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# *Dedication*

To Brad, Abby, and Simon: thanks for supporting my creative endeavors.  
I love you so much, forever and always.

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# *Poems in the Pandemic*

Written and Illustrated by Leslie A. Piggott





## *Before and After*

*Life*

*Once so carefree*

*So innocent.*

*When the unexpected*

*Was exciting*

*And mysterious.*

*When it seemed that far past*

*The sky—was the LIMIT.*

*That there were no boundaries.*

*Now*

*Seems so fragile*

*So unprotected.*

*Where the unexpected is*

*Terrifying.*

*Where fears are running high*

*And WALLS continually go up*

*In the name of safety.*

*When hope is hard*

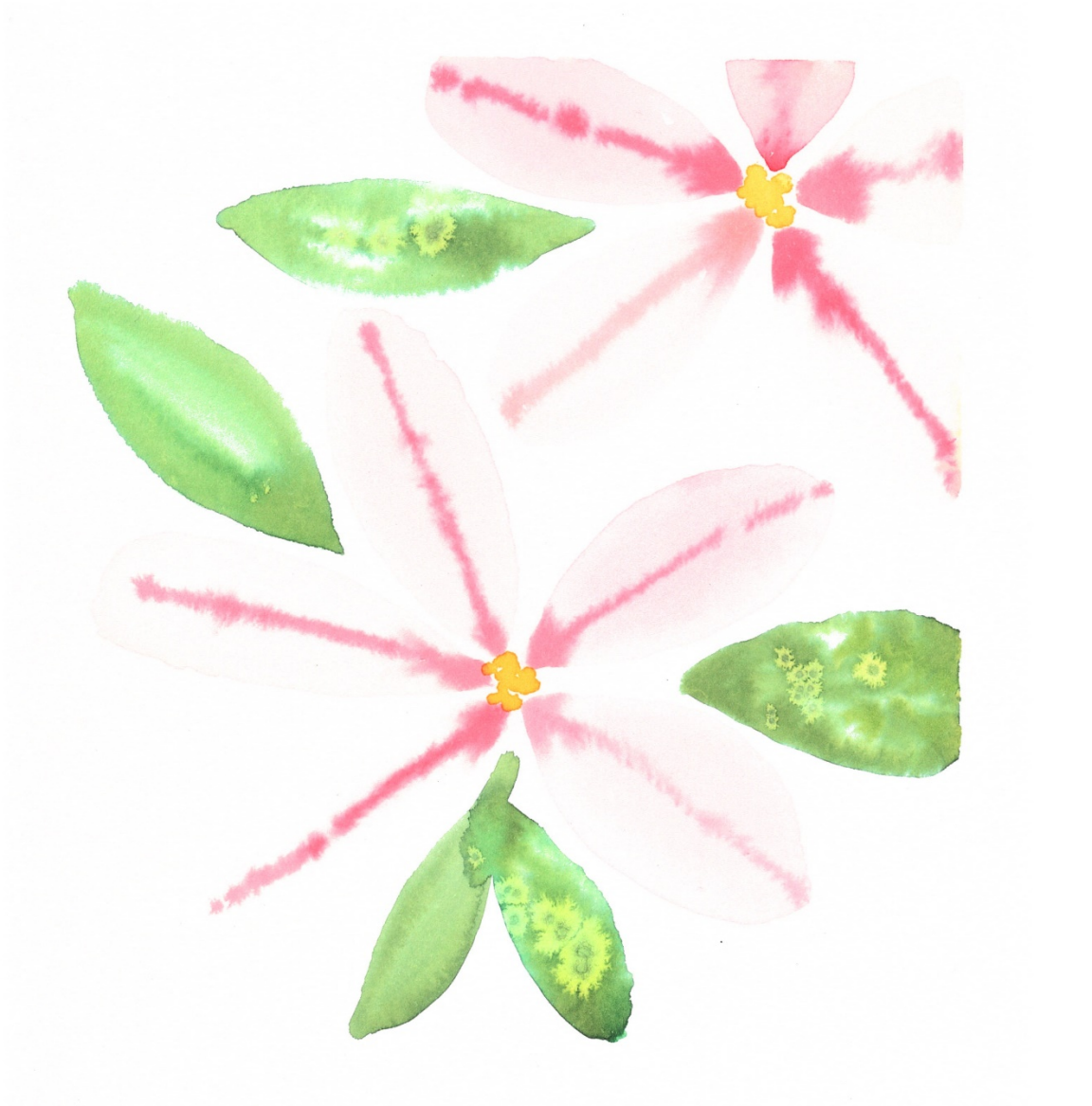
*And peace seems out of reach.*

*Love is steadfast*

*Hope will persevere*

*And Faith will endure*

*For God is with us.*



## Seeking Hope

God  
Waiting in heaven.  
Souls  
Returning home  
Daily  
By the thousands.  
When Lazarus died,  
Jesus wept.  
Who weeps now?  
Loneliness  
Feels fully tangible.  
They that hope in the Lord,  
Shall renew their strength.  
My strength wanes.  
Father God,  
Hear our cry.  
Heal your sons and daughters.  
Restore our hope.  
Forgive our weakness.  
You walk  
Beside us  
Before us  
Behind us.

## *Crying for Comfort*

*Help us  
To seek you  
We are  
Lost  
In the wilderness  
Of disease.  
May we see Your Light  
And find Comfort.*

# Healing

Prayers are raised: Continually, Constantly, Pleadingly.  
Struggling  
For clarity.  
How Why When...  
As the days  
Count higher  
Alongside the deaths  
The endless infection  
Rages  
Its hosts: Equal opportunity  
Its victims, much less so.  
