

FALL 2020

**WITH A
GRATEFUL
HEART**

WH

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COVER: This is a mixed media piece. Thank you Pam Taylor for providing the fall trees titled Contrasting Beauty.

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A NOTE

Hope is being able to see that there is a light despite all the darkness
 – Archbishop Desmond Tutu

For many of us, 2020 has felt like a forecast of permanently dark rain clouds casting shadows on every aspect of our lives. Now, more than ever, we find ourselves relating to Job's story of turmoil and tragedy. Together we share his sentiments, "If all of our anguish were to be weighed out on scales, it would surely outweigh the sands of the sea" (Job 6:2-3). Corporately and individually we could easily overwhelm the world with our woes. The unique challenge we face each day is shifting our focus and finding hope. How do we identify light in such a dark place? Can our eyes adjust to see God's goodness?

Gratitude is essential to unlocking our supernatural sight. It provides a lens for us to uncover God's truth, despite life's seemingly unbearable circumstances. The practice of gratitude does not make us blind to our hardships or require us to suppress how we truly feel. It does not require a grin and bear it attitude. At its core, gratitude is deeply authentic and complex enough to maintain the delicate balance of the reality we are currently experiencing as well as God's reality, which is far greater than our own.

The apostle Paul was speaking from experience in his exhortation to the church, "In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you" (1 Thessalonians 5:18). We know of Paul's sufferings from the New Testament. Among his many hardships, he had been shipwrecked, imprisoned, persecuted and beaten near death. Paul knew that giving thanks allowed him to follow Christ's example—walking in the way of love (Ephesians 5:1-4) and set him apart as God's beloved. As Christians, we are marked by our thanksgiving.

Gratitude is a powerful virtue that pushes back the walls of darkness. Among its many benefits, it opens the door to healing in our lives and strengthens our resilience. Psychologist Robert Emmons, who researches gratitude, noted, "Consciously cultivating an attitude of gratitude builds up a sort of psychological immune system that can cushion us when we fall. There is scientific evidence that grateful people are more resilient to stress, whether minor everyday hassles or major personal upheavals."

As we approach this Thanksgiving holiday, we hope the expressions and reflections you find here will change your perspective, ignite your spirit and speak directly to your heart. May you come away built up in love and overflowing with praise.

GRATITUDE IN 2020 REALLY?

TED ROBB

This has been one rough year and I don't think I'll get much argument there! We've all been run over by the truck called 2020. It seems we're stuck in some cartoonish plot where the truck backs up and runs over us again and again as we sit there helplessly wondering what in the world is going on and when will it end?

And then, we come to November when a time of gratitude is scheduled right there on the calendar, staring at us as if to say, "Thou shalt be grateful!" Who else feels like shouting at the calendar, "Forget it! Don't you know what kind of year it's been? Can't we do this some other time when I feel grateful, when I can find something that I'm truly grateful for?"

That's the crux or the rub, as it were. Being grateful ... for something. We tend to see life and its events on a basis of plus or minus, positive or negative. When things are good on our scale, we are grateful. When they are not so good, we are not grateful ... instead, we usually lament. I don't know about you, but I've been doing more than my share of lamenting so far this year.

And, as if 2020 hasn't been bad enough, many among us have had extra helpings of this less than festive meal to digest—those things that make life hard enough in a normal year: illness, loss, family issues, etc. So, here we sit, stunned like a deer in the headlights of 2020 and the calendar demands gratitude from us. "Gratitude? Really? Are you kidding me?"

A few weeks back, as I was honestly struggling with more than one of those "extra helpings" that had piled on this year, I heard a word from God. It was a reassuring word of encouragement and love. He said, "Remember, I have always been there for you and with you." I was stopped in my tracks, but I did look back through all the uglies of my life—not a few—and had to admit, he was right. God has honestly and obviously been there with me through all of them, and the apparent promise is, he won't stop now.

