

**August 11, 2019**

**Dance in the Bible  
Dancing With Miriam**

**First Reading** ~ *Exodus 15:19-21*

Once Pharaoh's horses and chariots and charioteers came onto the seabed, YHWH let the water collapse back upon them. But the Israelites walked through the seabed on dry land.

Then Aaron's sister, the prophet Miriam, picked up a timbrel, and all the women followed her, with timbrels and dancing, while Miriam sang:

"Sing to YHWH who has triumphed gloriously, who has flung horse and rider into the sea!"

**Second Reading** ~ *adapted from Brené Brown in "Daring Greatly: How the Courage to be Vulnerable Transforms the Way We Live, Love, and Lead"*

I took a deep breath and recited my vulnerability prayer as I waited for my turn: "Give me the courage to show up and let myself be seen." Then, seconds before I was introduced, I thought about a paperweight on my desk that reads, "What would you attempt to do if you knew you could not fail?" I pushed that question out of my head to make room for a new question. As I walked up to the stage, I literally whispered aloud, "What's worth doing... even if I fail?"

I believe honest conversations about vulnerability and shame can change the world.

In the song "Hallelujah," Leonard Cohen writes, "Love is not a victory march, it's a cold and it's a broken hallelujah." Love is a form of vulnerability, and if you replace the word love with vulnerability in that line, it's just as true. From calling a friend who's experienced a terrible tragedy, to starting your own business; from feeling terrified, to experiencing liberation... vulnerability is life's great dare. It's life asking, "Are you all in? Can you value your own vulnerability as much as you value it in others?" Answering yes to these questions is not weakness: It's courage beyond measure. It's daring greatly. And often the result of daring greatly isn't a victory march so as much as it is a dance of freedom, and one often mixed with a little battle fatigue.

### **Third Reading** ~ *from Nelson Mandela*

I have walked that long road to freedom. I have tried not to falter; I have made missteps along the way. But I have discovered the secret that after climbing a great hill, one only finds that there are many more hills to climb. I have taken a moment here to rest, to steal a view of the glorious vista that surrounds me, to look back on the distance I have come. But I can only rest for a moment, for with freedom comes responsibilities, and I dare not linger, for my long walk is not ended.