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 | | **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?** | |

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.