The reality is, even in the most bewildering and challenging of times, we have a God who truly loves us, who hears us as we labor in the midnight garden of prayer. He is saying, "Do not be afraid because I am here." He is a God who gives rest to those so greatly worn down by life's burdens, and who comforts those who suffer whatever pain life has thrown at them. We have a God who upholds us with his righteous right hand. This is one of the deepest truths humankind can know. And in the realization of this truth, we find our positive, one that springs from our heart and from our spirit, not just our feelings! In the unfailing love of my God, I can find gratitude.

COUNTING OUR BLESSINGS

Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits. – Psalm 103:2

Celebration doesn't always come easily. Sometimes we have to break the ice and coax it out. In Psalm 103, David exhorts his soul to bless the Lord. Though there are many things to be thankful for, even he (the man after God's own heart) had to do a bit of a warm-up. Counting our blessings, or listing the Lord's benefits, can bring us to a place of gratitude and abundant praise.

GRATITUDE CHALLENGE

Scripture: Read Psalm 103 in its entirety.

APPLICATION

Write down your blessings. You can record them in a journal or on scraps of paper and save them in a "Blessing Jar." Just recycle an old mason jar and presto! This is a practice you can do on your own or with your family and friends. Each day take some time to reflect on what you're grateful for. If you're having trouble, just use David's list as an example.

UNEXPECTED

TERESA SAYLES

A friend recently related how she had made a list of all the unexpected blessings she could remember throughout her life. The idea struck me as something both fun and helpful. After all, who doesn't like to remember the good things that have happened to them, especially when we tend to spend so much time lingering on the not-so-good things?

As I began my list, though, I realized a lot of the memories that were coming to mind were things that if I'd had my way initially, would have been very different. And yet, what I received in the end was almost always so much better, so much more beautiful than what I had originally thought I wanted. I had quit a job I loved with the idea that I'd find a new, fantastic job to replace it. Instead, I was given an extended time to think, rest, create, reconnect, travel and grow in ways that have changed and shaped me profoundly.

I took up a chair in a counseling session planning to "fix" the problem I walked in with only to find there was more to it than that one issue, that healing and transformation on a broader and more beautiful scale lay ahead of me.

I have made friends over the years thinking they would simply be nice, fun people to spend time with only to discover I can't imagine my life without them.

A visit to see my aunt to celebrate my 30th birthday ended up becoming a treasured and profound memory I will always cherish as she passed away just a few years later.

The list goes on.

I'm a planner. I tend to think ahead, grab the necessary details, and make things work toward that goal. So when I'm hit with the unexpected, when my plans fail or falter or have to change or are just completely thrown aside, it can shake me up pretty good. I sometimes even take offense. I will get mad at people, at myself, at God: why couldn't we just stick to the plan? It was a good plan!

But in looking back, I am reminded that my good plans are not always the best plans. In fact, they're often not even good plans.

And despite my tantrum-throwing, my angry remarks, my sullen feelings, God has over and over shown himself to be the God who knows me and what I really need better than I know myself. He has proven himself to be the God who loves me better than I can even understand. And He has carefully, tenderly, firmly planted good things in the soil of my life without my knowing that have, under his unfailing care, blossomed into the most beautiful blessings. And I will be forever grateful for the unexpected.

"BECAUSE PINEAPPLES"

EMILY MORRISON

This is not the last poem I will write

Because apples
and pines
and pineapples,
apple pies and mud pies
mud puddles and Puddleglum.
Because drumsticks
and fiddlesticks
and maybe even pick-up-sticks.
Because zoos and zoology
taxes and taxonomy.
Because over the moon
and under the sun.
Because chandeliers
and pink Champagne
and Charlemagne.
Because a-merry-go-round
and A-meri-go Vespucci.
Because praying mantises
and praying Pope Francis.
Because it hurts like the dickens
and oh how the plot thickens.
Because you can't rhyme orange and purple and silver
except with zorange and xurple and quilver
Because
as long as we have
words to write
and people to love
we will always need
one more
poem

AUTUMN SPLENDOR

PAM TAYLOR

BOTANICAL SCHADENFREUDE

MATTHEW JOHNSON

The summer was over
A maple tree looked down at the snow and begged for
The sun to chase away the freezing temps
The clouds lifted
The wind shifted
I snapped a photo of the tree
Pumpkin orange against icy blue

Magnificent! But then my friend
The maple tree's season was coming to an end
Work your tail off all summer long and what do you get?
A lack of water, freezing temperatures
Will kill you for the year
It seemed odd to celebrate this
But Stephanie said the pic was "Facebook worthy"
And others would delight in this as well
So, what the ...

