

Chant Down Babylon!



Council for World Mission

Reflections for Pentecost

'Chant down Babylon'

Speaking in the Spirit - songs of protest and the new reality

Pentecost Reflections

Council for World Mission has produced worship reflections on Empire for Advent, Holy Week and Easter and this production completes the liturgical set with a focus on Pentecost. I am grateful to the Mission Development Team for devising these materials.



Each of these reflections explores the outpouring of the Spirit at Pentecost through the medium of a song, itself an outpouring of the Spirit, voiced in praise or protest, announcing the alternative world we see as the Spirit's gift.

The reflections often use the contributor's mother tongue, translated into English also, as a further manifestation of Pentecost. You will find a Youtube link so you can play the song and follow the reflections further. Some are focused on communal and political moments and some on moments of personal struggle.

These reflections and songs invite us to see Pentecost, like Resurrection, as God's Spirit leading us into an uprising against the silencing stultifying powers of Empire and death in all aspects of our lives.

Resisting the death dealing forces of empire requires vision, hope and power. These are gifts we find in the Spirit of Jesus enabling us for mission in the context of Empire. The first disciples discovered in the Risen Jesus hope for life after and beyond Empire. Then the Spirit came to give them the power to live that life now. CWM offers these reflections on Pentecost to deepen spiritualities of hope, strengthen Christian witness and embolden our demonstrations of life in fullness in the face of the traumas, terrors and tragedies of Empire.



Rev Dr Collin Cowan

May 2018



'Chant down Babylon'

Peter Cruchley

See: Sylford Walker

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=unoW1hrA280>

The Pentecost moment in Acts offers itself as the disciples' announcing the counter-Empire *Evangelion*. The Empire's *Evangelion* was the moment the Generals announced the great power of Rome, either a proclamation concerning the extension of its borders or the birth of the divine sons of Caesar. The Gospel of the Empire was a proclamation of unity in the Empire's language, but unity through fear, a reminder that there was no alternative to the *pax Romana*, and all should bend to the will of Caesar. Perhaps there had been a declaration after Passover by Pilate of how the Pax Romana had successfully put down the revolt of such criminals and rebels as Jesus of Nazareth, king of the Jews.



Luke's description of Pentecost is an alternative proclamation a Gospel of the poor, not by the *Imperium Militare*, but by the *Res Publica*, a public demonstration of the new reality of life beyond Empire, which was announced in Jesus' resurrection. The Spirit came to announce entry into a counter – kin' dom and so the colonised cultures, tongues and identities of Rome are given voice, blessed and included without threat of suppression. This is Pentecost not as the

beginning of Church Revival, but as the taking to the streets by Black Lives Matters protestors, or the #metoo marches, or National Days of Protest in the Philippines or Fees must Fall marches in South Africa.

The voices of the people in Luke, the sermon of Peter, are the beginnings of songs and sounds of protest which will shake the Empire. Thus, the people gather in the power of the Spirit to 'Chant down Babylon'. Rome is named Babylon in the Revelation and it was a *crie de coeur* as well as code for the faithful to continue to struggle, for just as Babylon fell and the Jews returned so too Rome would fall. Rastafari uses Babylon as the symbol for Empire today in the same way. This prophetic shamanistic movement, rich in Old Testament spirit, lives out its challenge to the 'downpression' of Empire today by preaching down violence and raising up peace and love through music. The mood and message of this song appears in many forms but this particular song brought the WCRC General Council to its feet to symbolise its vision of Liberating Discipleship. Pentecost reminds us that the Spirit of God is not in Empire and her power gives us voice, hope and strength as we chant down Babylon and raise up new creativities and realities in the midst of Empire

Prayer

Come Holy Spirit
Lead us to the streets
To make loud and clear
our part in the work you have begun
of challenge and transformation.

You have placed yourself amongst
The downpressed, deviant and defiant.
In their plight, fight and insight
is news of the new world of
peace and joy which you are bringing.

May we find our voice with them
so that we may chant down the
sounds and systems of
injustice and impoverishment.



Freedom to Sing Te Aroha Rountree.

See – Tiki Taane featuring Michael Franti

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iOY0bswPAQg>

He whakamāramatanga i te reo Māori:

Ko te waiata nei me kī, "Noho herekore ki te waiata" he waiata mo rātou nō Tuhoe, he waiata mautohe, he waiata mo te Petekoha. E ai ki ngā kōrero o tō tātou kawanatanga me tō tātou pirihimana ko rātou ki Tuhoe e kohikohi ana ngā pū hei timata tētahi whawhai ki a rātou mā. I mea mai ngā pirihimana ko tēnei te mahi ā ngā kaiwhakatuma. Nā ko tēnei te take e pāhuahua ana ngā pirihimana mau pū ki te rohe o Tuhoe i te tekau ma rima o whiringa ā nuku, i te tau 2007.

Ko rātou ngā pirihimana e rite ana ki ngā tangata Roma, no Papurona. Ko tō rātou hiahia ki te whakataurekareka i ngā rangatira o Tuhoe me ngā kaiwhakahē. I haere rātou ngā pirihimana mau pū ki te Urewera, ki Ruātōki i hanga i te āraitanga i te huarahi ki te whakaparaketu i ngā waka mo ngā mea o ngā kaiwhakatuma. Ko te waiata nei e kōrero ana i ngā mea ngaukino mo ngā whanau me ngā tamariki o te rohe o te Urewera, nō Ngai Tuhoe. Ko tēnei te whakapēhitanga a te Pākehā, a te kawanatanga, a te pirihimana hoki. Ko ngā kaitōrangapū e whakamana mai i ngā pirihimana mo ngā pāhuahua. Ko ngā haahi e ngaukino hoki i tō tātou nohopuku.

Ko te mana o te waiata ki te whakaputa mai ngā kōrero a ngā iwi whānui o Tuhoe me ō rātou whanaunga arā ngā kaiwhakahē. Ko te noho herekore ki te waiata te tino mana o te Petekoha, kia timata ki te whai whakaaro ai i ngā oranga i muri nei i te kino. Me āta whakaarohia i nga oranga mo te tinana me te

wairua o Ngai Tuhoe. I te tau 2013 ka tuhu rātou o te Kōmihana Tikanga Tangata tō rātou kupu whakatau, nā ngā pirihihana te tino hē, e hara i te mahi taihara, i te mahi parahau o rātou mahi pāhuahua. Ko ngā tau tekau mā tahi kua pahure ake nei ēngari kāhore rātou nō Tuhoe e tau i roto i te rangimarie.

