

Dear Friends,

I heard a powerful poem the other day, so am sending it along to you, with my own prayer for peace. My family and I went to see the Dalai Lama this past weekend, and somehow it all seemed so simple. It's about compassion and forgiveness -- and discipline. I did particularly pay attention to that last one -- it's the one I tend to pass over. But I'm working on it.

This is tax day, and once again, I'll be late. Maybe it's a passive-aggressive thing, I haven't much liked the way my money's been spent. I've met tax resisters -- sang at a conference with them a while back -- and I have so much respect for them! There are many ways to resist, and tax resistance can be an effective one. Isn't that how this country started? With a tea party?

Speaking of tea parties, I have some exciting news: The musical reader's theater, ***Recipe for Justice***, will be presented in **Leavenworth on Mother's Day, May 11th at Sleeping Lady**.. I wrote music and worked with Susan Butruille on the script. I can hardly wait to see how the actors bring it all to life. Susan has been such an ideal partner on this project, and I am so grateful to her for her skills in research and writing. It's been a dream collaboration. The play is at 2:00. Scott, Nathaniel and I also have tickets to the 10 AM sitting of the Mother's Day brunch there -- which is, I've heard, world class. And looking at the menu, I believe it! So come to Leavenworth, if you can, and celebrate with us! Here's the information on the play at Sleeping Lady. Go to their web site for info on the brunch.

*The world premiere of **Recipe For Justice**, a musical readers theatre to commemorate the 2009-10 centennial of Washington woman suffrage. The musical historical drama features three generations of women planning a celebration dinner as the teenagers, mother and grandmother share memories, songs, recipes, and contrary views over women's rights. The script is by Leavenworth author and readers theatre director Susan Butruille, with Bellingham musician Linda Allen. Authentic suffrage music and Dr. Allen's songs about food and life and women's rights weave through the production. The Upper Valley Historical Society and Sleeping Lady Mountain Retreat sponsor the production, with partial funding from the Washington Women's History Consortium. Adults \$15, Seniors and Students \$12. For information, contact the Upper Valley Historical Society at 509-548-0728.*

In other news, I'll be participating in two benefits for our beloved **Utah Phillips**. His illness is preventing his being able to travel to perform, and as all of us who have done this trade know, this is a drastic setback. Medical bills have been high. So please come out and support Utah. If you don't know his work, check out his music on iTunes, or visit his web site. He's truly one of the finest, funniest performers and songwriters I know. Here are some details:

Sing Out for Utah Bellingham: Saturday, May 3rd

7:30 Bellingham Unitarian Church

Performers (alphabetical order)

Linda Allen (with Laura Smith), Artis the Spoonman, Marie Eaton & Janet Peterson,

Joules Graves, Mike Marker, Tim McHugh,, Geof Morgan, Mark Ross, Anna Schaad & Kevin Murphy (Emcee)

Advance Tickets \$12 (\$10 for seniors), At the door \$15 (\$12 for seniors)

Ticket Outlets:Boundary Bay Brewery and Bistro (360) 647-5593, FAX 671-5897

or info@bbaybrewery.com, Community Food Co-Op (360) 734-8158, Everyday Music (360) 676-1404 , Stuart's at the Market (360) (360) 714-0800, Village

Books (360) 661-2626, FAX 734-2573 or orders@villagebooks.com

Need more info? Email Steve Tornblom (thoreau@serv.net) or phone 360-671-2111

The second concert for Utah happens **Friday night, May 23rd, at the Folklife Festival**. My daughters Jen and Kristin will be participating in that one, along with a host of others. Watch the Folklife schedule for more information on that one.

I'll be updating my web pages soon -- but it's a bit out of date at the moment. I can tell you that there will be a new **Artist Way class** starting May 1st -- come join for an exploration of creativity and spirituality and where they meet. The two choirs, The **Threshold Choir and Women in Song**, continue to meet at The Connection, Whatcom Peace and Justice Building, on Tuesday nights from 6:30 to 8:30 (E. Maple and Cornwall). I attended a Threshold Choir gathering in California this month, and am totally excited about the new songs I'm learning to sing at the bedside for those struggling to live or struggling to die. But the choir is also for us..and not everyone will choose to sing at the bedside. Wonderful songs! For more information on the national choirs, and where they are located, visit:

www.thresholdchoir.org

I'm hoping to begin doing **concerts and presentations** again soon. I dropped most performing while I was in chaplaincy training. Now I have a break until October when the next training begins. If you're interested in having me come to your conference, church, club or living room, please give me a call! I'm also taking private students for voice/guitar/songwriting/spiritual counseling. My presentations/sermons/talks are on my journey to the Middle East, voice workshops, creativity or Creation Spirituality. And I love house concerts. Give me a call if you have some ideas for me for this summer, or if you'd like to sign up for a class. 734-7979.

So that's my news. I'm feeling happy more often than not. I've learned that when one is filled with gratitude, there is no room for anger or fear. So I'm trying to learn to live in that place as often as possible.

Love from my grateful heart -

Linda

Pray for Peace by Ellen Bass

Pray to whomever you kneel down to:

Jesus nailed to his wooden or plastic cross,
his suffering face bent to kiss you,
Buddha still under the bo tree in scorching heat,
Adonai, Allah. Raise your arms to Mary
that she may lay her palm on our brows,
to Shekhina, Queen of Heaven and Earth,
to Inanna in her stripped descent.

Then pray to the bus driver who takes you to work.
On the bus, pray for everyone riding that bus,
for everyone riding buses all over the world.
Drop some silver and pray.

Waiting in line for the movies, for the ATM,
for your latte and croissant, offer your plea.
Make your eating and drinking a supplication.
Make your slicing of carrots a holy act,
each translucent layer of the onion, a deeper prayer.

To Hawk or Wolf, or the Great Whale, pray.
Bow down to terriers and shepherds and Siamese cats.
Fields of artichokes and elegant strawberries.

Make the brushing of your hair
a prayer, every strand its own voice,
singing in the choir on your head.
As you wash your face, the water slipping
through your fingers, a prayer: Water,
softest thing on earth, gentleness
that wears away rock.

Making love, of course, is already prayer.
Skin, and open mouths worshipping that skin,
the fragile cases we are poured into.

If you're hungry, pray. If you're tired.
Pray to Gandhi and Dorothy Day.
Shakespeare. Sappho. Sojourner Truth.

When you walk to your car, to the mailbox,
to the video store, let each step
be a prayer that we all keep our legs,
that we do not blow off anyone else's legs.
Or crush their skulls.
And if you are riding on a bicycle
or a skateboard, in a wheelchair, each revolution
of the wheels a prayer as the earth revolves:
less harm, less harm, less harm.

And as you work, typing with a new manicure,
a tiny palm tree painted on one pearlescent nail
or delivering soda or drawing good blood
into rubber-capped vials, writing on a blackboard
with yellow chalk, twirling pizzas--

With each breath in, take in the faith of those
who have believed when belief seemed foolish,
who persevered. With each breath out, cherish.

Pull weeds for peace, turn over in your sleep for peace,
feed the birds, each shiny seed
that spills onto the earth, another second of peace.
Wash your dishes, call your mother, drink wine.

Shovel leaves or snow or trash from your sidewalk.
Make a path. Fold a photo of a dead child
around your VISA card. Scoop your holy water
from the gutter. Gnaw your crust.
Mumble along like a crazy person, stumbling
your prayer through the streets.

Rev. Dr. Linda Allen October Rose Productions 360-734-
7979 <http://www.lindasongs.com>