The world: Lush, Green, Alive.  
Its habitants: Cowering, Gasping, Questioning.  
Much seems uncertain  
Life, more precious  
Time, more endless, yet somehow  
Hanging from some unknown  
Precipice.  
As we grasp for hope  
Our dreams feeling somewhat  
Shattered,  
We plead with Our Creator  
To restore our world.



## Wandering

*Subconsciously*

*Perceiving*

*Guilt.*

*An unknown grievance*

*Must be righted.*

*How did we get here?*

*Trying to find Home*

*Yet always being there.*

*Constant uncertainty.*

*Constant monotony.*

*Is the end near?*

*Is it the end that we seek?*

*Dichotomy arises.*

*Some fight for life,*

*Some search for answers,*

*All desire peace.*

## *Springtime in Pandemic*

*Gentle rains washing in hope.  
The NEWS, like a quicksand  
Of ever-rising numbers.  
Spring: Synonymous with new life,  
New Beginnings,  
Yet, this Spring, morbidity looms  
As we hunker down.  
What fear looms on the horizon?  
What do we fear more:  
Disease, or uncertainty?  
The world longs for renewal  
For hope  
For evidence of restoration.  
When will we arrive there?  
We are on a journey to the unknown.  
We must arrive at this destination  
Without taking  
A  
Single  
Step.*





## *Finding Faith*

*Each morning  
Faith renewed  
The day begins  
Seemingly unmarred by tragedy.  
Yet  
One can only ignore  
The new reality  
For so long.  
The virus,  
Unfazed by modern medicine,  
Races through our communities  
Leaving victims by the thousand in its wake.  
God of our fathers,  
Our faith hangs  
Threadbare.  
Days pass  
Without holding obvious meaning.  
We grasp for answers,  
For understanding.  
We strain for victory,  
Struggle, for insight.  
Seeking balance*