Freedom to Sing (English edit)

Post-colonial Pentecost is in our freedoms, expressed and proclaimed. The song, 'Freedom to sing' highlights the events of the 15th of October, 2007 that saw the traumatisation and victimisation of Tuhoe people (A tribal group that occupies territories in central North Island, New Zealand). The Police, as agents of the criminal



justice system, are the Babylon of our context. Pentecost is manifest in the resistance as we seek to 'sing freedom' to the oppressive and discriminatory system of injustice. The Police raids of the day resonated with the vibrations of Pākehā (white people) dominance and empirical power over our people and our land. Politicians were complicit in the violation of human rights by sanctioning the Police action. The church in our silence, was complicit in the victimisation of Tuhoe people as the media spin was constructed to vilify Tuhoe leaders and activists to the public by Police, the church remained unencumbered.

The lyrics of the song tell the story of the people of Tuhoe who were victims of raids by Armed Offenders Squads. The armed Police entered the small, rural community created blockades to inspect school buses and private cars, as well as raids on homes looking for signs of alleged terrorist activity. Police justified the raids as an exercise to gather evidence that Tuhoe were militarising and had breached the Terrorism Suppression Act 2002. Only four people were convicted of arms charges in 'Operation Eight' and the Police were left to validate and rationalise their military-style approach reminiscent of raids on peaceful occupations at Parihaka Pa in 1881 and Bastion Point in 1978. Babylon (Police) sought to justify their show of empirical power and authority by controlling the narrative. The song serves to 'sing freedom' to the mainstream media that demonstrated bias in the reporting of the events.

If Pentecost is a demonstration of new reality of life beyond Empire, it is evident in the freedom to sing about injustices of institutional racism in Aotearoa. There is a profound power in the musician to raise the consciousness of a nation in the lyrical

composition of a song and to reach a young, mobile audience in the performance of such prophetic music. Pentecost is unmistakable as the song seeks to give volume to the silenced voices of the Tuhoe people and to offer a measure of hope and healing. In 2013, the Human Rights Commission in New Zealand and an Independent Police Authority investigated and found the actions of the Police to be 'unlawful, unjustified and unreasonable'. Justice in part, but not yet at peace!



Letter from America

Sandy Sneddon

See:

Letter From America <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MRP0teFwy1o>

Lochaber No More <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y-Im44nDD5Q>

Lochaber No More <https://artuk.org/discover/artworks/lochaber-no-more-218410>

The Proclaimers Letter From America was an unlikely hit in 1987. The litany of deindustrialised towns – Bathgate, Linwood, Methil, Irvine –devastated by the Thatcher government would be lengthened in succeeding years and would include Motherwell, the centre of the once mighty Scottish steel industry. Many of us snarled the lines in anger.



Free-market, monetarist economics opened the floodgates for globalisation, a new kind of imperialism that championed deregulation at the expense of national sovereignty and workers' rights. Thirty years on, and despite the financial and banking crisis of 2007, this is still the dominant economic model championed by the World Bank and celebrated and promoted at the World Economic

Forum annual meeting at Davos.

In their song The Proclaimers also refer to the Highland Clearances, a long, dark period in Scottish history. "Lochaber no more; Sutherland no more; Lewis no more; Skye no more" take us to the Highlands and Islands. Lochaber No More is also the name of a lament with lyrics written by Allan Ramsay in 1724 and a painting by John Watson Nicol (1856–1926), both of which portray the Clearances

Following the defeat of the Jacobites in 1746 at Culloden the British state brutally oppressed Highland culture by banning traditional dress, Gaelic language and music, and ending the power of the clan chiefs. From 1760 to the 1850s wealthy landowners backed by the State forcibly evicted whole communities to turn to more profitable sheep farming and later to hunting estates. Swathes of Scotland were depopulated.

Empire was played out in Scotland, where the British State first used the techniques against their own citizens that they would later employ across the world. Highlanders and Gaels were forced off the land where they lived and farmed. The British state ethnically cleansed the Highlands and Islands of Scotland. Highlanders and Gaels moved to Scottish cities and towns and many were shipped to the colonies of the new British Empire. There some would make their way as settlers and farmers while others were conscripted into Imperial service as overseers or soldiers becoming themselves, in a cruel twist of irony, instruments of Imperial oppression. It took me a long to understand why Black people from Jamaica or the USA would have Scottish names. I wept when I realised these names were a legacy of Empire and slavery.

Highland and Island culture was not completely destroyed but it was attacked and treated with contempt for generations and even today is looked down by many in Scotland. Only a concerted effort by generations has kept the traditions alive.

Pentecost isn't the undoing of Babylon. People from different places understood each other despite there being no common language. God delights in our diversity. The God of Pentecost would be appalled at the Highland Clearances, at the ethnic cleansing and attempts to wipe out a distinct culture and language, and must surely be angered by oppressive, unjust global economic policies.



**Reflexia o Impériu pri príležitosti Letníc:
Postkomunistická perspektíva
Pavol Bargár**

See "Kráľ a Klaun

<http://www.karaoketexty.cz/texty-pisni/kryl-karel/kral-a-klaun-8321>

See "Demokracie"

<http://www.karaoketexty.cz/texty-pisni/kryl-karel/demokracie-220832>

Táto reflexia je napísaná z perspektívy slovenského protestantského teológa narodeného v komunistickom Československu na začiatku 80. rokov minulého storočia, ktorý v súčasnosti žije v Českej republike. Z toho dôvodu berie postkomunistickú skúsenosť s najvyššou vážnosťou. Základom reflexie sú dve piesne od českého speváka a pesničkára Karla Kryla. Táto reflexia obe kladie do

vzájomnej súvislosti a na kontraste medzi nimi ukazuje, že jedno zvrhnuté Impérium a príliš často a príliš ľahko poskytuje priestor pre vzostup Impéria iného.

