



from Garth...

Light a Candle in the Darkness



On Sunday 22nd March, churches asked people to put a candle in their window at 7pm as a sign of hope in this time of coronavirus. Looking at our candle, Gill reminded me of my song *Light a Candle in the Darkness* and so I thought it could be time to hear that again, so we have put together **another meditational video clip**.

Mitri Raheb, Lutheran Pastor, theologian, author and friend, sent round a very significant quote – he is under strict lockdown in Bethlehem, and also Bethlehem experiences the ongoing pressure of the Israeli occupation and army.

Out of this situation he writes some very beautiful words of healing - so we start the video clip with his quote, **and you can see it on youtube here**.

Another voice of peace from Bethlehem

Another long time friend, Zoughbi Zoughbi - Director of **Wi'am, The Palestinian Conflict Transformation Center** - a partner of **Amos Trust** - also speaks of this time of coronavirus:

“Coronavirus is a pandemic that crosses the state borders of Israel and Palestine and affects Jews, Muslims and Christians alike. Israelis and Palestinians need to resist the dangerous movement toward racial and religious exclusivism. This virus proves that we are all one, equally threatened by coronavirus. Israel needs to

change. We must live together in peace, working together for everyone's well-being - Israeli and Palestinian - Jews, Muslims and Christians. There is no security in Israel unless there is also security in Palestine. The new name of the game is inclusivity and equality.”

Thoughts on our Lenten journey

We are still walking through the wilderness of Lent –

this year it is also the wilderness of Coronavirus.

This coming Sunday is the fifth Sunday of Lent –

then the next will be Palm Sunday.

What an unusual Lent

and it will be an unusual Holy Week, Good Friday and Easter.

But take time to pause, to remember and pray –

It is not a journey without hope – it is a journey to Easter morning.

In our prayers I'm sure we're praying for family and friends

but let us also pray for our communities that the healing will come,

pray for the sick, the bereaved, the lonely, the oppressed, and the victims of injustice.

Pray for the refugees, the victims of war.

Pray that a new spirit will rise around the world –

a spirit of caring, of community, of generosity and of peace.

Pray that the greed of the few will be replaced by a true love of neighbour and also love of the earth.

Prayer for us all

May God bless you with

discomfort at easy answers

half-truths, superficial relationships,

so that you will live deep within your heart.

May God bless you with anger at injustice,

oppression and exploitation of people,

so that you will work for

justice, equity and peace.

May God bless you with tears

to shed for those who suffer

from pain, rejection, starvation and war
so that you will reach out your hand
to comfort them and change their pain to joy.

And may God bless you with the foolishness
to think that you can make a difference in the world
so you will do the things which
others tell you cannot be done.

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