

# Beloved is where we begin

If you would enter  
into the wilderness,  
do not begin  
without a blessing.

Do not leave  
without hearing  
who you are:  
Beloved,  
named by the One  
who has traveled this path  
before you.

Do not go  
without letting it echo  
in your ears,  
and if you find  
it is hard  
to let it into your heart,  
do not despair.  
That is what  
this journey is for.

I cannot promise  
this blessing will free you  
from danger,  
from fear,  
from hunger  
or thirst,  
from the scorching  
of sun  
or the fall  
of the night.

But I can tell you  
that on this path  
there will be help.

I can tell you  
that on this way  
there will be rest.

I can tell you  
that you will know  
the strange graces  
that come to our aid  
only on a road  
such as this,  
that fly to meet us  
bearing comfort  
and strength,  
that come alongside us  
for no other cause  
than to lean themselves  
toward our ear  
and with their  
curious insistence  
whisper our name:

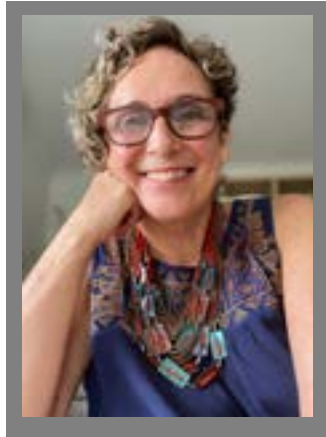
Beloved.  
Beloved.  
Beloved.

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# LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

## Christ's mission, our mission

A fellow student that I was counselling was retelling the story of her honeymoon. In the retelling she was close to tears as then divorced for four years she was surprised by the emotions that were resurfacing. I was at a loss how to show care for my friend but just at that moment a bird flew onto the city balcony where we were sitting in the sun. I thought about how sometimes emotions can trap us and hold us back from moving confidently into the future – I thought about the freedom of the bird in flight. "Look at that bird." I said. "Let's spend a moment to collect our thoughts." And I took her through a meditation about what it would feel like to be that bird.



Caring for people or the planet mostly means looking for what is right in front of you or listening to your heart and then doing something about what it is saying to you. Often when we think of saving the planet or helping a friend we can get so overwhelmed by the big issues in life that we miss taking the actions that can make all the difference. Showing up, listening, staying open to opportunities to care, changing the way we consume or even changing our diet can all be valid responses to our concern - maybe that was the whole point of Jesus' life – to remind us to care.

In his article *Metamorphosis meets Discernment* Steve Veazey says ."

Bruce Wooderson also shares about being inspired to care and responding to the call. He challenges us to interpret the teachings of Christ for a contemporary world.

Jenny Lonsdale reflects on kindness that was part of her journey as a child and is at the heart of compassion. Today she is excited by the liberating and healing movement of kindness that she sees in people who are responding to seek justice and live in peace with all living beings.

Ken Robinson speaks about the importance of connection as we reach out to care. He reminds us that

in choosing to take time to connect we are "bearers of hope and love."

Alex Kahtava upholds children who are leading the way in caring for our planet and creating the peaceable kingdom.

Katie Harmon-McLaughlin encourages us to incorporate everything we hear, learn, remember, and feel into conversation with God to seek God's vision and direction for our lives and communities. She introduces us to President Stephen M. Veazey's six lenses for discovering

God's will.

Anne Sutton shares some of the ways Brisbane Congregation have encouraged and provided ministry to people in the community since 2003 and Shell de Mol shares personal stories from her life about the challenges she has faced as she has endeavoured to care. She lists some of the personal commitments she has made to stay true to her values.

I hope you will be encouraged and challenged by this edition as you care both in big and small ways. Many years ago I learnt by heart this beautiful affirmation. May your heart soar as you take time to engage with the words. *'I'm deserving of love in its highest form simply because I'm alive and I share this love in its highest form just because I can.'*

May your caring come from this place of love and joyful service.

*Anne Bonnefin*

Editorial team member