Reflection for January 9, 2023



On my way home from work, I drive past a church marquee that offers this message:

God is our anchor in times like these.

When I first began driving past the church, I thought the message was probably referring to the pandemic. As time has gone on, “times like these” could be referring to any number of other matters: fire season, political upheaval, major supreme court decisions, the climate crisis.

It’s possible, of course, that the no one at the church as remembered to change the marquee: one of the letters is now a bit askew. But I tend to think that the statement remains true and relevant no matter what the times present to us. After one very pleasant day, I found myself reflecting that God is definitely our anchor, not just on the tough days, but also on the good days.

And now, God is not only our anchor, but our lifeboat as we navigate one atmospheric river after another. May you stay safe and dry during the coming week. I hope you can take a moment to enjoy the green world that is sprouting up all around us.

In faith,

Elizabeth

AND BECAUSE A GOOD POEM IS ALWAYS WORTH READING MORE THAN ONCE, we offer you Laurel Reader-Taatjes’ poen once again—with apologies that the stanza breaks were inadvertently taken out last week. Thank you, Laurel.

Hope In Winters Light

Somewhere
Snow is falling
It drifts down in sheets of white
That cling to tree branches
And settle on the once green ground
But we don’t see that

Somewhere
People are crying
Tears of joy and tears of sorrow
That stain the world
With darkest grief in tears that never stop
Someone is crying
But we don’t see that

Somewhere nearby
A bird sings a song
Maybe we hear it
Maybe we don’t

Somewhere nearby
A faint light flickers
Somewhere in coldness
Somewhere in sun

If we think of life
As darkness and light
Darkness is greif
Light is our hope

Somewhere
Hope is a candle
Burning hot and bright
That hope is almost
Tangible
Like heat
Against a wall of ice

Somewhere
Hope is a thread
Shining with bioluminescence
That hope is
Barely there
But there all the same
Like light
On the walls of a cave

Hope is not always bright
It’s not always
A flame in the darkness
A lantern guiding you on

Sometimes hope is the moon
Sometime hope can be seen
As a winter sunbeam through clouds
Sometimes hope is the sparkle in our eyes
When we see someone we love
Or light from a screen
Reflecting silver off ornaments

Hope isn’t always something radiant
Something obvious
The best type of hope
Is the type that comes to you
In the form you least expect it.



Special Announcement

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| As you may know, we expect additional storms to hit the area this weekend and next week. Hope solutions, in cooperation with other local service providers is working to get supplies to people who are living on the street during this precarious time. |

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| **We hope you will consider supporting this effort by donating the emergency supplies listed below to be distributed in emergency shelters.** |

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| **Survival supplies*** Mylar blankets
* Tarps (to fit a small/medium tent)
* Rain ponchos
* Hand warmers
* Beanies
* Gloves

**Non-Perishable foods:** (individual sizes so they can go out in food/hygiene packs) * Chili/tuna snack pack – anything with a pop top that can be opened easily
* Crackers/graham crackers
* Dried fruit
* Granola/cereal bars
* Fruit snacks
* Apple sauce/canned fruit (individual and/or pop top)
* Individual peanut butter and crackers or cheese/crackers
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| **If you can provide any of these items, please deliver them to the church office this week, M-F between 9 and 2. Thank you!!** |

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| **\*****How could you enjoy your life at Orinda Community Church even more?** |

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The church is seeking volunteers to participate in our life together in any number of ways. We need new volunteers for OCC Council and other ministries. Dream up amazing programming for our Lifelong Learning? Help design worship and suggest themes? Use your handyperson skills to work on our grounds? Welcome people on Sundays by ushering? Participate in the church council? There are many options and possibilities, and we would be excited to have you bring your gifts to our already-wonderful community.

If interested, please reach out to Bill Abriel, Anne Barr, or Elizabeth. We’d like to hear from you by January 15.