, and you lay your hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, too lofty for me to attain.”

~ Psalm 139:1-6

“I have seen the burden God has laid on the human race. He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the human heart; yet no one can fathom what God has done from beginning to end.”

~ Ecclesiastes 3:10-12

*By love, the bitter becomes sweet
By love copper coins become gold
By love, the dregs become clear
By love, the pain becomes healing
By love, the dead is made living
By love, the king is made a servant
And this love is the result of knowledge
Who, in foolishness, ever sat on such a throne?
~ Rumi*

Blink and you miss it. Or, not watch science fiction films and you miss it. It's a little engraved wooden sign just barely in the background for a second. Our young and still-learning hero Neo enters the apartment of the wise elder Oracle in the Matrix film, seeking knowledge. The Oracle speaks in riddles, she's elusive. I remember nearly ejecting myself from the seat. "Dude, it's spelled out for you!" In Latin, TEMET NOSCE. Know Thyself. Hardly the rubric for adventure cinema, but certainly for your own. It's perilous. Vicariously experiencing the travails and triumphs of those who go within can get one going, but it's easier than getting one going... oneself. Do we have habits of hyping the story of inner work as a way to do inner work? Knowing every line in the Matrix doesn't make a super-fan Neo, nor does perfect retreat attendance earn a self-knowledge merit badge. So, how do we get fired up about such a personal flame? TEMET NOSCE to find out.

September 11th 2022 – Let the River of Joyful {re}Penance Run by John

David Short

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“Then the Lord said to Moses, “Go down, because your people, whom you brought up out of Egypt, have become corrupt. They have been quick to turn away from what I commanded them and have made themselves an idol cast in the shape of a calf. They have bowed down to it and sacrificed to it and have said, ‘These are your gods, Israel, who brought you up out of Egypt.’”

“I have seen these people,” the Lord said to Moses, “and they are a stiff-necked people. Now leave me alone so that my anger may burn against them and that I may destroy them. Then I will make you into a great nation.”

But Moses sought the favor of the Lord his God. “Lord,” he said, “why should your anger burn against your people, whom you brought out of Egypt with great power and a mighty hand? Why should the Egyptians say, ‘It was with evil intent that he brought them out, to kill them in the mountains and to wipe them off the face of the earth’? Turn from your fierce anger; relent and do not bring disaster on your people. Remember your servants Abraham, Isaac and Israel, to whom you swore by your own self: ‘I will make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and I will give your descendants all this land I promised them, and it will be their inheritance forever.’”
Then the Lord relented and did not bring on his people the disaster he had threatened.”

~ Exodus 32:7-14

“Now the tax collectors and sinners were all gathering around to hear Jesus. But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law muttered, “This man welcomes sinners and eats with them.”

Then Jesus told them this parable:

“Suppose one of you has a hundred sheep and loses one of them. Doesn’t he leave the ninety-nine in the open country and go after the lost sheep until he finds it? And when he finds it, he joyfully puts it on his shoulders and goes home. Then he calls his friends and neighbors together and says, ‘Rejoice with me; I have found my lost sheep.’ I tell you that in the same way there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent.

~ Luke 15:1-10

In this culture we have a hard time with the word repentance, don’t we?

We seem to think of mistakes, which if we are honest, are what we are *designed* to do- as spiritual beings having a human experience as a zero-sum game.

Make a mistake, no heaven on earth for you. Yet every bit of our wisdom literature from the founding of the Hebraic nation down to Louis Armstrong’s *What a Wonderful World* suggests that God rejoices when we make mistakes, learn from them, and do better next time.

Here at Jubilee! we close our prayers with the last line of that wonderful song from the old Satchmo a throaty ‘Oh . . . Yeah!’ because we know we are a part of creation, growing, learning, adapting, evolving. And here at Jubilee! we make a lot of mistakes. That is part of the path to divinity, for a saint is merely a sinner (a latin word for missing the mark) who has fallen . . . and got back up.

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September 18th 2022 – Let the River of Relief Run by Jay Joslin

“Brothers and sisters, if someone is caught in a sin, you who live by the Spirit should restore that person gently... Carry each other’s burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ. Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers.”

~ Galatians 6:1-2, 9

“Sing to the Lord a new song, for he has done marvelous things; his right hand and his holy arm have worked salvation for him. The Lord has made his salvation known and revealed his righteousness to the nations. He has remembered his love and his faithfulness to Israel; all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God. Shout for joy to the Lord, all the earth, burst into jubilant song with music; make music to the Lord with the harp, with the harp and the sound of singing.”

~ Psalm 98:1-5

“I am convinced that it is essential that we cultivate a sense of what I call universal responsibility, or universal consciousness (the Tibetan term chi sem). An important benefit of developing such a sense of universal responsibility is that it helps us become sensitive to all others, not just those closest to us. We come to see the need to care especially for those members of the human family who suffer most. We recognize the need to avoid causing divisiveness among our fellow human beings. And we become aware of the overwhelming importance of contentment.”

~ HH the Dalai Lama

Jubilants have not really taken to Twitter and that’s okay. It’s not just about snarky politicians or vain celebrities taking pot-shots at each other. You might be surprised to know that ordinary people have come together from around the world to provide immediate relief to people suffering from war, disaster, and climate emergency through spontaneous networks of care. Anyone around you could be using public data to find people in need and coordinate efforts in tandem with citizens and trained rescuers on the ground. It’s a beautiful- and difficult- labor to see unfold as this new digital community grows. The more it grows, the greater the needs become apparent, and the wider the net becomes for average humans with just a little training to help out. I think we’ve become accustomed to expect the worst in humanity as we teeter ever closer to new iterations of global danger. This forces, however, us to become ever kinder, faster than before, with greater adaptability. The immediacy of good work- of relief- of feeding and healing- of a global harvest of compassion- is proof that in the words of folk singer Peter Meyer, “Everything is Holy Now.” Even Twitter.

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