Chlorophyll once coursing through the veins
Had turned the leaves so green
Now sugars trapped by freezing nights left red rimmed
Fringes on five fat fingered hands waving goodbye
To life for the year and who knows
Soon all red and brown would be gone too
Soon the absence of color, soon white, soon

Did I pity the poor tree?
Expressed regret, sure, and loss and sadness
But for the tree or me?
Sad that I could no longer bear witness to the colorful display
It was a dying process, but I didn't think of it that way.
The cycle of life
Did I pity the dying - no
I pitied poor me, my loss you see.
Yes, though gleefully stared at this showy display I was annoyed
Is this, I wondered, botanical schadenfreude?

There was nothing left to do
But get in the car. Drive to the orchard
It wasn't that far
Some apples, half a peck
What the heck make it two

It was a bumper crop this year
Honeycrisp, Zestar, Sweet Tango in paradise
Another tree to celebrate
Sweet dripping juiciness in every bite
Oh Lord, in spite
Of me you got it right.

IN SEARCH OF THANKSGIVING

Consider it a sheer gift, friends, when tests and challenges come at you from all sides. You know that under pressure, your faith-life is forced into the open and shows its true colors. So don't try to get out of anything prematurely. Let it do its work so you become mature and well-developed, not deficient in any way. – James 1:2-4 (MSG)

When James wrote his letters, his goal was to encourage those facing trials to live out their faith and remind them of their hope in Jesus.

As we try to make sense of this world, there's a lot of darkness to overcome. It's hard not to be overwhelmed by it all. As humans, our brains are wired to fixate on negative things. This psychological phenomena is known as "negativity bias" and it can have a powerful impact on how we think, respond and feel. If we are mindful of our tendency to negativity, we can ask God to provide a different perspective.

Note: Be patient with yourself. This intentionality takes time and it's ok if you're not feeling particularly grateful or positive in the midst of trauma. Sometimes you'll have to wait for the storm to pass before you can point out the "good things."

GRATITUDE CHALLENGE

Pray James 1:2-4. Ask for God's perspective.

APPLICATION

- Spend 10 minutes each day for a week practicing mindfulness.
- Find a quiet comfortable place to focus.
- Close your eyes and recognize your breathing. That's something to be thankful for! You may be in the middle of a hardship, but your heart is still beating.
- Capture your negative thoughts and lay them at Jesus' feet.
- Ask God for the courage to continue moving forward in hope, faith and gratitude.
- If you're in too much pain to contemplate all these things, it's ok. German Theologian Meister Eckhart once said, "If the only prayer you said was thank you, that would be enough."

A GLIMPSE INTO TRUE GRATITUDE

TED ROBB

When it comes to gratitude, let's just say I'm still working on it. By that, I mean, I'm not really proud or comfortable with my feeble attempts at it. I think gratitude should have more substance than a mere "thank you note" weakly offered to God. It was around this time last year I had an experience that gave me a glimpse into what true gratitude really is.

It had been a rough year, and I was heading for an appointment with a member of my cardiology team. If you've had any significant cardiac issues, you know that you end up with not just one cardiologist. You end up with a cardiology team. As I got out of my car in the parking lot of the clinic, I heard music. It was beautiful music with a quality that made me think it must be playing through speakers in the portico, which was not common for this clinic. As I drew closer, I realized that the lovely music was coming from one elderly man as he sat on a bench near the door. He sang with a vocal clarity and beauty that could have been professional. As I came near, I saw people pass by seeming not to notice this exquisite performance. I did notice, however. I stood and watched and took it in. I struggled to make out the words, but that didn't diminish the experience. It was beautiful.