Karel Kryl (1944 – 1994) bol kultový československý (narodený na Morave a hovoriaci česky) básnik, pesničkár a spevák protestných piesní, z ktorých sa mnohé stali hitmi. V nich identifikuje a zavrhuje pokrytectvo, hlúposť a nehumánnosť komunistického a neskôr aj postkomunistického režimu vo svojej krajine.¹

Prvou piesňou, nad ktorou sa chcem zamyslieť je „Kráľ a Klaun“. Bola napísaná v roku 1969 ako ohlas na vpád sovietskych vojsk do Československa v predchádzajúcom roku. Text predstavuje postavu Kráľa, militantného monarchu, ktorý práve tiahne do vojny a nezastaví sa ani pred pálením dedín a dobývaním miest. Preto symbolizuje nielen komunistický režim, ale je ho možné vnímať aj vo všeobecnejšom zmysle ako stelesnenie Impéria. Klaun, či Kráľov dvorný šaľoun, je predstavený ako Kráľov pravý opak. Nie je mu daná žiadna politická ani vojenská moc a trasie sa hrôzou, keď odchádza v noci z Kráľovho vojenského tábora, aby burcoval ľud nepoužívajúc pre to nič iné, len svoju hudbu. Klaun sa následne postaví tvárou v tvár Kráľovi, ktorý zomiera, preto je ho zo strachu „trafí ľak“. Pieseň vyznieva celkovo nádejne, keď záverečný obraz hovorí o tom, že krajina íjďe ďalej aj bez Kráľa a Klaun hrá na svoju lutnu.

Druhá pieseň je diametrálne odlišná. Bola napísaná v roku 1993 a nazvaná „Demokracie“. Odráža Krylovu zatrpknutosť a sklamanie z vývoja, ktorý v jeho krajine nastal po páde komunizmu v roku 1989. Niektoré z problémov, ktoré pieseň opisuje, sú tie, ktoré tí, ktorí kradli celé



roky, teraz kradnú dvojnásobne, tí, ktorí nás týrali, nás teraz vyhadzujú z práce a tí, ktorí o slobode spievali, boli označení za zradcov. Kryl spieva s poukazom na metaforu Zamatovej revolúcie, ktorá sa zaviedla pre označenie udalostí zvrhnutia komunistického režimu v Československu, o tom, že „zamat a ne nosť“ sú preč a teraz sme dostali „nové postroje a náčomúť nás znova páli“.

Myslím, že obe interpretované piesne veľmi trefne ilustrujú prínos, ktorý má teologická reflexia obohatená o post-komunistickú skúsenosť, na formulovanie kresťanského postoja voči Impériu v súčasnom svete. Stručne povedané, aj keď nádeje a aktívnej angažovanosti sa nikdy nesmieme vzdať, je potrebné opustiť akúkoľvek naivitu a očakávania udalostí, ktoré by Impérium zvrhli rýchlo a raz a navždy.

¹ Podľa Wikipédie; ďalšie informácie pozri na https://sk.wikipedia.org/wiki/Karel_Kryl (stránka zobrazená 25. apríla 2018).

Odkaz na text a Youtube nahrávku piesne "Kráľ a Klaun":

<http://www.KaraokeTexty.cz/texty-pisni/Kryl-Karel/Kral-a-Klaun-8321>

Odkaz na text a Youtube nahrávku piesne "Demokracie":

<http://www.KaraokeTexty.cz/texty-pisni/Kryl-Karel/demokracie-220832>

Záverečná modlitba pri príležitosti Letníc:

Pane Letníc! Prosíme Ťa o nadanie i rozvahu. Dávaj nám nádej a chráň nás sklamania. Inpiruj nás k tomu, aby sme sa nevzdávali. S Tebou je všetko možné. Ty si Pán! Amen.

Reflection on Empire for Pentecost: A Post-Communist Perspective Pavol Bargár (English edit)

This reflection is written from a perspective of a Slovak Protestant theologian, born in communist Czechoslovakia in the early 1980s and currently living in the Czech Republic. As such it takes into serious consideration post-communist experience. The basis for the reflection are two songs by Czech singer-songwriter Karel Kryl. By juxtaposing these two songs, this reflection seeks to show that an Empire brought down is too often and too easily replaced by another one.

Karel Kryl (1944 – 1994) was an iconic Czechoslovak (Moravian born and Czech speaking) poet, singer-songwriter and performer of many hit protest songs in which he identified and attacked the hypocrisy, stupidity and inhumanity of the communist and later also the post-communist regimes in his home country.²

The first song I would like to ponder on is called "Kráľ a Klaun" ("The King and the Clown"). It was written in 1969, in the aftermath the Soviet occupation of Czechoslovakia in 1968. The lyrics introduce the character of the King, a militaristic monarch who is just about to go to war, not shying away from "burning down villages and conquering towns". As such, he symbolizes not only the communist regime but can be seen to embody, more generally, the concept of Empire. The Clown, or the King's jester, is introduced as the King's clear opposite. Endowed with no political nor military power and "trembling with horror", the Clown leaves the King's camp in the night to "rouse the people", using not but his music. The Clown then faces the King who dies of "having haemorrhage" because of his fear. The song ends on a hopeful note with "the land living in peace, with no King, and the Clown playing his lute".

² According to Wikipedia; for further information see https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Karel_Kryl (accessed April 25, 2018).



The second song is very different. Written in 1993, it was entitled "Demokracie" ("Democracy"). It reflects Kryl's bitterness and disillusionment from the development in his home country after the fall of communism in 1989. Some of the problems described in the lyrics are that "those who had been stealing for years, are stealing twice as much today", "those who tortured us, are now firing us from work", and "those who sang about

the truth have now been labeled as betrayers". Referring to the Velvet Revolution, the metaphor used for the overturn of the communist regime in Czechoslovakia, Kryl sings that "velvet and gentleness are long gone" and we have now gotten "new horse-trappings and our collar harness burns us" again.

I think the two songs considered here very succinctly illustrate the contribution made by theological reflection from a post-communist context on Christian stance vis-à-vis Empire today. To put it simply, though the hope and active engagement should always be retained, any naivety and expectations of quick and once-and-for-all overturning of Empire are to be abandoned.

Concluding Pentecost prayer:

Lord of Pentecost! We ask you for both enthusiasm and discernment. Grant us hope and save us from disillusionment. Inspire are to keep on the struggle. With you, everything is possible. You are the Lord! Amen.



I am not my hair

Yvonne Dawkins

See: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2qiD71ouZq4>

India.Arie - I Am Not My Hair (Featuring Pink)

Every black woman has a 'hair story'. Part of that story is bonding or fighting with her mother over washes and combings (because little black girls need help to groom their hair). Part of that story is going through her teens and experimenting with hair straighteners, hair colour, cutting, colour, curling and uncomfortable rollers and hours under the hair dryer.

