

Spring Message Series: New Normal (or, "How Not to Waste an Apocalypse")

Challenge: The past year has changed many things, among them the ways that we communicate with and relate to each other. Many of the events of this year have made us look more closely at our communities and our culture, and at how we treat and care for each other. Have a conversation with someone in your life about how "old normal" was working (and not working) and what this past year has led you to dream about.

Spiritual practice: The spiritual practice for this series is gratitude. It is easy in difficult times to get caught up in looking only at the negatives. Take some time each day to look at the positive things in your life, both those that have come out of the past year and those that have been there all along.

Discussion questions: What does your "new normal" look like? What is different/not different from your life before Covid? What things in your life are better or worse? How can you focus on and build on the positives? What can you learn from the negatives? In what ways has the past year offered you opportunities for spiritual growth?

Journal/reflection/art prompt: silver linings

Additional Resources:

- ["3 lessons about what really matters in life, learned in the pandemic"](#) by Kate Torgovnick May @ideas.ted.com
- ["The Pandemic's 5 Silver Linings"](#) by Stephen M. Walt @foreignpolicy.com
- ["The Great Coronavirus Pandemic of 2020—7 Critical Lessons"](#) by Lawrence O. Gostin @jamanetwork.com
- ["Building Resilience During the Pandemic"](#) by J. Scott Fraser @www.psychologytoday.com

Readings, etc. from the Revs:

Articles:

- ["Prepare for the Ultimate Gaslighting"](#) by Julio Vincent Gambuto @forge.medium.com
- ["Awakening to the Apocalypse"](#) By Larry Ward @tricycle.org
- ["School Wasn't So Great Before COVID, Either"](#) Erika Christakis @theatlantic.com
- ["An Old Phone Placed in an Olympia Park is a Tool for Grieving, Hope"](#) by Matt Wakefield & John Prentice @seattlerefined.com
- ["How to Heal the Mass Trauma of Covid-19"](#) by Ed Prideaux @www.bbc.com
- ["The Unlikeliest Pandemic Success Story"](#) @www.theatlantic.com
- ["How a New Wave of Black Activists Changed the Conversation"](#) @www.nytimes.com
- ["The New Reconstruction"](#) @www.theatlantic.com
- ["The Unraveling of America"](#) @www.rollingstone.com
- ["How Jobs, Bosses, and Firms May Improve After the Crisis"](#) @www.economist.com
- ["I Write Obituaries For The New York Times. Memorializing People In A Pandemic Feels Like A Different Assignment"](#) by Glenn Rifkin @www.wbur.org
- ["If Winter Feels Extra Hard This Year, You're Not Alone"](#) by Corinne Purtill @www.nytimes.com
- ["The "Essential Worker" Swindle"](#) by Sarah Lazare @inthesetimes.com
- ["When Things Are Unveiled — Center for Action and Contemplation"](#) by Richard Rohr
- ["How future generations will judge humanity's performance against the coronavirus"](#) by Anthony Faiola @www.washingtonpost.com

Articles, continued:

- ["Californians on universal basic income paid off debt and got full-time jobs"](#) @www.theguardian.com
- ["Cultivating Intimacy With Life: The Five Remembrances"](#) by Ann Kline @www.stillwatermpc.org
- ["Playwrights envision a post-pandemic future guided by hope"](#) by Stephen Humphries

Books:

- [The Post-Quarantine Church](#) by Thom S. Rainer
- [The Fire Next Time](#) by James Baldwin

Podcasts:

- ["Trust Me"](#) from *Freakonomics*
- ["Ocean Vuong: A Life Worthy of our Breath"](#) from *OnBeing*
- ["Renegades: Born in the USA"](#)

Videos:

- [Welcome to the Apocalypse](#) from Rev. Nadia Bolz-Weber
- [A Covid-19 Anniversary Message](#) from the UU Trauma Response Ministry

Poems:

- [Things to Do in the Belly of the Whale](#) by Dan Albergotti
- [When We Get Through This](#) by Maya Stein

Songs:

- [The Keep Going Song](#) by The Bengsons
- [Better Than We Found It](#) by Maren Morris
- [Turntables](#) by Janelle Monae
- [Making Do](#) by Lake Street Dive

"Tonight we cry, we despair, and we fear. Tomorrow we get back to work trying to build the world we want." - Sam Altman

"You'll have bad times, but it'll always wake you up to the good stuff you weren't paying attention to." - Robin Williams

Questions? Suggestions? Feedback? Please feel free to contact one of the members of the Spiritual Development Ministry:

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