

Overcome by light

The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. -John 1:5

Read: John 1:1-5

Reflect: I spend more than 40 hours a week in a lock-down hospital, behind clanging doors, intimidating sally ports, security cameras. Razor wire. Sometimes, on approach to the buildings, one can hear the screams of angry or despairing patients. Sometimes, they are screaming at torturing voices only they can hear...

On the weekends, I travel 100 miles away from there, walk to the riverbank, where I become still. I breathe deep.

Thank you for this wetness, thank you for this grass, for these berries and thorns, for these firs, for these water skippers, for these spiders, for this grey sky. Thank you for these snails, for these leaf hoppers, for these rocks, for these rose hips. Thank you for these glump glump sounds of deep water, for these cottonwood leaves floating by, for this moss and its spores, for these sand grains, for the bee-buzz in the blossoming plum thickets. The light dancing on the water has not been overcome by the darkness at the hospital.

Then I return the hundred miles, back through the sally ports and the banging doors. And I am greeted by the excitement of a patient who's had an unexpected phone call from a lost daughter, by the moist eyes of another who claims he has not been able to cry for 10 years. A man who once marveled at the possibility of recovery is exuberant upon discharge, and does not return to the hospital for many years. Maybe not at all. The Light snagged on the razor wire has not been overcome by the darkness.

[Respond: Thank you for the Light. And thank you for the night, which is not darkness to you.]