



## Election Season Spiritual Care Package

Soul Nourishment in a Time of Life-Denying Rhetoric

As national elections near in the United States, our televisions, computer screens, emails, social media, mailboxes and voicemails fill with divisive messages, often aimed at stoking a fear of "the other." Too often politicians and advocates for particular laws or viewpoints draw on stereotypes, misinformation, and prejudice to make their points and draw people to share their opinions and actions. Racist, xenophobic, anti-trans/queer/nonbinary, homophobic, misogynistic tropes get trotted out to help win votes and create or change laws. Queer and trans folks, people of African, Asian, Latin and Indigenous decent, are especially targets of these messages. And, while we may know and feel assured of our belovedness and our dignity, despite the rhetoric, it also takes a toll to be confronted with the noise of hate that questions our very right to exist on the daily. Even if our identities, existence, experience and beliefs aren't political punching bags, the divisive and fear-laden speech that pervades our media and conversations can take a toll on our spirits. So the crew at Join the Movement toward Racial Justice wanted to offer some practices, prayers and art to ground us in moments of anger, rage, grief and fear, and to remind us that we are each images of the Holy One, God's love, hope, grace, and justice made flesh in the world. In these voices and practices, may you recognize God's voice calling to you: "This is my beloved in whom I am well pleased."

## Grounding in Dignity and Value

### [Centering Practice with Prentis Hemphill](#)

Prentis Hemphill (They/Them) is unearthing the connections between healing, community accountability and our most inspired visions for social transformation. Prentis is a therapist, somatics teacher and facilitator, political organizer, writer and the founder of The Embodiment Institute. Before founding The Embodiment Institute, Prentis was the Healing Justice Director at Black Lives Matter Global Network and a lead somatics teacher with generative somatics.

Originally offered as a moment of healing and connection as so many were taking to the streets following the murder of George Floyd, this centering practice offers a moment to gather strength from our own inherent dignity, our ancestors and lineages of support, our core values, and the future visions we are striving for.

### [Centering: A Guided Meditation](#) with Deesha Narichania

Deesha Narichania is a licensed clinical social worker who brings together various approaches including [AEDP](#); [somatics](#) and mindfulness practices; and [DBT skills](#), in order to help people, especially of queer or trans experience and people of color, make sense of difficult feelings, cultivate self-acceptance, and make their present-day longings come alive.

This centering meditation is rooted in generative somatics and was originally designed for the Transgender Law Center wellness hub, to assist in bringing people home to our bodies.

## Reconnecting to Belovedness

### [Layleen's Bill \(With Revisions\) by Benji Hart](#)

This poem arises from the imagination of what a world that invests in transformative justice would look like. It was written in honor of Layleen Polanco-Xtravaganza, who died while in custody at Rikers Island.

### [Excerpts from \*Soft Magic, A Fire Like You and Nectar\* by Upile Chisala](#)

Upile Chisala is a storyteller, sociologist and activist from Malawi. She is the author of several books of poetry, including, *a fire like you*, *soft magic* and *Nectar*. Born in 1994 and raised in Zomba, Chisala's hope is to tell stories from the margins and through her

work help others and herself come to terms with pasts, celebrate presents and confidently dream beautiful futures.

### [Accents by Denice Frohman](#)

Denice Frohman is a poet, performer, and educator from New York City. Her work explores the complexities of language, lineage, queerness, and the colonial relationship between the United States and Puerto Rico. Frohman sees her poetry as a tool for social change, cultural preservation, and aims to subvert traditional notions of power and knowledge. Her poem accents is a tribute to her mother.

### [Bodies as Resistance: Claiming the Political Act of Being Oneself by Sonya Renee Taylor](#)

Sonya Renee Taylor is an author, poet, spoken word artist, speaker, humanitarian and social justice activist, educator, and founder of The Body is Not An Apology movement, an international movement and organization committed to radical self-love and body empowerment as the foundational tool for social justice and global transformation.

### **Celebration of Gender Expansive Identities Chant by trans and racial justice advocate and artist Rae Strozso.**

*Add identities to any section as needed.*

Gender expansive identities and bodies are beloved by God. (3 times)

Transgender, transsexual, trans masculine, trans feminine, trans women, trans men, FTM, MTF, agender, non-binary, feminine of center, masculine of center, gender queer, gender fluid, gender neutral, gender non-conforming, bi-gender, passing and nonpassing, third gender, two spirit, intersex bodies and identities are beloved by God.