*Desiring relief.*

*Our hearts are consoled by yours.*

*Your compassion is with us.*

*This season will end.*

*Hope will outlast fear.*

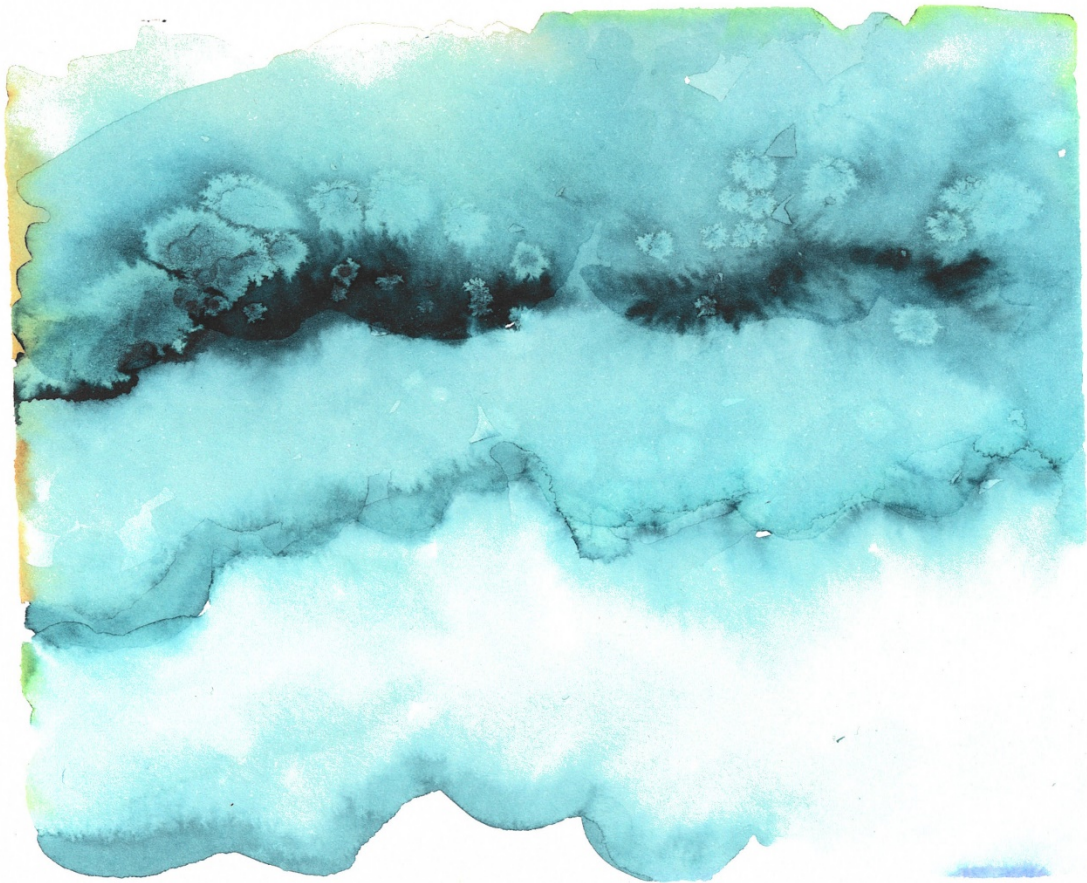
*Faith will see us through.*

## Seeking Light

When this ends  
Who will remain  
Untouched,  
Unchanged?  
Or without sacrifice?  
Isolating  
Yet uniting.  
Hope looms in the distance  
Sometimes skating by  
In a brief, flicker of light.  
Unquenched by the surmounting darkness  
Of lives lost.  
The Light cannot,  
Will Not  
Be Overcome.  
Faith  
Perhaps misplaced at times  
In things that cannot sustain,  
Seeks the Light,  
Satiated and renewed.

## *But Still*

*Overwhelming bleakness  
Looms around me.  
Straining for hope  
Searching for something tangible.  
My prayers are heard.  
This I KNOW.  
Thunder roars.  
Despair looks for a foothold.  
But still.  
I will not be shaken.  
Nor will I be moved.  
The disease circulates,  
Spreads,  
And sometimes,  
Conquers.  
But still.  
God walks with us.  
Holds us.  
Knows us.  
No matter the outcome,  
We are still God's.*



## *Finding Connection*

*Joining together  
Across miles  
Hearts connected  
Hearts entwined  
Feeling seen, even touched  
Without making physical contact.  
God crosses these boundaries.  
God's connection of love  
Never broken  
God's arms of compassion  
Never missing.  
We are not forsaken  
Not forgotten.  
We are loved.  
We are held.  
We are known.*

## *Moments of Despair*

*Oh God,*

*I want to believe you hear me.*

*I want to feel that you are comforting me.*

*I want to feel something other than alone.*

*Sweet Jesus,*

*I feel despair.*

*I feel a bit lost.*

*I don't see your hand,*

*Yet I know it's there.*

*Is there no rescue crew?*

*When does this suffering end?*

*How do I pray for help?*

*Where do I find relief?*



## *Standing*

*We stand,  
Where the jokes have ended,  
Longing to laugh.  
We dream  
Of times when we were together,  
Wishing they were now.  
We rise,  
Going through the motions,  
Hoping for good news.  
We gaze,  
At the world around us,  
Wondering where we stand.*