Every woman has a 'body image' story. Concerned about looking 'good', struggling with someone else's definition of 'good'. Too fat, too slim, too short or tall or dark or fair or straight or curvy. We may not think that our look defines us but other people do! So, we struggle to look or sound in a way that meets YOUR expectations. YOUR

expectations at work or church, on the streets, in private. YOUR expectations of what kinds of abilities are normative and which ones are not.

Every Christian has an 'identity 'story. Perhaps it's the moment we REALLY heard the Word that we are 'made in God's image' ...really heard it in our spirits. The moment it occurred to us that we are already beautiful and articulate and accomplished, already. Perhaps the moment is not an event but a process, a kind of spiral that takes us back to the place of hearing the Word again and again, each time with a greater sense of knowing.

Yet even in wanting to apprehend this sense of wholeness that the scripture speaks of (made in God's image), we know that in our environment, our community, the images fed to our minds, are in conflict with the wholeness that in our spirits we believe to be God's truth.

I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear. ¹³ But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. ¹⁴ He will glorify me because it is from me that he will receive what he will make known to you. ¹⁵ All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will receive from me what he will make known to you. (John 16: 12-15)

The coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost signifies the extending of God's redemptive process to all people. The movement of the message of Christ beyond the Jewish community. The Holy Spirit is the agent of the new birth (John 3: 5). How amazing that Christ's truth speaks to us today, about the salvation of our souls as well as the redemption of our sense of self. India Arie's song is not simply about hair. It is a commentary on the issues of race, history, gender, culture, hegemony, social exclusion, cultural misappropriation that dominate our attention and concerns. Even though we want to love ourselves, all these messages say that we do not. The song celebrates finding satisfaction in who we are regardless of our inability to meet the expectations of others, giving up the struggle to 'look right' and focusing our energies on learning how to 'be right'. We can 'be right' in Christ.

In my 40s I stopped straightening my hair and then I grew locks. In my 50s I cut it really short and finally found the phrase to answer the many questions of 'What are you doing with your hair???' . Now I say 'My hair should serve me, I should not serve it'. Waking up to the truth about ourselves is also part of our testimony.

When the Advocate comes, whom I will send to you from the Father—the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father—he will testify about me. ²⁷ And you also must testify, for you have been with me from the beginning. (John 15: 26-27)

I am not my hair
I am not this skin
I am not your expectations, no (hey)
I am not my hair
I am not this skin
I am the soul that lives within

Prayer

God in whose image we are made, your Holy Spirit came to guide us to all truth. May our spirits hear the truth that we are beautifully made and that we are called to use our lives to bring beauty to your world. We surrender our insecurities at the cross of your love, we reject the messages that tell us that we are not good enough and offer ourselves to be redefined in the light of YOUR expectations for us.



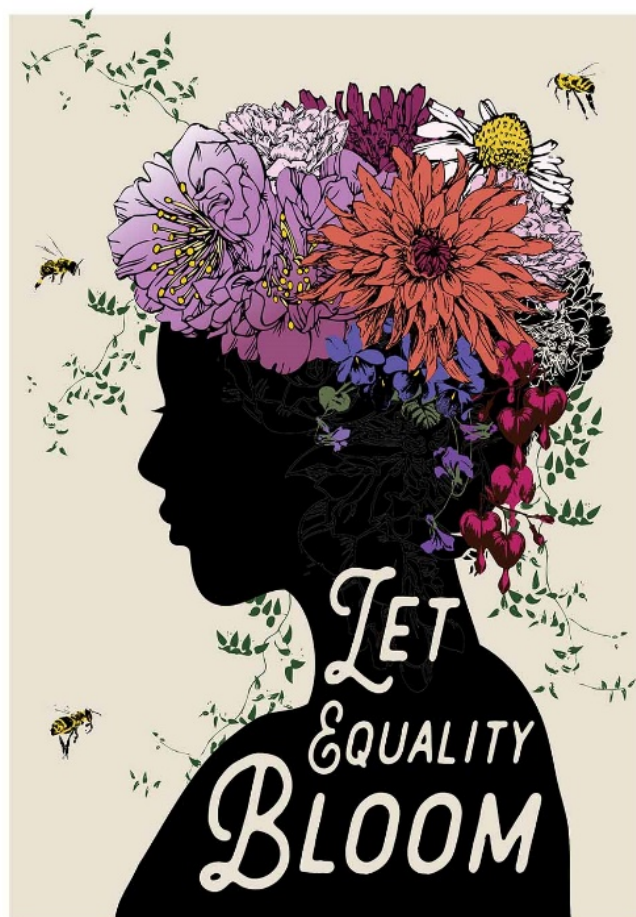
Planting Trees

Yueh Wen Lu

“種樹”

盧悅文

Youtube連結：<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E4BWUug3eRw>



聖神降臨節，一個全世界基督徒都必須慶祝的基督教重要節日，紀念因為聖靈降臨在使徒身上並帶領他們見證基督救贖的信息，也造成基督教教會誕生。聖靈是上帝做工的力量，展現上帝另外一種面貌。不時會聽到有人宣稱某些人被聖靈充滿、或者是某些基督教教會因為被聖靈充滿而大興旺等說法。這些說法常常讓我想到聖經所說的：「親愛的朋友們，對於自稱有聖靈的，你們不要都相信，總要察驗他們的靈是不是出於上帝，因為已經有許多假先知到處出現了。你們怎麼辦認上帝的靈呢？誰公開承認耶穌基督降世為人，誰就有從上帝來的靈。」

我相信聖靈的降臨並沒有一定的形式和規則。既然聖靈是上帝的一種特性，也就不是我們人可以理解和掌握的。既然聖靈是上帝力量的展現，更不可能讓我們可以藉由學習特定的方式學會如何被聖靈感動，聖靈更不是個物品是可以藉由特定儀式獲得。

