



Spiritual Joy in Times of Crisis

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What is spiritual joy in times of crisis? How can we find joy in our hearts when we live in a world filled with sorrows? In the shadows of the cross, where is our glad hosanna?

An ancient instrument with mystical powers, the drum connects us to our spiritual core. As part of my sabbatical last summer in search of spiritual joy, I attended a community concert featuring a wall of percussion instruments performed by a musician as a sound bath experience. At the end of the night, the artist invited us to keep whatever insights we gained and to let go of anything that felt disruptive to our spirits.

I held onto one insight from that night. I prayed for God to show me spiritual joy in my body. As a survivor of trauma, I prayed for spiritual joy to transform my body/mind. As I listened to the drumbeat, bathed in sound, I reconnected with my heart's spiritual core, feeling the vibrations of the beating of the drum throughout my whole body.

My heart began to pray.

When words fail to express the depth of our despair, we pray with the sound of our beating heart. The heart communicates beyond the boundaries of time, location, nationality, race, ethnicity, religion, culture, gender, politics, class, age, sexuality, disability, and language.

The sound of the drums awoke an ancient truth within me: we are one.

The bullied transgender youth's heart. The woman crossing the border's heart. The praying refugee's heart. My heart. God's heart. The heart of Christ. The heart of Sophia. We are one.

Beloved, you are loved beyond your wildest imagination. Your life matters. Your life, simply by being you, brings God joy. Your life as your authentic self brings God joy.

What a gift it is to be alive and have a heart that beats to the rhythm of joy. How good and lovely it is to be part of beloved community, a sacred gathering of people throughout time and space.

Crisis, sorrow, and trauma do not have the right to steal our spiritual joy that is our birthright. We claim liberation, transformation, and freedom for all God's oppressed children in the name of the spiritually joyful Jesus. Nothing can separate us from the love of God's sacred heart that beats within all of Creation.

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