## Redefining

Where is the world that I once called home?  
Where is the stability I so often took for granted?  
I have long-since surpassed the idea of waking from an  
unfathomable nightmare.  
This is not a novel with a plot of a dystopian future.  
This is my new reality.  
Things once certain feel precarious.  
This is not a disruption.  
It is a new course.  
While disease rages and emotions run high,  
The world is experiencing a new tack.  
May we forge ahead together.  
May we see what was broken and find new ways to fix it.  
May we open our eyes to the injustices that we've refused to  
see before.  
May we be the LOVE that the world needs  
Instead of the judgment with which it's already been filled.

## *Restoration*

*O Lord, where do we see your vision?  
Where do we find your joy?  
Where do we look for justice?  
Where do we turn for hope?  
Open our hearts to your will.  
Open our ears to your dreams.  
Align our goals with your calling.  
Restore our hope for tomorrow.  
Let joy sing again.*

## Travel

Some days the road seems longer than usual.  
Some days the uncertainty of the future feels insurmountable.  
Some days my significance appears insignificant.  
Some days my desire to masquerade as an ostrich in the  
desert is hard to overcome.  
As fearful thoughts continually circle around me,  
Where do I find refuge?  
You say, "Joy still comes in the morning,"  
But when does the morning come?  
Am I allowing moments of mornings to pass me by  
As I tread in my pool of fear?  
Am I searching for answers that do not exist?  
I long to have unshakeable faith, but feel myself growing  
weary.  
May the Spirit of hope move like a strong wind.  
May I draw comfort in the wishes of a new season.  
May I see the heart of God in the world that is my home.



## Road of Life

We have walked the road of life thinking that the road will always be recognizable.

We have taken comfort in “knowing” that at least the road will always be a road. It might be hilly or windy or muddy, but it is still a road.

When we awake to discover that we are no longer walking down a road, but now navigating through stormy water, we panic. “Where is our road? Where is the life we have always known? How do we restore that?”

Maybe instead we should ask how we adapt to our new setting. The old has gone. The new does not have to be bad. Maybe the stormy water is ushering in a new wave that is better than the road we long to rebuild.

