

Praise Song for the Pandemic*

Praise be the nurses and doctors, every medical staff bent over flesh to offer care, for lives saved and lives lost, for showing up either way,

Praise for the farmers, tilling soil, planting seeds so food can grow, an act of hope if ever there was,

Praise be the janitors and garbage collectors, the grocery store clerks, and the truck drivers barreling through long quiet nights,

Give thanks for bus drivers, delivery persons, postal workers, and all those keeping an eye on water, gas, and electricity,

Blessings on our leaders, making hard choices for the common good, offering words of assurance,

Celebrate the scientists, working away to understand the thing that plagues us, to find an antidote, all the medicine makers, praise be the journalists keeping us informed,

Praise be the teachers, finding new ways to educate children from afar, and blessings on parents holding it together for them,

Blessed are the elderly and those with weakened immune systems, all those who worry for their health, praise for those who stay at home to protect them,

Blessed are the domestic violence victims, on lock down with abusers, the homeless and refugees, Praise for the poets and artists, the singers and storytellers, all those who nourish with words and sound and color,

Blessed are the ministers and therapists of every kind, bringing words of comfort,

Blessed are the ones whose jobs are lost, who have no savings, who feel fear of the unknown gnawing,

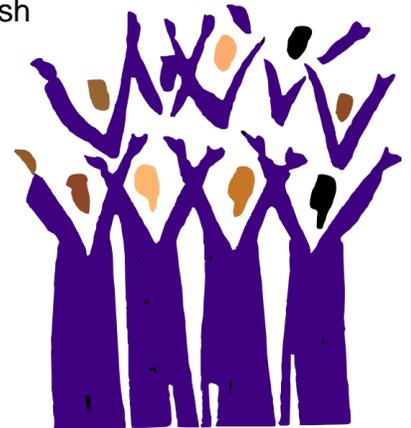
Blessed are those in grief, especially who mourn alone, blessed are those who have passed into the Great Night,

Praise for police and firefighters, ambulance drivers, and all who work to keep us safe,
praise for all the workers and caregivers of every kind,

Praise for the sound of notifications, messages from friends reaching across the distance, give thanks for laughter and kindness,

Praise be our four-footed companions, with no forethought or anxiety, responding only in love,

Praise for the seas and rivers, forests and stones who teach us to endure,



Lift up
your
Hearts
in
Praise!



Give thanks for your ancestors, for the wars and plagues they endured and survived, their resilience is in your bones, your blood,

Praise every moment of stillness and silence, so new voices can be heard, praise the chance at slowness,

Praise be the birds who continue to sing the sky awake each day, praise for the primrose poking yellow petals from dark earth,

Blessed are the dolphins returning to Venice canals, the sky clearing overhead so one day we can breathe deeply again,

And when this has passed may we say that love spread more quickly than any virus ever could, may we say this was not just an ending but also a place to begin.

—Christine Valters Paintner, *Abbey of the Arts*