2011年的夏天，在我開始自稱「自我放逐」生活四個月之後，我來到距離瑞士日內瓦搭火車一個半小時車程的女修道院「曠鄉」，展開我在這個修院為期3個月的志工生活。「曠鄉」為了每個志工安排一位「靈性陪伴修女(vis-a-vis)」陪同這個志工在修院生活期間尋找與檢視自己的內在和自己與上帝之間關係的靈性生活。在2011年年初，在業務部副總因為和公司老闆在經營和行銷理念不合決定離開了工作11年的公司之後，我也因分攤副總離職之後的新增業務連續導致每天工作超過16個小時將近3個月之後，在該年年終即將公佈的前兩個禮拜，離開了這間工作將近5年的公司。在離開一份薪水不錯工作、而我又已經超過35歲的當時，「離職」是個非常冒險的決定。眼前的人生路看起來非常的模糊不清，而我同時感受到身邊親友那份對我來說是非常沈重的擔憂。於是，我去了「曠鄉」。

到「曠鄉」的第三個禮拜，在一個異常寒冷又下雨的一天，我在「曠鄉」附近、靠近「新堡湖」的林間散步，作為我到修會之後第一次避靜的方式。我的「靈性指導修女」要求我在散步期間盡量看看四週，但同時不要對四週看到的景象馬上下判斷或者是給與心得。每一次從湖邊或是樹林散步之後再回到祈禱室思想剛剛散步所看到的景象、聽到的聲音或者是感受的感覺。那一天，我一共前往三個不同的方向進行避靜散步。

儘管身體疲憊不堪，但出乎意料之外地我有了一次非常有意思的避靜經驗。這次避靜中，並沒有我去「曠鄉」之前想要的閃電頓悟，像是跟摩西遇到燃燒的荊棘或者是在狂風中聽見上帝聲音的以利亞一樣。然而，一股非常清楚的安定、平靜、喜悅和被喜愛的感覺不斷湧上心頭。知道上帝在任合一個地方看著我、知道聖靈就在我經過的每棵樹的樹梢間、溪邊生長的莓果們以及從修院附近山上往湖邊流去的河水中。聖靈同時在修院修女們那每日禱告時吟唱的美妙歌聲裡或者是每天早上五點就在我房間窗外吟唱試圖把我從睡夢中叫醒的麻雀中。

聖靈也在那些因為經濟和社會制度不公平感到沮喪而決定付諸行動的年輕人當中；聖靈同時臨在感受到與自己被遭受社會歧視並被家庭、社會甚至是教會視為「不正常」感到同樣難過和痛苦的同志朋友和與他們一起有同感的異性戀朋友們的身上。聖靈同時也降臨在當你同樣可以感受到女性因為性別的關係遭受歧視的同時。

我最愛的客家歌手林生祥所唱的「種樹」是我在2011年陪我上班路上的幾首歌曲之一，也是我在離職前三個月每天上班時會聽的歌曲。它同時也是那天在「曠鄉」避靜時腦海中唯一浮現的歌曲。生祥曾經說過『種樹』這專輯是他開始將關注焦點轉到這塊他出生與生長島嶼上的環境問題的專輯。這也是一張重新出發的專輯，特別是在他有了一群新的團員以及採取新的作品風格之後。每一次聆聽「種樹」，總是可以感受到一股強烈的平靜和力量。感覺就像是聖靈確實在每個角落並且將希望帶給正在絕望的人們身上，儘管不容易被察覺到。然而，當我們需要的時候，聖靈就會來到。

種樹

詞：鐘永豐

曲：林生祥

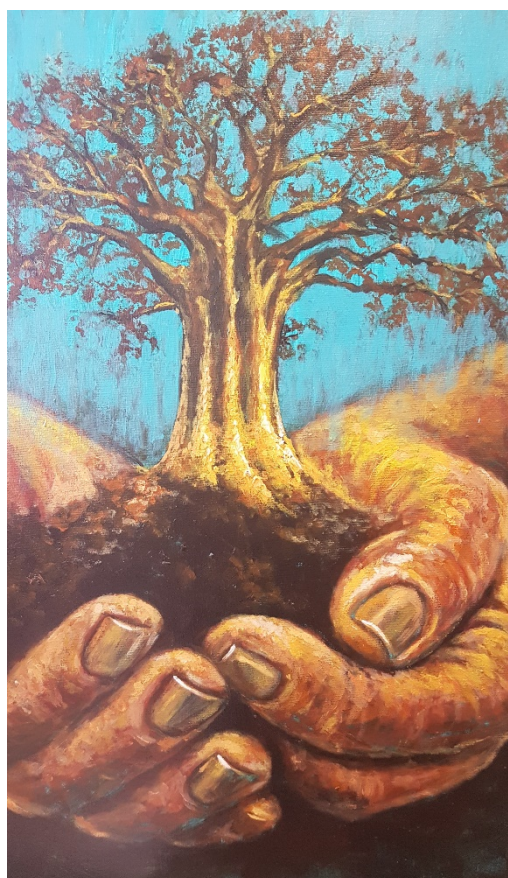
（客家語）

（華語）

種分離鄉介人	種給離鄉的人
種分忒闊介路面	種給太寬的路面
種分歸毋得介心情	種給歸不得的心情

種分留鄉介人	種給留鄉的人
種分落難介童年	種給落難的童年
種分出毋去介心情	種給出不去的心情

種分蟲仔避命	種給蟲兒逃命
種分鳥仔歇夜	種給鳥兒歇命
種分日頭生影仔跳舞	種給太陽長影子跳舞



種分河壩聊涼 種給河流乘涼
種分雨水轉擺 種給雨水歇腳
種分南風吹來唱山歌 種給南風吹來唱山歌

“Planting Trees” (English edit)

Yueh-Wen Lu

In summer 2011, 4 months after I began a life that I called “self-exiled”, I went to a women’s convent named “Communauté de Grandchamp”, which is about 1.5 hour by train from Geneva, to begin 3 months of life as volunteer to work for the community. The Community would assign a sister, as they called “vis-à-vis” to accompany those visitors and volunteers in the process of searching and re-examine the inner-self and relationship with God. Early in 2011, 5 months before going to Grandchamp, I felt defeated because I quit the job that I had been doing for almost 5 years. I left the company following the resignation of my supervisor who had been working in the company for 11 years. The power struggle between different managers, wrong marketing strategies and unclear visions of investing in new products were major reasons that cause the resignation of my supervisor, who was the vice-president of the business department by the age of 40’s. After working almost 16 hours everyday for 3 month, facing doubts and challenges from the new supervisor about my job content I questioned myself strongly. I decided to leave the job just a month before the company announced the amount of annual bonus of each employee. Leaving the job with a good salary at the age over 35’s was a very bold and yet, risky decision. The road ahead of myself was blurred and I could feel the anxiety of my family as well friends.



locations nearby.

