

## Mealtime Graces and Blessings-----

May the light we now kindle, and the food we now share,  
Inspire us to use our minds and bodies  
To heal and not to harm  
To help and not to hinder  
To bless and not to curse  
To serve Life and Love.

*(Adapted from the Passover Haggadah)*

We take a moment to be thankful, and to remember all that has come to us from Life:

For food which nourishes our bodies  
For family which teaches us what it means to be human  
For friends who help and encourage us  
For work that helps us discover what we can do  
For the sun which rises, for the wind and clouds,  
For the earth of which we are made  
For all of these things, we take this moment to remember how they make life worth living,  
And we give thanks.

## Meditations.....

### Morning Meditation

In the quietness of this place, surrounded by the all-pervading presence of the Holy, my heart whispers:  
Keep fresh before me the moments of my High Resolve,  
that in good times or in tempests,  
I may not forget that to which my life is committed.  
Keep fresh before me the moments of my high resolve.

*Howard Thurman*

*(All readings in this month's collection are taken from Singing the Living Tradition – our hymnal.)*

### Evening Meditation

Before the wonders of life, we acknowledge our failures to see and to revere:  
Before the sanctities of life we seek forgiveness for our disrespects and indignities;  
Before the gifts of life we own that we have made choices of lesser goods and now recommit ourselves to seek the gifts of life:  
Before the possibilities of life and love, we seek once again to be enlarged to new devotion.

*Adapted (Van Ogden Vogt)*

## Readings.....

### Strange and Foolish Walls

The years of all of us are short, our lives precarious  
Out days and nights go hurrying on and there is scarcely time to do the little that we might.  
Yet we find time for bitterness, for petty treason and evasion.  
What can we do to stretch our hearts enough to lose their littleness?  
Here we are – all of us – all upon this planet, bound together in a common destiny.  
Living our lives between the briefness of the daylight and the dark.  
Kindred in this, each lighted by the same precarious, flickering flame of life,  
how does it happen that we are not kindred in all things else?  
How strange and foolish these walls of separation that divide us.

*A. Powell Davies*

### To Risk

To laugh is to risk appearing the fool.  
To weep is to risk appearing sentimental.  
To reach out for another is to risk exposing our true self.  
To place our ideas – our dreams – before the crowd is to risk loss.  
To love is to risk not being loved in return.  
To hope is to risk despair.  
To try is to risk failure.  
To live is to risk dying.

*Anonymous*

Meditations on Love -----

Love is not concerned  
with whom you pray  
or where you slept  
the night you ran away from home.  
Love is concerned that the beating of your heart  
should kill no one.

*Alice Walker*

Love cannot remain by itself – it has no meaning.  
Love has to be put into action and that action is service.  
Whatever form we are,  
able or disabled,  
rich or poor,  
it is not how much we do, but how much love we put in the doing;  
A lifelong sharing of love with others.

*Mother Theresa*

We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single  
garment of destiny.

Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.

There are some things in our social system to which all of us ought to  
be maladjusted.

Hatred and bitterness can never cure the disease of fear, only love can  
do that.

We must evolve for all human conflict a method which rejects revenge,  
aggression, and retaliation.

The foundation of such a method is love.

*Martin Luther King, Jr.*

## READINGS AND MEDITATIONS

*To Share with Family and Friends...*

*February 2006*

*People's Church*

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### The Legacy of Caring

Despair is my private pain  
Born from what I have failed to say, failed to do,  
failed to overcome.

Be still my inner self  
Let me rise to you, let me reach down into your pain  
and soothe you.

I turn to you to renew my life  
I turn to the world, the streets of the city, the worn tapestries of  
brokerage firms, drug dealers, private estates,  
personal things in the bag lady's cart  
rage and pain in the faces that turn from me  
afraid of their own inner worlds.

This common world I love anew,  
as the lifeblood of generations who refused to surrender their  
humanity in an inhumane world courses through my veins.

From within this world my despair is transformed to hope  
and I begin anew  
the legacy of caring.

*Thandeka*