

*Friends and members of Perkasie Mennonite Church reflected during April and May 2020 on the COVID-19 pandemic.*

**BREATHE!**

The virus explodes  
crosses the seas  
spewing its poison  
in one giant blow

but

Life is breath, air  
now it's death  
don a mask  
stop the spread  
shutter the windows  
bar the doors  
close out the world

yet

Fear settles like fog  
creeping through cracks  
clogging noses and throats

I CAN'T BREATHE!

then

A purple dot erupts clay  
cedar sways its chartreuse limbs  
blue bird flits, twirls  
daylight lingers

and

Air escapes  
chest expands with new song  
a promise to never forsake  
kindnesses encircle earth  
squeezing – sending  
precious pristine air caresses  
a reminder to breathe

**BREATHE!**

*-Laurel Hertzler 5/2020*

"We shall always dream.

We shall always love."

*-Hilda Landis*

Whenever you think it can go on no longer,  
From somewhere there comes a small light.

*--Hilda Landis*

*(translated from a German saying shared by a friend)*

## Introspection

What day this is, I sure don't know;  
It's probably on the calendar, though.

– *Mary Lou Cummings*

## May, 2020

We sit safe behind glass, smiling at the new yellows and greens,  
we drive past corn fields, last fall's golds, now spiky, mottled,  
and wonder why they are not plowed and ready for what comes next.  
But none of us is ready for what comes next.

This moment in time, 2020,  
offers us a slit view— what it feels like to live only in the moment.  
A narrowing of vision to this house, this porch,  
this partner, this teacup.  
A virus too tiny to imagine shows us another universe  
glimmering under a microscope,  
Vast, and like the cosmos, out of our control.

--*Mary Lou Cummings*

## Novel Times

Covid-19, pandemic  
New words  
Harsh sounding  
I don't like them

Closed in, lock down  
Describe a prison

Days spin and turn  
From joy of being and doing home  
To yearning for any place but

“Be Grateful”  
The words come from somewhere  
And my mind spins there  
Soft sweet words  
Fill and overflow

--*Lois Alderfer 5/6/20*

## **ROCK OF AGES**

I  
am  
tethered  
to a  
shaft  
of  
light  
a  
still  
point  
moving

*--Barbara Shisler*

## **COVID-19 Journey**

Quarantine. Silence. Solitude.  
Loneliness. Helplessness.  
Deaths, suffering, unstoppable.  
Fear. Disbelief. Denial.  
CLOSED. No service! Go home.  
Keep out. Danger.  
Do not touch me!  
Masks. Like robbers.  
Smiles hidden.  
Days, weeks, months...  
Forever??  
Questions.  
Truth? Lies?  
Pray? Really? Tears, sobs, shouts.  
God, are you there?  
Almighty One, rescue us!

And yet, we acknowledge, God, it's true, we still hear the cardinals, smell the lilacs, feel the sunshine, savor the ice cream, and connect on Zoom. You are still there. God, we beseech Thee, fill us with your grace. Help us cope until Zoom turns into hugs, masks are for Halloween, and children return to our playgrounds. Amen

*--Joyce Hunsberger*