(Only once)

Intersections of identity are beloved by God. (3 times)

African-American, Chicano, Latinx, African, White, Native, Filipino, Assyrian, Iranian, mixed race, Chinese, Japanese, Hawaiian, able bodied, visually impaired, legally blind, hearing impaired, neurologically diverse, immigrant, documented and undocumented, Christian, Jewish, Buddhist, non-Christian, Muslim identities are beloved by God.

(Only once)

All Gender expansive identities and bodies are beloved by God.

Gender expansive children are beloved by God.

All genders and bodies are beloved by God. (3 times)

My gender identity is beloved by God. (3 times)

My body is beloved by God. (3 times)

## **Imago Dei Breath Prayers**

Breath prayers have been used by Christians for centuries to connect with the Spirit that lives and moves in our very breath. Originally associated with contemplative mystics, it simply ties one part of a short, rhythmic prayer to an inhale, and the second part to an exhale. These prayers help us focus on our breathing while also creating space for us to dwell with the Holy. They can be especially helpful in moments of anxiety, stress or trigger to help regulate our bodies and spirits.

Inhale: I am not their words for me.

Exhale: I am beloved by God.

Inhale: Created for flourishing,

Exhale: I am made in the image of God.

Inhale: Love be a shield.

Exhale: Protect me from fear and hate.

Inhale: Shelter me under your wings.

Exhale: Remind me how we fly.

## Creating Healing Spaces

### [Sending You Light by Melanie DeMore](#)

African-American composer, songwriter and singer Melanie DeMore was born in the Bronx, raised in Anchorage, and moved to San Antonio to complete her schooling. Her music draws from the African American diasporic tradition and has been recorded and sold across the United States. Nothing is closer to her heart than bringing people together wherever she is to experience the healing power of music. Whether performing solo, leading stick pounding workshops, doing residencies with choirs all over the country, or teaching Sound Awareness to sixth graders, baby boomers, or senior citizens, one thing is certain: her mission is to make sure you unlock the key to experiencing yourself in all your Glory.

### [Trans People Are Sacred Public Art Project](#)

Beginning with one billboard that was intended to strengthen representation and inspire hope for Trans individuals in Detroit, the Trans People are Sacred public art project spread like wildfire. The billboard reached a global audience. And the words,

“Trans People Are Sacred,” took root, and catalyzed profound healing for individuals and communities the world over. After the success of the initial billboard, Save Art Space reached out to Jonah Welch to create a national-level project for this work. Spend some time with these healing images and messages.

### [I Choose Love by Mark A. Miller](#)

Mark Miller is a pianist, organist, singer, composer, choral conductor, church musician, educator, and active lay person in the United Methodist Church. He composed this song in response to the murders of 9 people attending bible study at Mother Emmanuel AME Church in Charleston, SC.

### [AFTEREARTH a short film by Jess X. Snow, Kit Yan & Peter Pa](#)

As rising sea levels threaten the loss of their motherlands in Hawai‘i, the Philippines, China, and North America, four women fight to preserve the volcano, ocean, land and air for future generations. AFTEREARTH is told through music, poetry, and heartfelt testimonial, and displayed through stunning visuals situated in locations touched by the Pacific Ocean. *Also check out the other cultural resources at the [Smithsonian Asian Pacific American Center Care Package](#).*

### [13 Artists on Immigration](#)

In the midst of the rhetoric surrounding immigrants and refugees, these 13 artists offer reflections of the beauty and struggle of migration in and around the borders of the United States.

### **Rituals from enfleshed**

enfleshed creates and facilitates spiritual resources for collective liberation through prayer, liturgies, art, meditations, teaching, and other resources. Their intentions and efforts are to center the wisdom, experiences, and desires of those traditionally on the fringes of dominant institutions, theologies, and politics. With attention to the Sacred in the flesh of the earth and all creaturely forms, they find Divinity in the entangled, fleeting, beautiful and aching nature of this “one wild and precious life.” (Mary Oliver)  
Check out their prayers and rituals, including:

- [A Ritual for Black Joy](#)
- [A Ritual When Feeling Unwanted](#)
- [Sacred Incantations: Rituals of Trans Wisdom for Every Season](#)