

Ancient Well

In 1985, South African pianist, Abdullah Ibrahim released Water from an Ancient Well. Born Dollar Brand, Ibrahim had converted to Islam in the mid 1970's, marking this conversion with a name change. He had lived in exile in Europe since the early 1960's when the apartheid regime in South Africa had destroyed the Cape Town jazz scene of which he was a part. The ancient well from which Ibrahim draws his water is Africa.

Now finally returned to South Africa, Abdullah Ibrahim is celebrated as one of the inspirational figures behind a re-birth of South African jazz.

You could use this prayer in conjunction with listening to the track and/or as a reflection on some of the Biblical stories where people meet around an ancient well such as the woman who met Jesus at Jacob's well.

When anger and conflict rise to the surface
and we argue over the resources of land, water and oil
help us to dig deep into the resourcefulness
of the ancient well of human creativity
and forge peace and justice for all nations.

When human leaders take ballot boxes as a mandate for war
and we find ourselves dis-empowered by those we empowered
help us to dig deep into the resourcefulness
of the ancient well of human creativity
and enact stories of protest and change.

When fear and prejudice cause us to put up barriers
and exclude the people who are not like us
help us to dig deep into the resourcefulness
of the ancient well of human creativity
and build bridges of social inclusion.

When the burning of fossil fuels causes global warming
and human greed and wastefulness exacerbates the problem
help us to dig deep into the resourcefulness
of the ancient well of human creativity
and invent sustainable technologies.

When we are tired of trying to change the world
and apathy and despair take root
help us to dig deep into the resourcefulness
of the ancient well of human creativity
and renew us with energy and enthusiasm.

Encounter us and you encountered the Israelites
and met with the Samaritan woman at the well
help us to dig deep into the resourcefulness
of the ancient well of human creativity
and to put our trust in you.

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