

March 22, 2020
Led Into The Unknown: New Worship

Isaiah 1:11-18a

“These interminable sacrifices of yours: what are they to me?”, says YHWH. “I have had enough of burnt offerings of rams and the fat of fed beasts! I do not delight in the blood of bulls, or of lambs, or of goats. When you come to appear before me (when you come to worship), who asked this from your hand? Trample my courts no more; bringing such offerings is futile. Their incense fills me with loathing. New moons, Sabbaths, assemblies- I cannot endure solemn assemblies of injustice! Your new moons and annual appointed festivals my soul hates; they have become a burden to me, I am weary of bearing them. When you stretch out your hands, I will hide my eyes from you; even though you make many prayers. I will not listen; your hands are covered with blood.

Wash! Clean yourselves!
Stop doing the evil things I see you do! Stop doing wrong!
Learn to do good. Seek justice, rescue the oppressed!
Protect those who are orphaned! Plead the case of those who are widowed!
Come now, let us reason this matter together,” says YHWH.

Pandemic

—Lynn Ungar 3/11/20

What if you thought of it
as the Jews consider the Sabbath—
the most sacred of times?
Cease from travel.
Cease from buying and selling.
Give up, just for now,
on trying to make the world
different than it is.
Sing. Pray. Touch only those
to whom you commit your life.
Center down.

And when your body has become still,
reach out with your heart.
Know that we are connected
in ways that are terrifying and beautiful.
(You could hardly deny it now.)
Know that our lives
are in one another’s hands.
(Surely, that has become clear.)

Do not reach out your hands.
Reach out your heart.
Reach out your words.
Reach out all the tendrils
of compassion that move, invisibly,
where we cannot touch.

Promise this world your love—
for better or for worse,
in sickness and in health,
so long as we all shall live.