# Anguish

*Sitting on my bed*

*Crying*

*Not wanting to laugh*

*Not wanting to cry*

*Trying so hard to be in the moment.*

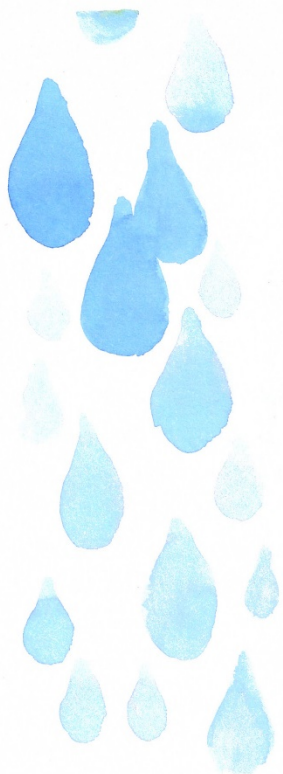
*Trying to see where hope lies.*

*Feeling overwhelmed by the weight of tomorrow.*

*Unable to enjoy today.*

*Please, Jesus, send relief.*





## Floundering

*Inward restlessness.*

*Outward joyfulness.*

*Unreconciled turmoil.*

*Incomplete dreams.*

*What do you desire?*

*What do you seek?*

*Where do you turn when it feels like love is not enough?*

*What do you pray for when you don't know what you want?*

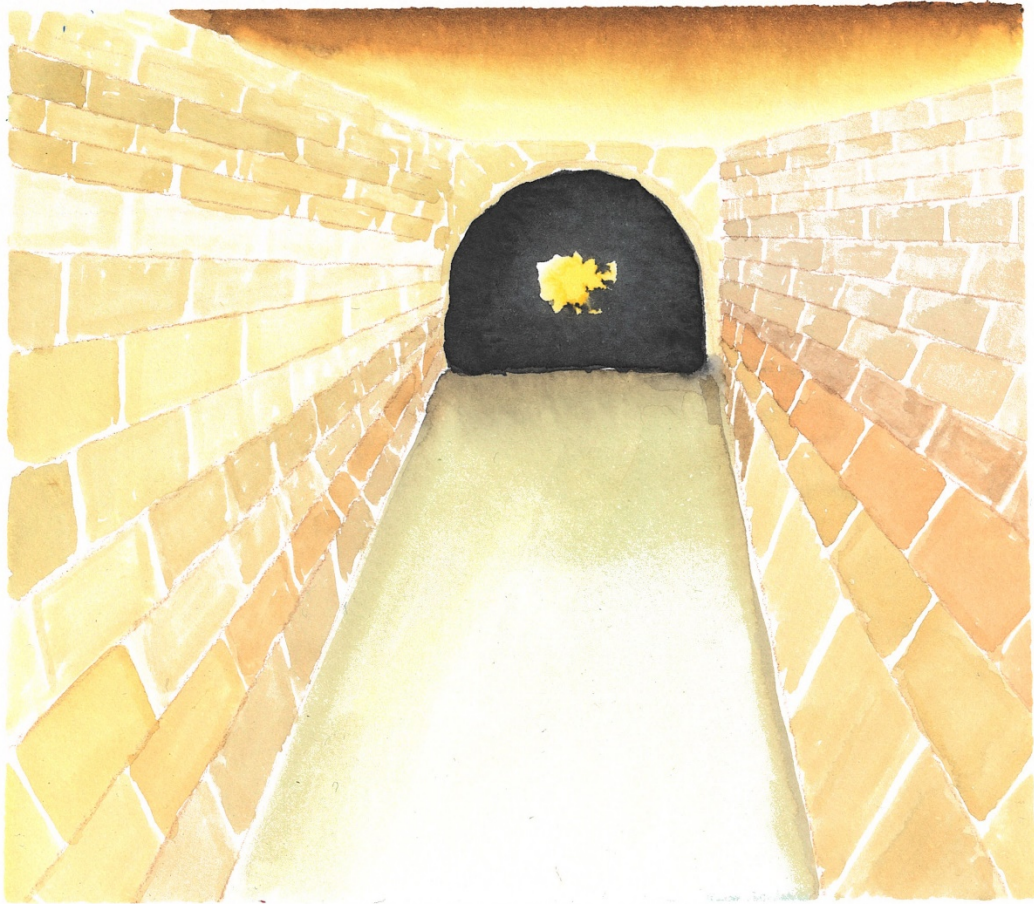
*Who can answer the questions you don't want to ask?*

## *Perspective*

*In the beginning,  
We were naïve,  
Uninformed.  
Maybe even ignorant.  
Fears ran high.  
The unknown and endless uncertainty fueled our hysteria.  
The number of questions  
Smothered  
The few answers we could find.  
Our trust plummeted.  
We wondered where our new equilibrium would settle.  
IF it would settle.  
We joked.  
We criticized.  
We cried for unity  
While demonizing anyone with differences.  
We longed for restoration.  
For something that reminded us of “normal”.  
Will we discover patience?  
Will we find peace?  
Will we Love?*

## Tunnel Vision

People speak of a light at the end of the tunnel.  
Sometimes it feels like I can't even see the tunnel,  
Let alone whether or not it has a light.  
Faith is knowing that the light is there, even if unseen.  
Life feels like uphill running right now.  
That we just keep pushing up and onward  
Towards the peak,  
But it just keeps getting higher.  
Just need more patience,  
More perseverance,  
More endurance.



