**Contemplative Service for Wednesday**

**June 14, 2023**



*art by Wentja Napaltjarri*

**First reading**: Philemon 1: 6-16

I pray that the partnership of your faith may become effective as you comprehend all the good that we share. I haveindeed received much joy and encouragement from your love, because the hearts of the saints have been refreshed through you, my brother.

For this reason, though I am more than bold enough to command you to do the right thing, yet I would rather appeal to you on the basis of love—and I, Paul, do this as an old man and now also as a prisoner of Christ Jesus.I am appealing to you for my child, Onesimus, whose father I have become during my imprisonment. Formerly he was useless to you, but now he is indeed usefulto you and to me. I am sending him, that is, my own heart, back to you. I wanted to keep him with me so that he might minister to me in your place during my imprisonment,but I preferred to do nothing without your consent in order that your good deed might be voluntary and not something forced. Perhaps this is the reason he was separated from you for a while, so that you might have him back for the long term, no longer as a slave but more than a slave, a beloved brother—especially to me but how much more to you, both in the flesh and in faith.

**Music**: “Ukuthula” sung by Cape Town Youth Choir

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yNqmpQPp-ns

**Second reading**: from *Truth and Repair* by Judith Herman

If traumatic disorders are afflictions of the powerless, then empowerment must be a central principal of recovery. If trauma shames and isolates, then recovery must take place in community.

**Music**: Lakota Lullaby, sung by Alexia Evellyn

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lSXIVhe\_esM

**Time of Silent Contemplation**

*O God, we thank you for the lives of great saints and prophets in the past, who have revealed to us that we can stand up amid the problems and difficulties and trials of life and not give in. We thank you for our foreparents, who’ve given us something in the midst of the darkness of exploitation and oppression to keep going. Grant that we will go on with the proper faith and the proper determination of will, so that we will be able to make a creative contribution to this world. In the name and spirit of Jesus we pray. Amen.*

*—Martin Luther King, Jr.*

**Communal Blessing**

Whether we rub with the grain or against it, whether smoothing the pelt or ruffling it, what we touch, Maker, is still alive with texture. It has its own integrity. May we touch with reverence even that life which is so different from our own. May we be touched with respect, even awe. We pray that we will be reconciled when our edges meet, when we find meaning, and then pleasure, and finally your holy continuity in all that we are and all that we encounter. Praying, we touch you. And your hand upon us. Amen.

**Music**: “Northern Lights” by Ola Gjeilo, sung by the Gemma Choir

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uwnXJRqjcx8>

*Peace be with you.*