3 weeks later, in an unusual raining and chilly summer day, I was walking in the woods toward the lake of Neuchâtel as to practice the first retreat lesson that I had in Grandchamp. I was asked by my vis-à-vis to look around whatever I saw and heard, and not make any judgment immediately. After the walk, I went back to the prayer room and reflected what I saw, heard and felt in each walk in the woods or from the lake. In that one-day retreat, I had three walks to different natural

Though exhausted and yet, to my surprise, I had a very interesting and positive experience from this retreat. There was no sudden lightening, no burning bushes like

what Moses encounter or strong winds that Elijah had as I was expected and yet, there was a sense of assurance, peace, joy and being loved. Knowing that God's everywhere watching over me, knowing that the Holy Spirit was everywhere from trees that I passed through, from berries that grow by the creek and from the floating water that went all the way down to the lake from the hill nearby. Holy Spirit was there in those beautiful voices from sisters when they sang in chorus in every daily prayer or from the singing that sparrows sang every morning at 5 clocks when they tried to wake me up.

Yes, the Holy Spirit was there when I was moved by the lovely voices from sisters in Grandchamp. The Holy Spirit was there when Taiwanese young people were upset about social and economic context that they' re facing and decided to take further actions trying to change the current situation. Yes, the Holy Spirit was there in the pain of gay and lesbian friends always being labelled as "abnormal" by their family, friends and even the churches. Yes, the Holy Spirit was there when you constantly felt being discriminated simply because you're a woman.

"Planting Trees", a song written by my favourite Hakka singer Lin Sheng-xiang from Taiwan, was one of the few songs that I would listen to on my way to work in the year of 2011, especially the last 3 months before I left my job and felt like a loser. It was also the only song that keeps resounding in my mind when I had that retreat day walking in the woods. Sheng-xiang once said that this was the album that he began to focus much more to the environmental problems came out from the island that he was born, raised and grow up. It's an album as a "reborn" album that he published with new band members and new styles. Each time when I listen to the "Planting Trees", I can feel a very strong sense of comfort, tranquillity and strength. Feeling like the Holy Spirit is indeed in every corner and bring hope to those who are desperate, even though it is not easy to be found out immediately and yet, at the time when we need, the Holy Spirit will come.

Planting Trees: Lyrics by Zhong Youngfen. Music by Ling Sheng-xiang

Plant them for those who have left the village

Plant them for roads that are too wide

Plant them for feeling you can't go home again

Plant them for those who are stayed behind

Plant them for childhoods full of grief

Plant them for feeling that you can't leave

Plant them so the bugs can escape with their lives

Plant them so the birds can rest after they fly

Plan them so the sun can grow dancing shadows



Plan them so the river can take the shades
Plant them so the rain can rest its feet
Plant them so that we'll hear mountain songs
in the southern breeze



GET UP, STAND UP ... Arvind Theodore

See:

Bob Marley and Peter Tosh <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BiPwCMIghhQ>

The first thing that comes to my mind when I think of music that echoes the themes of protest and resistance is Rastafarian music. The spirit(uality) of Rastafarian music is discerned in questioning hegemony and in its powerfully evocative lyrics insinuating non-compliance with the Empire. The song "Get up, Stand up" written in the early 1970's by Bob Marley and Peter Tosh within a socio-political context of colonialism, racism, Christian fundamentalism and economic imperialism advocates for justice and the need to fight for it. What is also striking is the song's critique of a politicized faith and an apolitical religion that is defined by personal piety and afterlife events, thus negating life and its struggles in the present. While the context of its composition and context of interpretation and appropriation differs, the demonic spirit of the Empire and its sub-empires continue to torment people across time and space. Yet, I believe the Spirit is imbedded, alive and active in the song as it is anti-hegemonic, earthly and transgressive.

I would like to reflect on this song drawing inspiration from its echoes of the anthem of resistance, focusing on Empire from my context. If Empire can be understood as a dominating system exercising control over people and communities, the Empires in need of annihilation today, I believe, are heteropatriarchy and economic imperialism.

The social and political ideology of heteropatriarchy – male-heterosexual dominance – needs to be disarmed. The LGBTQI+ community is one of the most discriminated-against communities in India. They are criminals to the law, outcasts to



society and an abomination to religion. In fact, women and children are no less a victim under this Empire. The recent gruesome rapes of an eleven-year old, an eight-year old and an eight-month old in various parts of India validates its venomous character. Also, the silent protests staged by farmers in the state of Maharashtra to question the unfair economic policies and to seek the right to own lands is reminiscent of imperial violations. It is in this context that the words "Get up, Stand up" takes meaning.

The protests by the LGBTQI+ communities, Women and Child Rights groups and Farmers for their rights, the rights of the "downpressed" (Rastafarian word for oppressed) echoes the need to fight for justice. If heteropatriarchy – a 'divinely-ordered' system of oppression – has always been the bedrock of religion, capitalism is no less. The rhetoric of a politicized Empire-bound faith - the idea of heaven as a reward for the suffering (women – to honour the Divine by capitulating to men at all times, the poor – to partake in a nation's progress by 'relinquishing' their bodies and lands, and the LGBTQI+ – who are advised by the religious faithful to abandon their sexuality for a greater otherworldly cause) negates the earthliness of lived realities, and the song rightfully alludes to this religious vacuity. Every protest - fight for human rights - is a conscious spiritual practice that rejects the status quo and reverses the social order.

How can the spirit of Pentecost be appropriated amidst these contexts? The Spirit came upon all 'flesh' (yes, as against the 'spirit'), and all 'flesh' came from socially unstable backgrounds. The spirit of the Pentecost does not lie in coming together and speaking one language, as the Empire wants, but in speaking their own. Just the way the Spirit made the vulnerable agents of justice and transformation, today's vulnerable – the women, the queers and the farmers - "stand up" to break cultural, gender and economic assumptions and discriminations. And just as Peter reminded the people of their actions against the violated one – Jesus - the women, the queers and the farmers of today remind us that our actions (and silence) have violated many as well. The unity and the voice of the subaltern, empowered by the Spirit, reminds us of the violations and expunges every power, every Empire. As my fellow-seminarian Yajenlemla Chang says, "Protests are [...] sources of fellowship with the divine - whose righteousness and justice [...] permeates all aspects of life." To live we protest; to protest we live. The event of the Pentecost and the anti-imperial song galvanizes action – to "Get up, Stand up" and confront the Empire – like Peter did, like the Rastafarians did, and like the vulnerable and subaltern communities do. The spirituality of the Pentecost lies in the Spirit's life-affirming act of empowerment and in the defiance of the "downpressed" against inhuman and unjust power structures. The Pentecost reminds us that where the Spirit is, there is freedom; freedom from the shackles of the Empires of today.

