

Resilience and Renewal: By Reverend Nur'llah (Cathy) Layland, for Universal Worship,
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In early May something rustled the leaves of a hanging begonia suspended from our front patio awning... oh! a Dove! The next time the plant needed watering, the dove flew off, so I took that opportunity to take down the basket, and low and behold, 2 eggs in a loosely constructed nest! How exciting! We learned doves mate for life, and, take turns warming the eggs. Wishing to support the growing family, I got black oiled sunflower seeds and dried mealy worms and tossed a handful on the patio. Oh, but that invited squirrels, and soon one of them took advantage of the patio furniture to launch itself into the begonia! Mom, sitting in her usual spot by the picture window which gives her a view of some of the gardens and of passersby, raise the alarm! "Come quick! There's a squirrel after the doves!"

Running from the other end of the house, I arrived in time to witness a tussle within the veil of leaves, until finally, the dove flew off. The squirrel jumped down and made for the hedgerow when I shouted.... sadly I found but one egg left in its nest.

Hanging the begonia higher, and, away from the furniture, might help... and the remaining ground-food was swept up, with a heavy heart. Surely the dove would not return...

But later that day... there they were! Resuming their stations, one on the nest and the other on the peak of the roof, cooing.

We watched and waited, hoping to see a young one being fed, but the days passed with now visible activity.... then suddenly one day, there was an adult, sitting high, looking in our picture window, framing the one squab against its breast as if to introduce it to us. A few days later, they were gone.

Surely, I thought, after that traumatic against all odds fledging, they would not return... although doves often raise several families in the same nest in the course of a season.

And then, a week or so later, we could again see a long pointed tail sticking out from between the ever increasing wall of leaves!

What resilience! What an act of Hope, of Faith, of Trust in co-creation, the possibility of Wonderfulness! Faith that the best will be!

At the Summer Solstice we are confronted with the beginning of abundance by the verdant exuberance of earth. A myriad of seeds, having spent a long winter in the bosom of the earth, have pushed through the soil to grow, flower and produce. So many flowers are in full bloom! I look out my kitchen window at the Little Woodland in its fifth year and it's almost TOO green

for my eyes! The Bunny Banquet Garden (beds built on stilts high from the bunnies' view, we hope) holds crowds of greens, and the herb bed is resplendent. Many food crops are beginning to burgeon, whilst other fertile patches await their seeding.

It feels like a tsunami of abundance fueled by a most manifest power - the sun, symbol of energy, of enlightenment, of summer, of gods. All of creation is manifesting.

How about you? Are you awake, as those seeds sprouted from the dark womb of earth, aroused by increasing daylight and warmth, as fired up by the sun? Alive, energized, yearning to move, to feel alive, to celebrate? And what have you planted, what will you plant in your life to be harvested later on? And how will you tend your garden?

How will you direct your energy, both in your own life and outward to the world around you? In this time of witnessing creation in all its glory, let us remember that we are CoCreators. Let us embrace and embark with Hope, Faith and Trust in the possibility of Wonderfulness.

“Wherever Thou shalt cast Thy glance, Beloved, a new sun will rise there.” And whose glance is mine if not my Creators?

The Persian poet Sa'di reminds us: "The Constructor of this whole universe is active in constructing even my affairs.”

.....it is by the gardener's imagination that a beautiful garden is made. (What do YOU imagine? For your self, your community, the world?)

Pir Vilayat asked us “do you have the courage to be who you really are?”(Do you? Extend that and do you have the courage to co-create the world as it CAN be?)

Goethe challenges: “Whatever you can be, or think you can, begin it. Boldness has genius power and magic in it.”

And in the Gathas we read: “Every thought coming from a fertile and flourishing ground must bear some fruit. A loving person's life itself is a garden. “

NOW is the time!