

## Reflections for Tuesday, June 30 by Kate Bottorff

*"I saw Heaven and earth new created. Gone the first Heaven, gone the first earth, gone the sea. I saw Holy Jerusalem, new-created, descending resplendent out of Heaven, as ready for God as a bride for her husband. I heard a voice thunder from the Throne: 'Look! Look! God has moved into the neighborhood, making his home with men and women! They're his people; he's their God. He'll wipe every tear from their eyes. Death is gone for good—tears gone, crying gone, pain gone—all the first order of things gone.' The Enthroned continued, 'Look! I'm making everything new. Write it all down—each word dependable and accurate.'"*

Revelation 21:1-5

The Book of Revelation was written during a time of upheaval and persecution. It was not a book used to predict the future. Rather it was written to provide a new story of hope for those going through hard times.

Not only are we dealing with a rise in Covid 19 cases, but we are seeing the statues of those people we revered toppled. The old stories, the ones we have relied on for so long, are exposed as not fully told. As a White person of privilege I grew up with stories of how the police were always there to help. I grew up with stories of the heroics of founding 'fathers.' I embraced the Civil Rights Movement of the '60's which was to guarantee equal treatment and opportunity for African Americans. What now is being revealed is there are times individual police treat Black and Brown people unfairly. What is being revealed is that the people (men) who were founders and leaders go our past were not giants but those with flaws and prejudices like all of us, people who treated others unjustly. What is being revealed is that people who are different from the majority in power are the targets of hate and suffer small and large injustices.

The old stories of how we value some lives over others, of how we value profit at the expense of giving life to all, of how we value individual rights over the rights of the whole are hopefully going to be rewritten. Indeed, it seems like they have to be rewritten again and again. What will the new story look like? Hopefully it will contain words like sharing, humility, the embracing of difference, seeing the holiness of all life, human and otherwise.

Prayer: God of all that has life and breath and meaning, we invite you into our neighborhoods that we might learn from you what is loving and just, what from the old needs to be kept and what may be discarded. We give you thanks that through you all things can be made new. Help us to write stories that affirm life in all its variety and assure life's fullness for all. Amen.