

small dark very personal spaces that protect our memories,
that give us space to peek into what could be next.

When time and busy-ness cover over our holes, **CALL OUR NAMES IN THE NIGHT** to re-find that light that seemed so bright when we first let it into our darkness.

Deep inside the hollow that we feel at times, let us rest and be thankful. For our fathers. For the light of the sun and moon and stars. For the light of Them who break through our darkness when we aren't quite expecting their light. AMEN.

We all know the ultimate loneliness of feeling as if we are not recognized.

Alone, feeling completely disconnected? That's where everyone lives some of the time. And it's when we're *least* alone.

That's when we're most like each other, most able to understand and connect to each other. Best able to see.

That emptiness is the essence at the heart of every lifetime. It's where all our possibilities are. It's where one possibility at a time takes root and grows.

The darkness is where light is born. Dawn does come on the last edge of night.

"And God created all that is, out of the vast void". VOID is a very fertile place. It's where we come from.

I hope we may be by each other's side in many of the Alone times until we all see. Really SEE.

LOOK AGAIN

You are *mine*.

You are *my son!* *I* formed you, Boy-O.

I am so, so happy with you! **My son! My beloved son!**

Could be a soundtrack from a birthing room. A father's first sighting of his son. "*I* formed you. Wow! You are *mine, Boy-O!* You make me so happy!"

And then, the son becomes 2. Then 12. Then 16. Then 40.

Part of what happens between father and son in the in-between is that *expectations* and *reality* diverge. The magic of that first look into each other's faces is full of a father's expectations and a newborn son's first exploring discovery. That first glance creates expectations of total, mutual, unconditional possession that a son and his father spend the rest of their lives not finding.

It's hard to let go of expectations. Children are more open to discovery. Grown-ups tend to keep looking for what they expected. The disconnect between father and son, brother and brother, friend and lover, onlooker and stranger, is a dark void that sometimes takes a lifetime to dissipate because expectations on both sides take so long to morph into reverence, esteem, gladness in the diversity of each other's company.

Wisdom seeps in when expectations morph.

Baptism is a ritual morphing. Symbolic revealing of what was unseen. Immersion. Emergence. With proud Papa-God bellowing through our cloudiness, "Yep. ***This one's Mine – as is***". Not what you expected; but *Mine!*

Fathers. Sons. Mothers. Daughters. Friends. Lovers. *What you see usually is **not** all that you get.*

Look again. See. Humbly cherish even the stranger, the homeless, the unnerving child; the faltering ancient parent, and certainly your beloved. Take delight – tonight -- in the one who has grasped *your* hand; or wants to.

In you I am well pleased.

We wait a lifetime to hear it. “You delight me”. Sometimes, it’s being said in a language we’re not ready to understand; because it’s in a language we are not expecting.

Give someone a chance to become uncovered as more than what we thought. “Lord, that I may see”.

Until then, I am not less because others see less than who I am. Like Father-God, I am who I am. I am not less because less is attributed to me.

But, our absence of esteem for each other leaves a big hole. It hurts. We all have felt it.

I have a prayer for days when *holes r us*.

OUT OF THE DEPTHS OF OUR HOLES WE CRY O LORD

OH, WE KNOW HOLES. We hate holes. They trip us up. They block our way. They take away what we expect. They break what we built. They scare us.

HOLES. Help us make our way past the treachery of holes.

HELP US SURVIVE THE COLLAPSES that pull the ground out from under us.

REMINd US TO TREAD GENTLY on the edges of each other’s broken places.

LET US HOLD HANDS TENDERLY; to find our way together.

HELP US TO BE KIND as often as we stumble into piles of our past that keep us from getting to where we could be.

MAKE US STOP AND TAKE A BREATH so we don’t live too far ahead of ourselves. Teach us to pay attention to the next step. And first, to let go of the last one.

HELP US REMEMBER that many good things, like inspiration and new babies, arrive with pain and fear. Fear pushes us free from what *was* to what could be.

SHOW US THE UNEXPECTED OPPORTUNITY IN HOLES. Children play in mud. Sparrows take sand baths. Robins listen for holes, and feast. Baby mice are born in holes and tunnels, and are kept warm and safe in temporary darkness. When our eyes can’t yet see, hold our hearts open to see possibility.

LET US NOT BE AFRAID to smell the fresh earth at the bottom of the grave of our expectations. To find that we’re still safe. To be patient with ourselves and each other. To start anew.

LET US LEARN TO RECOGNIZE the holes that we make for ourselves. Tug us when it’s time for us to climb over the walls we have dug around ourselves. Teach us to let go of fear that others will not know where our boundaries are because we don’t know where our boundaries are. Excite us again to explore a path that is not yet familiar.

JIGGLE US GENTLY. Wake us up to adventure. Show us how to relish the holes in our expectations, the holes in our hearts. Remind us how to play, to get tired from the elation of exploring, to lie down and dream, to be at home in those