The man wasn't singing for me. He wasn't singing for anyone around him, that I could determine. I guessed he was singing to himself. His eyes were focused on a piece of paper he held with both hands. The paper showed the creases of having been folded and placed in an envelope which lay in his lap. As he continued his angelic verse, he worked the tune and his voice into a spine-tingling finale. As he did, he grasped the paper stronger, almost desperately, and raising his moistened eyes upward, he loudly and exquisitely sang, "And I thank you!" I considered approaching him to tell him how much I had enjoyed his song, but I chose otherwise because though the music was over, the moment, for him, was not. Leaving him in his moment, I entered the clinic to keep my appointment.

In that one, short manifestation I realized that I had been in the presence of an amazing display of true gratitude. In that moment, I learned that gratitude involves deeply personal connection and communion between the receiver and the giver—in this case, between the man and his God. I also realized that when gratitude is honest, true and real, it is undeniably a thing of radiant beauty. Not everyone's gratitude will meet the artistic beauty of this man's display, but gratitude—true gratitude—is in and of itself a thing of wondrous beauty.

JOY IN THE DARK

CAROLINE WISE

Resolute while the boat of my hope
fills with water and I cannot bail
fast enough to save it

Sinking beneath the waves of
relentless silence as my lungs fill
with the water of anguish

I smile behind a mask in public, so
no tears leak out, and I stand in a
check-out line tribeless when I am
wired to belong. What good does
it do me to hear an online sermon
about friendship, and the power of
fellowship, when I ran from it be-
cause it was too cold in that house

In the gasping silence of my life, I
remember Peter

He did the only thing left, he cried
out in those waves, sinking

Lord, save me

The waves still, and I'm lifted to a
view above that ocean and in my
mind's eye I see a massive table,
with an empty seat for a guest

The table is situated in an ocean of
joy, and I hear what I've been wait-
ing for all my life, a soft voice say-
ing, "Friend come, there is a place
for you here, with Me."

Joy breaks through, I am called to
a table where love is prepared, a
feast, a celebration where all the
outsiders are included

I join brothers and sisters through
the ages that claim me as their own
family, I cease to be orphan and
find my kin, while I hear them cheer
over my homecoming, "Look we
saved you a seat! We are waiting
for you, come here dear one."

In this moment while the tears are
still wet on my face, I laugh for joy
and remember

They are all there waiting, a cloud
of thousands, brothers and sisters,
friends

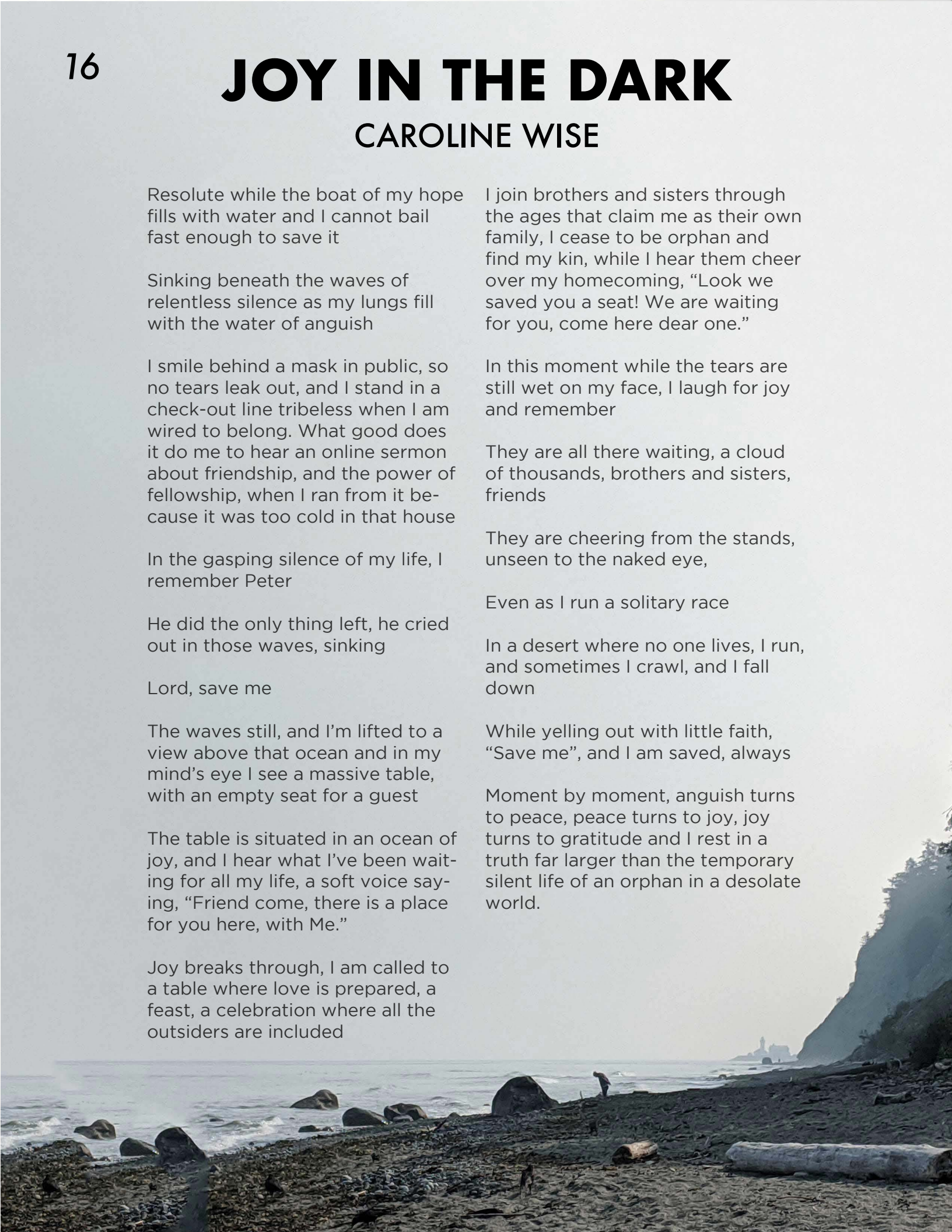
They are cheering from the stands,
unseen to the naked eye,

