



## “A Healing Testimony”

Have you ever had the experience of saying something that came from deep inside you, witnessing its impact on those listening, being asked to repeat it, then finding the words elusive, as the moment has passed, and you are not quite sure of what came out of your mouth in the first place?

This is the situation I found myself in recently. Let me explain. We begin our Staff Meetings with a period of silent meditation. Then we check in with how we are doing in our personal lives, before focussing on our work issues. In our Staff Meeting a couple of weeks ago, when I checked in, I did so from an open, spacious place about my deep sense of well-being and shared a spiritual insight that had come to me earlier in the week. At the time, I felt like a soaring eagle. Bruce asked me to offer that reflection this morning, as it would fit with the healing theme of today's service.

I agreed, but in the meantime life happened, including violence, grief, disappointments, busyness, all clamouring for my attention and constricting my heart. My eagle self came crashing to earth and it seemed as if I could no longer find the words to express what I had said during that Staff Meeting.

However, what I discovered was that perhaps the words would not come because they were not yet ready to emerge. Yesterday, 6 of us from one of the Centerpoint groups that I co-facilitate, spent a Retreat Day together in which we viewed a DVD of a contemporary spiritual teacher in California, named Adyashanti, who was talking about attention, stillness and silence. After enjoying some time preparing and eating a potluck lunch, we went on a silent guided meditation walk in the nearby woods of Pacific Spirit Park. As we walked, I found myself pondering today's scripture readings. In the passage from John's Gospel, what stood out for me was Jesus showing the disciples his wounds when he came to them in their locked room following his resurrection. He did not appear in an unblemished state but as one who still bore the marks of his suffering and death.

When we stopped in the woods, I leaned against a large, tall tree. I felt embraced and deeply known by it. I actually experienced the tree as a manifestation of the wounded Risen Christ, coming into my closed, locked heart and greeting me with 'Peace be with you.' It was like a breath of fresh air was being breathed on me, as the breath of life had been given to me at birth. Just as Jesus breathing on the disciples in that locked room was

reminiscent of the creation story in Genesis 2:7 when God breathes life into humanity. I reconnected with what Adyashanti calls “the unique and undivided expression of existence” that is inherent within us.

So now I am able to tell you of the moment of clarity that came to me a few weeks ago. I had an awareness of and was profoundly grateful for how blessed, full, and rich my life is. For example, I have a sense of purpose as an instrument of God’s love and I am moved when people express gratitude for their experience of being touched by my presence or my words. I feel well used by God. I have a wonderful, loving family with whom I am close. I have the privilege of belonging to and serving in this remarkable, vibrant community of faith. I am humbled by the acceptance and trust I receive from the folks at the quiet, sacred space in the Downtown Eastside, called The Listening Post where I regularly volunteer and provide Healing Touch. I treasure Thursdays with Miracle, my beloved Goddaughter, as well as my friendship with her parents, Neil and Rachel. I enjoy weekly “Best Neighbour Soiree” dinners with some of my neighbours in the condo where I live, with whom a trip to the Yukon together in June is being planned. The words falling from my lips right now might as well be those from the psalm we heard read today, “How very good and pleasant it is when kindred live together in unity! It is like the precious oil on the head, running down upon the beard...” I do not actually have a beard, however, at my age I do have those pesky chin hairs, so maybe that counts!

Along with this awareness of the blessedness of my current life emerged a memory of myself as a young child, kneeling and praying in church, asking God why I had been created. I knew that God must have made me for some purpose but I had no idea what that could be because I felt as if I was nothing. I was a very shy and frightened child who thought that I was neither very good at anything nor had any talents. Suddenly, an enormous wave of appreciation for God and God’s timing washed over me. I recognized that it was no wonder that the little girl I’d been did not know for what reason she had been created, because she needed to mature and have all the life experiences that I have had in the interim, take place in order for God to use me as is happening today. I felt such love for God and just chuckled at the realization! This quote by Byron Katie, in her book, *Who Would You Be Without Your Story?* jumped out at me when I read it, “To inquire honestly, with intention, is to wait for an answer within you to meet the question. Your wisdom is always there to speak, and it will give you the answer to the question.” In this case, it took 60 odd years for wisdom to arrange this meeting of my question and the answer!

This is my healing testimony. In what ways have you been healed? How might you need healing? As you come forward this morning, to participate in our sacred communal meal, with open hands, ready to receive, I invite you to bring your attention to the gift of the Spirit of the wounded yet Risen Christ that is available for you. Then, if you choose, move on to a station to have healing hands laid on

your shoulders while you are anointed with oil, being marked with the sign of the cross on your forehead as was done with the infants who were baptized last

Sunday. For, as the psalmist says, the blessing that God ordained is: life for evermore. May it be so!