Prayer

God of life
Fill us, we pray, with your Spirit
That we may be convicted of our shortcomings
And seek pardon from those we have sinned against
Instil in us anger, compassion and hope
So we may rise from our slumber
and strive towards the path of Justice

God of little things
Restore in us the newness of vision
Grant us the courage to question
unjust powers
And through struggle and strife
engage in transgressive action
We ask this in the name of the one
who subverted power
Jesus, our Christ
Amen



Ymlaen mae Canaan

Jeff Williams

Ar gyfer yr oriau tawel, llonydd, wedi'r brotest, c'n gan Leonard Cohen:

For the quiet, still, moments after the protest, a song by Leonard Cohen: Come Healing

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MUB1O2cT2gM>

Ar gyfer yr adegau pan mae'n ymddangos fod yr hyn rydym yn brwydro amdano yn rhy bell i'w gyrraedd, c'n gan Steve Eaves:

For the moments when it seems that the goal we struggle for is too far to reach, a song by Steve Eaves:

Ymlaen mae Canaan (Onwards to Canaan)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PAZM46-WFEg>

O Dduw, yr wyt ti'n addo byd
lle y caiff y rhai sydd yn awr yn wylo, chwerthin;
y rhai sydd yn awr yn newynog wledda;
y rhai sydd yn dlawd
ac yn wrthodedig nawr,
gael dy deyrnas di'n eddio iddynt hwy.
Yr wyf finnau am feddu'r byd hwn.
Ymwrthodaf ag anobaith
Gweithredaf dros newid,
Dewisaf gael fy nghynnwys
yn dy wledd fawr di, gwledd y bywyd. Amen

O God, you promise a world
 where those who now weep
 shall laugh;
 those who are hungry shall
 feast;
 those who are poor now,
 and excluded,
 shall have the kingdom for
 their own.
 I want this world too.
 I renounce despair.
 I will act for change..
 I choose to be included
 in your great feast of life.
 Amen. (Janet Morley, Cymorth
 Cristnogol/Christian Aid)



“Tomato Balunda”

Teddy Sakupapa

See: Callen Moses Chisha (popularly known as Twice)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Durm8xgekA>

“Tomato Balunda” ulwa imbile ba Callen Moses Chisha (abai shibikwa ng aba Twice)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Durm8xgekA>

“Tomato Balunda” lwimbo ululanda pamafya ya bwikashi bwa bena Zambia. Lwafumine mu mwaka wa 2000. Kemba wa lwimbo ulu ni Callen Moses Chisha. Ukupitila mu lwimbo ulu, kemba ale landilako abantu pa mulandu wa kuti imitengo shya fyakulya shaley i lako fye pamulu. Ulu lwimbo lulanda pa mafya yabalanda no kubulilya kwa ma chito. Kemba ailishanya pamulandu wakuti aba buteko pamo pene na ba mu fipani fya fikansa fya chalo ba monekela fye elo balefwaya ama voti, lelo taba sakamana ubuchushi bwa bekala caalo. Ulu lwimbo lwa fumine mu mwaka elo ba kateka bali pamu pando balefwaya ukutwalilila ukuteka lelo amafunde ya caalo ta ya suminishe.

Ubuteko tabwa temenwe pamulandu wa kuti ulu ulwimbo lwa lelandilako abantu, eico imilabasa ya buteko bali shikenya ukulisha “Tomato balunda”. Nagula cibe fyo, “Tomato balunda” lwimbo lwimbo ululanda ifishinka pamulandu wa mafya yaba pina na ba bulilwa. Uyu umu pashi wa ku landilako abantu eo christu afwaya. Emupashi wa Pentecost. Mu caalo nge ci ichi itakisha ukuba icalo cabu kristiani, ulwimbo ulu lule twibukishya pa mulandu wa ku soselako aba pina, kabili no kulanda icinshika cakwa Lesa kuli bonse pamo penefye na ba buteko. Abalanda bacili balelila ukuti tomato balunda. U kwa bula ama cito, ni “tomato balunda”.

Kemba wa lwimbo ai pusha ilipusho, “bushe ifintu fikabako bwino”? Ili lipusho lipusha lya chchetekelo, ukutula pakati pa kuchula na mafya ayo icalo cesu cilepitamo, Umupashi Wa

Mushilo, uletwika to kubila imbila nsuma ya kwa Kristu ku balanda. Umupashi wa kwa Lesa, amaka ya kwa Lesa, Umupashi wa Mweo, Umupashi uuleisa ku bana na ku ba kulu, ba na mayo na bashi tata. Umupashi wa Pentecost ule tu tuma mu ku pyungila lesa no ku soselako bonse. Ule tutuma ukusosa icishinka ukwabula umweso; ukusosa icishika na kubuteko elyo balufyanya.

Ipepo

Mupashi wa Mushilo, tutungulule mu kutemwa,

Mupashi wa Mushilo, tu lange ishila shobe,

Mupashi wa Mushilo, tupeko amaka ya kukupyungila, tutungulule ku mulinganya,

umutende no kuba ba kangalila wa fintu wa panga.

Tomato Balunda (English edit)

Teddy Sakupapa



The song “Tomato Balunda” is a socio-economic commentary on the Zambian society released in the year 2000 and prophetically highlights the unbearable conditions of the poor amidst high prices of food commodities. Composed by Callen Moses Chisha (popularly known as twice), “Tomato Balunda” literally means the price of tomato has gone up. It

depicts the rising cost of living for the poor and jobless, while politicians go around making empty promises. The song was released a year before the general elections in 2001 at a time when the late President Chiluba was seeking an unconstitutional third term in office which did not materialise. Banned from the Zambian national airwaves for its prophetic stance, this song remains a sharp critique of politicians both in government and the opposition. In a country where politicians have exploited the Christian faith for political expediency, this song remains a radical critique of structures of oppression that condemn the poor to endless circles of suffering. The cries of the poor in present day Zambia is a cry of “Tomato Balunda”. The question “bushe ifintu fikabako bwino” (will things ever change for the better) is not a note of despair but a radical proclamation of hope. In the midst of political intolerance, economic

meltdown and the dwindling confidence in State apparatus that must serve the greater good, the Spirit of Pentecost beckons us to witness to the good news of Jesus Christ to the poor. The Spirit of God, the vital force of life, is the Spirit of Life, the Spirit coming to all people, young and old, women and men. The Spirit of Pentecost calls us to a missional imagination in a context in which the prophetic role of the church is threatened by subtle co-option into the oppressive schemes of the powers that be all in the name of promoting a "Christian nation".