Even as I run a solitary race

In a desert where no one lives, I run,
and sometimes I crawl, and I fall
down

While yelling out with little faith,
"Save me", and I am saved, always

Moment by moment, anguish turns
to peace, peace turns to joy, joy
turns to gratitude and I rest in a
truth far larger than the temporary
silent life of an orphan in a desolate
world.



A DRIVE TO WORK

KAY LEE PENTON

Four living dead people
ride to work with me this morning.
The red ball of rising sun
blinds me as I head east.
It doesn't bother my companions.

My husband rides shotgun,
like he always did
after he had to quit driving,
when he couldn't find
anywhere.

I turn to catch
a glimpse of his profile,
like I always did,
when he was alive
and I was driving us
somewhere.

In the back seat, chatting quietly,
sit the Holy Three-
Papamama, the H.S. and Jesus.
I concentrate on not
hitting deer or cats,
or running over
dead raccoons and skunks.

I peek over at my husband
who has turned toward the back seat
and is laughing gently with Jesus.
Papamama is humming.

I just know
the H.S. is passionately playing
air guitar.

There are no deer, cats, or smelly roadkill.
Just green, green trees, a brightening blue sky,
the sun hidden behind the visor.
By the time I pull into the parking lot,
my riders have all disappeared.

CELEBRATE

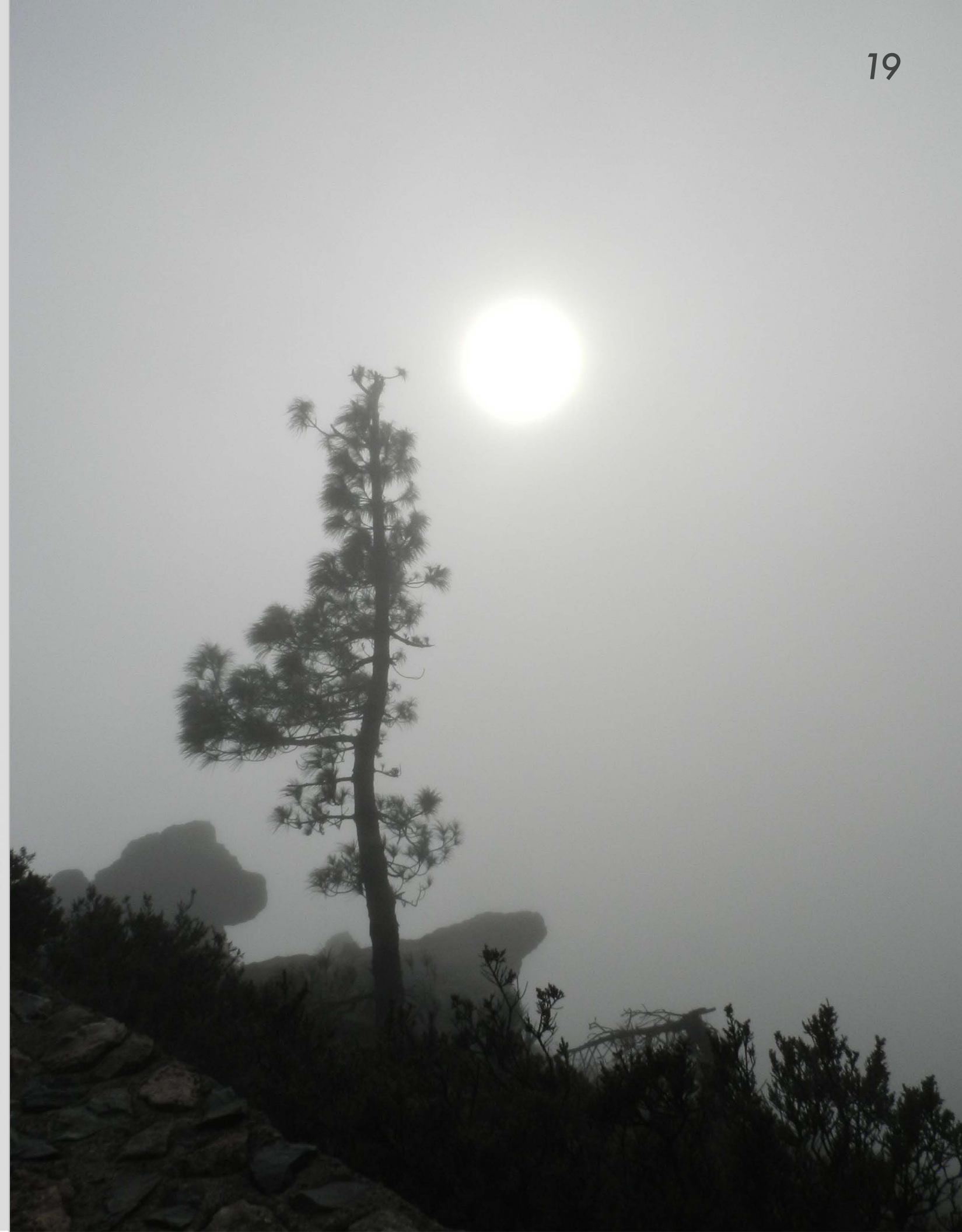
MAGGI HUTCHESON

Knowing that there is a firm foundation of abiding goodness in the universe, I want my soul to awaken and exuberantly celebrate all the joy that is happening everywhere.

Surely surely if we must rightly lament over evil, we must also celebrate all that is good.

Celebration is not frivolous but necessary.

It is fuel for fighting the good fight.





PRAYING HANDS

LYNN M.

Yet in the midst of grief and loss, we are reminded of God's strength in these enormous stone hands. We are reminded that when we pray, our small, folded hands are encircled by the presence and majesty of God, who covers our entire being, our life, even nations, in the fold of his magnificent hands.

Psalm 20:6, "Now I know that the Lord saves His anointed; He will answer him from His holy heaven with the saving strength of His right hand..."

LOLA AND THE SWEET POTATOE PIE



WITH LOVE, LYNN M.

(A VILLANELLE)

When early morning cooking begins, Lola's on the prow!
Across a cold floor is the click-clack of four spotted feet
Sniff, sniff...Lola's tummy begins to growl

Morsel dropped on the floor, a sticky trail Lola will follow
Turkey, pie, stuffing and other tasty treat...
When early morning cooking begins, Lola's on the prow!