## *The Language of Love*

*What language did the angels speak  
The night our Savior came?  
What people understood their song  
That rose above the earth?  
At Pentecost, the Holy Spirit came,  
Bringing the good news in such a way  
That all who heard could know.  
When the angels sang of our Savior's birth,  
What language hit each ear?  
Did they speak with judgment  
With voices filled with scorn?  
Did they sing condemning lyrics  
That made men fall in shame?  
While I cannot say, for I was not there,  
I think I will believe,  
That the angels sang that all could hear  
And they sang their words in Love.*

## *Love Came Down at Christmas*

*Love came down at Christmas.  
Christmas 2020.  
In a year filled with uncertainty,  
Fear,  
Doubt,  
Loss of trust,  
And isolation,  
Love still came.  
Love is present.  
Love is the light shining in the darkness.  
Shining in each of us.  
We have seen life challenged this year.  
We have seen judgment on nearly every front.  
We have endured pain.  
We have persevered through trial after trial.  
We have found ways to come together  
While remaining apart.  
Love came down at Christmas,  
2000 years ago.  
But Love never left.  
Love remains  
It is steadfast,  
Breaking through the darkness that has challenged our days.  
May we see the Love of Christmas  
May we seek Love and find Hope.*

## *Unrelenting Judgment*

*Some days  
The perceived judgment I feel  
Almost outweighs my fear of getting sick.  
So many battles are raging:  
Physically against a viral pandemic,  
Socially against accepted boundaries,  
Emotionally against our psyches as we strive for comfort.  
Agonizing over what has been lost  
While feeling calloused by the high death tolls.  
Can you strain for balance?  
We have built a dam—  
An effort to keep the virus out.  
Each of us  
Scrambling to avoid the leaks  
Which grow in number daily.  
As the pressure builds,  
We try to remain resolute,  
Uncompromising.  
Relief feels close  
But still out of reach.*





## Seeking Relief

*Bend, don't break.*

*Persevere.*

*Endure.*

*How far can we bend?*

*How long must we persevere?*

*Where does relief reside?*

*Like children on a road trip,*

*We ask, "Are we there yet?"*

*What does "there" look like?*

*As the pandemic rolls on,*

*Without any sign of dampening,*

*It feels like we're failing.*

*Like we must be making constant missteps.*

*Life, once taken for granted,*

*Feels paused,*

*Yet rushing on.*

*We long for contact,*

*For something to break free.*

*We grasp for hope,*

*Continually feeling*

*Like it's out of reach.*

*Yet we are not abandoned.*

*We are not forgotten.*

*We are held.*

*We are known.*

*We will one day gather safely,*

*Our joy renewed, restored.*

## *Division*

*Our world feels foreign.  
Changed.  
We question everything.  
We trust little.  
The designations of “Haves” and “Have-Nots”  
Are redefined.  
Like a scarlet A,  
The mark of disease  
Is not forgotten.  
We continually speak of kindness,  
But look with scorn  
On those who are struck sick.  
No reward awaits those who are unscathed.  
May our cry for Unity be pure.  
May we join together with love.*

## *God Is Present*

*Child of God*

*Lift your head*

*Don't despair*

*Your cries are heard*

*The discomfort of the present*

*Will not last forever.*

*God is still with us.*

*Your pain is not unseen.*

*Your grief is not unnoticed.*

*You are not forgotten.*

*You've endured the unimaginable.*

*You've experienced tremendous loss.*

*You seek comfort amidst your isolation.*

*God knows.*

*God hears.*

*God is present.*



## Refocus

How did we get here?  
When did we forget who we are?  
When did we stop loving our neighbor?  
Who knew staying home was so hard?  
We say, "there's no I in TEAM"  
While constantly looking out for #1.  
We wear our "Be Kind" t-shirts  
While rolling our eyes  
And calling each other stupid.  
Our lives a surreal dichotomy  
Of self-righteousness and spirituality.  
We cry that God has been pushed from our narrative  
While judging others' values as less.  
We've redefined "neighbor" as our replicas,  
Turning our backs on those who differ.  
Can we recenter and remember who is welcome at the table?

