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We have what it takes to heal.

“And a Time to Heal”

“There is a time for everything,
 [it’s written in the Hebrew Bible,]
 and a season for every activity under the heavens:
 a time to be born and a time to die,
 a time to plant and a time to uproot,
 a time to kill and a time to heal...”¹

What does it take to heal when you’re weary? What does it take, when you fear “being left behind, left out, and being turned against”?² What does it take to again “hold life like a face/between your palms” and “say, yes, I will take you/ I will love you, again”?³

Not a homily. Not advice. Not words of wisdom. Not words at all. No. What it takes to heal are what the poet calls “*the tensile strands of love* that bend/and stretch to hold us.”⁴

Some snapshots from this week that heal us:

Love for what enlivens us heals. A 20-yr old Women’s Studies major reacts to the election results by getting a tattoo that day of the woman’s symbol.

Love for the other, who’s suddenly visible, heals. A millennial sobs into her pillow, sad to see her ignorance about fully half of the people in this country, sad to feel isolated, longing to connect, wanting somehow to love.

Love for the natural world heals. [show bean]A chaotic swirl of dark scythe-like shapes in a tree overhead, twists in the raw wind. And inside, a miracle of tender seeds. Their beauty and fragility touch the heart.

Love for life heals. In yoga class, opened up and awake, a man breaks down, feeling the bracing freshness of his powerlessness.

Love for neighbor heals. Ivy Brashear, a queer liberal Appalachian woman, fearful for her safety and her rights, also understands the fear of her conservative neighbors, whose future is bleak and for whom working in the mines is not a job, but an identity, a way of life. “We know who we are,” she writes, “We grew up in hollers, close and tight...where

¹ Ecclesiastes 3:1-3.

² Ivy Brashear, 31 October 2016. Accessed 9 November 2016 at <https://medium.com/@ivyjeb/i-come-from-the-land-of-trump-and-i-know-why-hes-winning-in-rural-communities-it-s-not-why-you-fl45862376ac#.iy7hur710>

³ “The Thing Is” by Ellen Bass, from *Mules of Love*. © BOA Editions, Ltd., 2002. The Writer’s Almanac, Prairie Home Productions, 16 October 2010.

⁴ Robert R. Walsh, “Fault Line,” *Noisy Stones: A Meditation Manual*. Boston: Skinner House Books, 1992.

we can hear the dogs barking from the opposite hillside...where Granny is always cooking enough food to feed an army...we care about our neighbors...we need to find a porch swing to sit in....”⁵ Love for place and love for each other heals.

We may be weary, but we are not broken. We will heal. We’re designed that way. And we can do our part to help. When we feel low, we can resist the urge to distract ourselves and do the same old thing—check email or Facebook, rustle up a snack we’re not hungry for, flip on the TV....

Instead, we can seek out ways to love. We can listen for the sweet note that breaks through the din of opinion. The call for justice, the child’s question, the truth in what a forgetful person notices, the turn of phrase that speaks to us. We can watch for miracles that stop us in our tracks—a spider’s web, a red sky at dawn. We can smile across the kitchen table.

We have what it takes to heal. To heal so that we can live our values. So that we can bring to this gift of life our best and highest selves.

So may it be.

⁵ Ibid.