Prayer

Holy Spirit, lead us to love,
Holy Spirit, help us discern your ways,
Holy Spirit, empower us for your mission,
Holy Spirit, lead us to Justice, peace and the integrity of creation.



We who believe in Freedom cannot rest

Robina Winbush

See: ELLA'S SONG

Bernice Johnson Reagon <https://ellabakercenter.org/blog/2013/12/ellas-song-we-who-believe-in-freedom-cannot-rest-until-it-comes>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S2T216XgiO0>

Even though Luke intentionally reports that the women were in the Upper Room on the Day of Pentecost and quotes the Prophet Joel that God "will pour out God's Spirit upon all flesh and your sons and daughters shall prophesy", the stories and experiences of the women are often overlooked or silenced in the Pentecost narratives. Similarly, the voices of women in the U.S. racial justice movements of the mid-20th century are often silenced or overlooked. Ella Baker was a key leader in the Freedom Movement, serving as a field secretary and local branch director of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), an organizer along with Martin Luther King, Jr of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), an organizer of the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) and she remained active in justice movements until her death in 1986 at the age of 83. She developed the reputation as one who taught the next generation about how to engage justice work.



Ella's Song was written by Bernice Johnson Reagon founder of the acapella group, *Sweet Honey in the Rock*, both as a tribute to Ella Baker and as a reminder that the

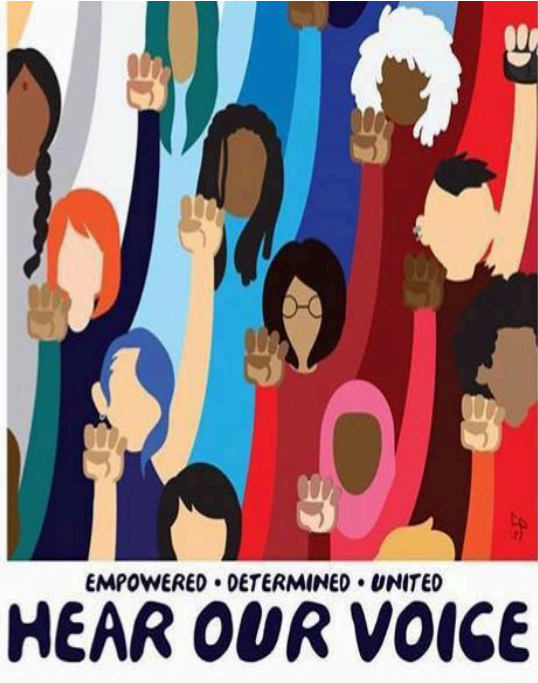
work for justice is carried in every generation. In the recent years of extrajudicial killings of Black and Brown people in the U.S., *Ella's Song* has become an anthem and call to resist death dealing forces. Even when one is tired and wants to sit down or give up the struggle, *Ella's Song* reminds us that if you really believe in freedom, the struggle must continue. However, it is not a struggle by an individual, but by "one in the number who stand against tyranny." I suspect Ella Baker would be most proud of Alicia Garza, Patrisse Cullors, Opan Tometi, three Queer African-Descendant women who launched the 21st century international activist movement of Black Lives Matter in response to the killing of Black people. In the words of the song, "The older I get the better I know that the secret of my going on is when the reins are in the hands of the young, who dare to run against the storm To me young people come first They have the courage where we fail And if I can but shed some light as they carry us through the gale."



Adi Marina Waga, an Indigenous woman from the Pacific, reminded the participants at the World Council of Churches Conference on World Mission and Evangelism that "Jesus would definitely be a 'youth' here. And even if that was not the case, Jesus at the time he was walking this earth in Palestine would still have been far younger than the average age in many of our mainline churches today. Yet, as a young person on the margins, his agency has set the tone for God's mission in the last two millenniums!" It can be understood that his companions and followers would also be considered youth by today's standards.

Following the state-sanctioned lynching/murder of Jesus by the Roman empire, the followers of Jesus could have easily given up on their belief of a world free of domination by the Roman Empire. They could have accepted that the Roman empire would continue to murder resisters. They could have accepted a hierarchy of relationships in oppressed communities that mirrored subordinate relationships and power differentials of the Empire. They could have retreated in fear and given into the spirit of division and isolation. They could have returned to the "pre-Jesus" way of living.

However, Luke tells us that first they were together in one place. Resisting the Empire's power requires a movement away from individualism and isolation and finding common cause—even if that common cause is grief and anger at systems of injustice. Secondly, Jesus promises that the oppressed community would receive the power of the Holy Spirit—the same power that was at the beginning of creation, the



same power that anointed Jesus for the work of liberation, the same power that raised Jesus from the dead. While apparently powerless in the face of the Roman empire, they would rise as a people with the power to speak truth, to confront systems of oppression and to model a new community of just relationships built upon justice and equal distribution of resources. Finally, at Pentecost, while Peter's sermon is the one recorded, it is obvious that the Holy Spirit was a gift to all gathered and all had a voice to speak of the power of God in their midst. Not a voice of one tenor or one language, but a voice that embodied the diversity of the peoples gathered. A voice in which both men and women proclaimed the power of God. A voice born of the

many voices that put the Roman empire on notice the revolutionary claims of Jesus would continue. They understood the profound calling of the faith, "We who believe in freedom cannot rest until it comes." They believed that freedom would one day come.

Holy Spirit, as you disrupted the status quo at Pentecost and empowered women and men living under Roman occupation to proclaim the good news of God's triumph over evil and death and to model a new way of being in relationship, disrupt the oppressive systems that hold people in bondage. Grant us the courage to keep fighting for freedom until it comes for all people in all places. In the Name of the Liberating Jesus we believe and therefore we pray. May it be so!



Contributors

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