

Dear Friends,

Here in the Northwest we've spent several weeks in a deep freeze. It's somewhat unusual for us. We huddled around our gas stoves and fireplaces, rarely venturing out between the ice and freezing rain. Seems like my heart's been rather frozen, as well. The election broke my heart. Then a series of devastating family illnesses, including my mother's stroke, scattered the pieces of my heart in a dozen directions. Then came the tsunami. But something happened. Just when I thought my heart could never be put back together again, hope came like the warm "pineapple express" winds that we've been experiencing over the past few days. Hope came as I saw so many care so deeply about the suffering of people half way around the world. Hope came as I heard my mother's voice, growing stronger. Hope came as I saw the numerous small organizations springing up in our town,

working on issues of peace, sustainability, democracy and spirituality. These are people who are keeping their hearts and minds alive. It is the hearts that are willing to break open that bring more compassion, and ultimately, more justice into the world.

So now I feel energized for the work ahead. I'm in the midst of recording my NEW CD, "Where I Stand". I'm excited to be working with Cary Black, a long-time friend and ultimate musician, as my co-producer. It always feels scary and crazy to do these projects, but I think these times call for a bit of craziness. If you'd like to join me in this endeavor, I would be delighted to have you buy the CD in advance, to give me working capital. Maybe even 2 or 3. It should be done by Spring, and then I can send you your copies -- I'll pay the postage. If you're interested in pre-buying, please send me an email and I'll send you an address to send your order.

I'm also excited about the ongoing work with our ROOTS community. We've had three monthly gatherings now, and I'm thoroughly enjoying working with Shirley Osterhaus, Joan Muenschler, and others in the community as we experiment with art, ritual, song and conversation, connecting our hearts and politics with spirituality.

Coming up - this weekend I'll be in CALIFORNIA. Before that, on Thursday (if you get this note in time), I'll be at the ANTI-INAUGURAL EVENTS here in Bellingham, between 5 and 7 PM at the Mt. Baker Theater, and between 7 - 9:00 PM at the Pickford Dreamspace. Great program of speakers and musicians raising their voices for democracy.

There are other upcoming events listed at the end of this newsletter. You can also find this information at my web site: www.lindasongs.com. Watch for updates on my site, coming soon. There will be a photo album, song sample, and more. Not ready yet, but hope to have it done soon.

I'd like to share the lyrics of one song I hope to have up on the web site before too long. It's a lament for the victims of the tsunami. I heard a news piece about the parents of missing children going down to the beach, waiting for the sea to bring their children back. So this song came through my cracked-open heart:

God of All Beyond the Sea (2005 Linda Allen)

God of all beyond the sea
Send my children home to me
If they are gone, please hear my plea
Let the waves wash over me

Sea bird flies where none can hide
Above the sea so dark and wide
Will you be my eyes today?
Are my children on their way?

Porpoise leaps above the waves
I see him flash, I see him play
May my children ride you home?
Across the cold and windswept foam

God of heaven, God of light
God of Earth and endless night
God of the sea, where I may rest
Rock my children on your breast

God of all beyond the sea
Send my children home to me
If they are gone, please hear my plea
Let the waves wash over me

I'd like to close with a quote from one of my favorite annual Christmas letters from our friend, Percy Hilo:

"Although the world is full of suffering, it is also full of the overcoming of it" - Helen Keller

Be at peace -
Linda