Begging for just one bite, Lola will howl
Yummm... Thanksgiving dinner is almost complete
Sniff, sniff...Lola's tummy begins to growl

Drool forms at her fuzzy jowl
The sweet potato pie never looked more sweet
When early morning cooking begins, Lola's on the prow!

Lola jumps on the counter,
Mommy's face is crumpled in a scowl
Slurp slurp, Lola lunges for pie and meat
Sniff, sniff...Lola's tummy begins to growl

FROM THE AUTHOR

This poem is based on a favorite family story and one of my happiest memories. One Thanksgiving, I spent hours baking a sweet potato pie sweetened with chai. It was completely destroyed when our Dalmatian, Lola, jumped on the counter, both paws around the pie, and slurped it all up! Her white face was bright orange, I had to laugh. She taught me a valuable lesson ... situations may not live up to our expectations, or they turn out differently than we thought. Yet, a moment, even in trial or frustration, holds the potential for so much more. After all, who would think this odd shaped vegetable dug out of the ground would one day become a delicious pie?

Lola has since passed away. She was always a bright spot in my life during hard times.

1 Peter 5:10 (NIV), "And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast."

AN ACT OF FAITH

CAROLINE WISE

Sometimes expressing gratitude is initially an act of faith upon which dead, withered vines regenerate. I've lived long enough to observe that gratitude eventually begets joy. The expression of gratitude adjusts our lens to see how vast the reasons for gratitude actually are.

Reciting the Lord's prayer this morning, I thanked God for my daily bread. As I did, I realized that a recent family fracture that was so extremely painful, was also "daily bread."

The practice of gratitude is already shifting how I see things. The pain opened my eyes to some much-needed change and took me to a deeper place of surrender.

In the end what looked like a death was a unique opportunity for rebirth. Gratitude is the alchemy that opens blind eyes to see.

THE JOY OF GRATITUDE

Come, let us sing for joy to the LORD; let us shout aloud to the Rock of our salvation. Let us come before him with thanksgiving and extol him with music and song.

– Psalm 95:1-2

Do you remember the last time you were overcome with joy because of God's goodness? Can you recall what you were thinking? Did your body have a physical reaction?

Studies show that when we express gratitude our brain is at work releasing mood boosting chemical messengers, dopamine and serotonin, to the rest of our body through neural pathways. What a marvel! Isn't it crazy to think of how impressive our bodies are? Everyday neurons are sending messages constantly. Science also shows that by practicing thankfulness, we can strengthen and rewire our brains, making us healthier and more joyful.

Philosopher and theologian G.K. Chesterton once said, "I would maintain that thanks are the highest form of thought, and that gratitude is happiness doubled by wonder."

Gratitude Challenge

Scripture: Read Psalm 95 out loud.

Application

Every day say out loud something you are grateful for. It doesn't matter if you're alone or sharing with your family. God will always be present.

THE GIFT OF GRATITUDE

BERIT LUNSTAD

From God:

My gift to you is gratitude.

Dear child,

I give you beauty in every situation
I give you an act of empathy
The secret to the beginning of
understanding.

I give you a transformation
From grief to peace and joyful
remembrance
From frustration to the heights of
hope.

I give you the secret to joy.
I give you a connection to me
I give you a smile in the midst of
heartbreak.

I give you a way to accept,
In spite of transgressions,
My unending love.

You need not worry about
tomorrow
Be grateful for today.
I give you a tool
Tempered with my dying breath
To hold open the door of your heart.
I give you a helper
This hindrance to temptation.

I only seek your love, dear child.
This is my gift to you
Accept it.

It is the wind that clears the night
And holds the light of a billion stars
in renewed wonder.

It is the reawakening of nerves to
the warmth of the sun
and a loved one's touch.

It is the reflection of stars in water
when you fear to look up.

It is the multitude of vibrant colors as
the
world dies

It is the everlasting evergreen in the
coldest night

Dear child,
I have given you everything

Hold on
For in every loss, there is a memory
In every day, there is a tomorrow
With every night comes a morning
And with the dark comes the stars
For in every person lies a heart

In every destruction a renewal

In every fallen tree
a hundred saplings
For every fault, forgiveness
For every winter, a spring
With every death, heaven
And in every moment
Of every second
Of every day
Now and forever
I promise, dear child,

There is, was, and always will be:
Me.

