

There Is A Tree
by Rev. Teri Lubbers

There is a tree beyond this world. In its ancient roots a song is curled. I am the fool whose life's been spent, between what's said and what is meant. ~ Carrie Newcomer, lyrics from album "Geography of Light"

The quote above comes from a song I heard last night for the first time ...I love the image of a song being curled up in the ancient roots of a tree beyond this world. And the next line also resonated with me, that my life's been spent between what's said and what is meant. Don't know about you, but I often find it difficult to say what I mean in real time. With reflection time I can sometimes verbalize what I really mean. But I am struck with how often I do the automatic thing in real time. I will say the thing that another expects, or that seems acceptable, or that is designed not to hurt, offend, leave me open to criticism, or reveal more of myself than I want another to know. I like being liked. I know the internal censor we each carry colludes in our being less than honest and authentic with ourselves and one another. But maybe we could practice getting what we what we mean and what we say a little closer to each other.

I usually walk Lola twice a day along the Trinity River. Every day we pass this huge beautiful tree whose branches make a canopy probably 100 feet wide, casting shade and that kind of quiet that only trees send out. Sometimes I stop - on the pretense of letting Lola sniff just in case anyone is watching (why it matters to me what a total stranger thinks of me is anyone's guess!) - and place my hand on the trunk of this tree and share its energy for a moment. I imagine its roots pushing through the earth, going deeper than I can know to draw strength and nourishment from the darkness so its branches can reach high to draw in the life-giving light. It is my grounding tree.

Find whatever touchstone helps you ground yourself today and commit to yourself that at least once today you will not do the "automatic thing" as you interact with others, but that you will think about what you mean, and then let that be what you say.

Prayer: Creator, you are the One who desires truth in the inward parts of us. Help me embrace my own best self today, being honest with You, with others, and especially with myself. Amen.