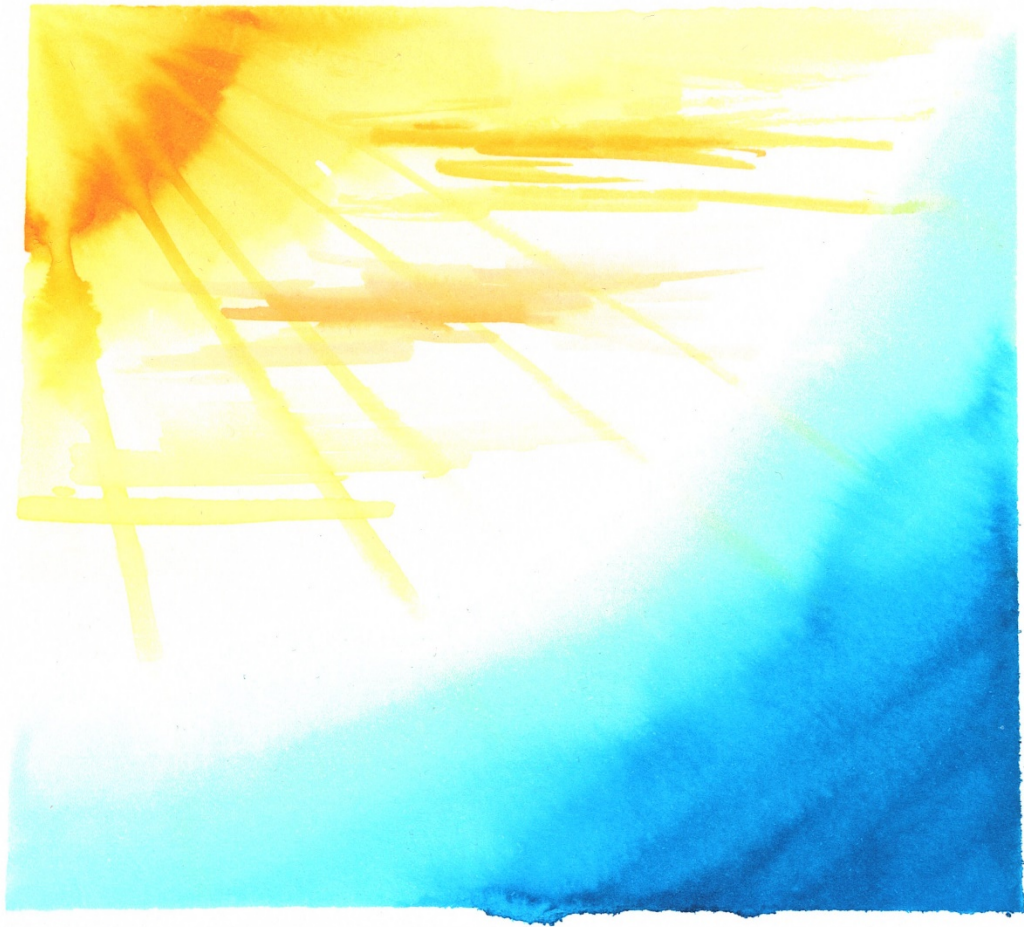
## *Real Life Pain*

*New life experiences  
Singing church hymns  
Tears in my eyes  
As notes choke out.  
Seeing my child  
Eyes wide with concern.  
Why is Mom crying?  
Pain, stemming from loss  
From change  
From witnessing callous disregard,  
Grows deeper daily.  
Overwhelming desire for relief  
For the world to right its course.  
How much more can we endure?*



## Breaking Point

There is a brokenness  
That is breaking me.  
Conflict, death, and unrest  
The joy I seek  
Continually out of reach.  
Is the desire to be right so strong?  
Where is love hiding?  
Am I part of the hate?  
What resolution is coming?  
Can we find the love we've abandoned?  
Will we see past our hurt?  
Will we find good in our neighbor?  
We must get up.  
We must not wallow.  
We can work together while being apart.  
Hope has not fallen.  
Love is within us.  
We will persevere.



## *Held*

*Remember*

*The God who parted the waters,  
Who shielded youths from the fire,  
Who shut the lions' mouths  
Is with you too.*

*The God who brought down giants,  
Who healed the blind and the lame,  
Who brought the dead to life  
Has not deserted you.*

*From water to wine*

*To grave to life*

*God knows you.*

*God hears you.*

*God sees you.*

*Let yourself be held.*

## *Prayer for the Pandemic*

*In the midst of WIDESPREAD suffering,  
I pray that my love would be more  
WIDESPREAD*

*In the face of endless infection,  
I pray that my compassion would know no end.  
As our time of quarantine increases,  
So may too my generosity to my neighbor.*