SOUL FILLING

KATIE HOLMBERG





WONDERFUL CREATION

*The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands.
Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they display knowledge.
– Psalm 19:1-2*

All of God's creation bears witness to his power, wisdom and goodness. It can be so easy to miss out when we're cooped up inside immersed in technology.

German theologian Martin Luther once said, "God writes the Gospel, not in the Bible alone, but in the trees and in the flowers and in the clouds and stars."

GRATITUDE CHALLENGE

Worship: Take a break from technology and spend time with God in nature.

Go on a walk outside. Observe the world around you and take note of God's beautiful handiwork.

WOOD WIDE WORSHIP

PAIGE K. SLIGHTER

Push the meaningless media
out of your mind
Leave your to-do list at home
Breathe in the earth's sweet, rich musk
God's creation, a magical cornucopia

Close your eyes and cup your ear to the forest floor
Listen to the crackling of connections being made
Root tips are conversing through
currents
Crisscrossing like clasped hands

An intimate world exists beneath
our feet
Fibers and fungi are exchanging
encouragement
The earth is in constant dialogue
To our human ears, much of it is masked in mystery

I wonder if these whispers are worship
My spirit hums eagerly within me,
joining the wooded symphony.

EVERY DROP A MAGNIFYING GLASS

MATTHEW JOHNSON



I went out in a hurry for my morning walk, skipping over puddles and downed leaves left by the overnight wind and rain. As my mind wandered through the day's activities like a child chasing windblown leaves across the back yard, I realized I really needed to "bag" my thoughts. I slowed down, if only slightly.

I began bemoaning my tendency to move past things without seeing the significance of what lay right in front of me. I stopped and looked at the trees. The birds were quiet now—an occasional chip and chirp. Brilliant orange-red maple leaves matted against a blue frame. Squirrels rustling under leaves for a January Sunday dinner. I listened. I watched leaves falling. I smelled the air.

Lord, thank you for the abundance of life
For the intricacy of life
For the complexity of life
For the delicate fragility of life
For the resilience of life

I know that my perspective comes only by the gift of faith in the Creator, but how could anyone not be filled with awe and wonder? That may be the greatest thing about grace—it's for those that know and those that think they know and those that don't know and those that don't want to know.

I can only ask that as I go forward, I will not be so quick to bypass and dismiss what lies right in front of me. Door after door has been held wide open—or at the very least left ajar—waiting for me to step through. Even those that have been passed by seem to somehow find their way in front of me again. Now, I ask, can you please help me take the time to stop and take a closer look? Only then can I know what is waiting to be revealed.

As I concluded my walk and ambled up the driveway I'd skipped down before, I stopped and knelt down to examine the fallen leaves speckled with rain drops ... each drop a magnifying glass, a little laboratory awaiting the student to stop and take a peak into a different dimension beyond what was there in plain sight.

I only needed to take the time to stop and look.

An answered prayer.

SOLACE

LILY MUMFORD



Grateful for vast waters and natural beauty. I'm grateful for the ability of my mind to take in this view and find comfort from something so large and daunting. To feel my mind heal by seeing something imposing but not intimidating; so beautiful and comforting with its quiet power.

PEACE & THANKFULNESS

GAYLE ROBB

*Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body; and be thankful
– Colossians 3:15*

MANY THANKS

"At times, our own light goes out and is rekindled by a spark from another person. Each of us has cause to think with deep gratitude of those who have lighted the flame within us."

- Albert Schweitzer

Dear reader,

We hope this journal rekindled your spark of thanksgiving and lit a flame. Times are hard, and we all need a little boost. May you feel the strength of many hands and hearts holding you up and cheering you on. We pray your gratitude overflows to those in your circle and beyond.

Dear artist,

Thank you for digging deep. Thank you for sharing your experiences and your unique perspectives with the broader community. Thank you for letting us join you in this journey to gratitude. May you feel heard, appreciated and supported. Keep investigating. Keep creating. Keep the flame alive.