

Lenten Flowers In The Desert

Originally this was written for advent/Christmas but later adapted to fit with the Lenten theme of the wilderness or the desert and the idea of longing for the new life of Easter. We seem to have spent most of the last few years as a community waiting for regeneration, new life, to happen. And in the waiting, we hope and dream.

We wait, we long for, we hope,
reality seems dark as night,
drab as the peeling paint,
dowdy as damp ridden houses.

We wait, we long for, we hope,
peace seems a long forgotten dream,
as wars continue to rage,
as people die from hunger and bullets.

We wait, we long for, we hope,
as the baby of our long-faded Christmas celebrations
has reached adulthood
and is baptised in the Jordan.

We wait, we long for, we hope,
as the young man travels around Palestine,
itinerant healer and teller of stories,
touching the outcast and the lost.

We wait, we long for, we hope,
as hope itself seems to die,
the saviour hangs on a cross,
a tomb's silence deafening the skies.

And as we wait, as we long for, as we hope,
we look for the signs
daring to believe there is hope
dreaming of a miracle.

And as we wait, as we long for, as we hope,
the signs of heaven on earth are there
in the breaking of bread
and the pouring of wine.

In the gradual lengthening and warming of the days
we see glimpses of God's shalom,
and the desert is imbued
with the delicate fragrance
of flowers pushing up through the earth.

In the returning of migratory birds flying in to roost
we see glimpses of God's shalom,
and the desert is permeated
with the inspiring melody
of birdsong wafting in the air.

In the first flowerings of delicate snowdrops
we see glimpses of God's shalom,
and the desert is infused
with the riotous extravagance
of flowers bursting into bloom.

In the cooking of pancakes and squeezing of lemons
we see glimpses of God's shalom,
and the desert is saturated
with the gentle drenching of spring rains
as they hit the scorched earth.

In the children playing out after school in the muddy park
we see glimpses of God's shalom,
and the desert is refreshed
by the earthy aroma
of warm, wet soil.

We wait, we long for, we hope
and in the waiting, in the longing, in the hoping,
we take plain, simple bread
sign of Christ's body
broken for the life of the world.

We wait, we long for, we hope
and in the waiting, in the longing, in the hoping,
we take rich, full-bodied wine
sign of wonder and celebration
the promise of shalom for the world.

Share bread with the words:

Take, eat, this is my body given for you.

Share wine with the words:

Take, drink this is the new covenant sealed by my blood.

So we continue to wait, to long for, to hope,
to look for glimpses of God's shalom,
when the desert shall be infused
with the riotous extravagance
of flowers bursting into bloom.

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