

GROUP RETREAT

REFLECTION

Co-Humanity

A NEW LOOM
ORG



Group Retreat Reflection

Co-Humanity

INTRODUCTION

This reflection scours the globe to find the rhythm of our shared humanity, through exploring theological ideas, poetry and the beat of the drum from all over the planet. Unlike other reflections in this series, you are encouraged to work through the material in the order it is presented here. If you take time to ponder when it's suggested, the reflection should take around 1 hour.

RHYTHM

Listen to the rhythm of our shared humanity

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gJpT_wHZeF8

THE BEAT OF THE DRUM

Scotland

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hnSNfxjrwc>

CO-HUMANITY

'We are only persons with each other: our humanity is "co-humanity", inextricably involved with others, utterly relational, both in our humanity and our shared life on a finite planet. If those others are of ultimate worth then we are each called to responsibility towards them and to contribute responsibly to our communities.'

This is a quote from the Church of England vision for education, it's an ethos that church schools are required to uphold. But what about us as a church, as individual followers of Christ? How do we engage with this concept of co-humanity, of working together, of appreciating the other?

Let's watch the internationally renowned Blue Man Group.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ltAk4ToydBg>

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POEM

by Rasaan Malik, a graduate of the University of Ibadan, Nigeria.

IN ANOTHER WORLD

In another world I want to be a father without
passing through the eternal insanity of mourning
my children, without experiencing the ritual
of watching my children return home as bodies
folded like a prayer mat, without spending my
nights telling them the stories of a hometown
where natives become aliens searching for
a shelter. I want my children to spread a mat
outside my house and play without the walls
of houses ripped by rifles. I want to watch my children
grow to recite the name of their homeland like Lord's
Prayer, to frolic in the streets without being hunted like
animals in the bush, without being mobbed to death.
In another world I want my children to tame grasshoppers
in the field, to play with their dolls in the living room,
to inhale the fragrance of flowers waving as wind blows,
to see the birds measure the sky with their wings.

In this poignant poem we begin to get a sense of migration, war, refugees, asylum seekers, loss, culture, tradition, hope...

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READING (NIV)

Matthew 22, 36-40

³⁶ “Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?”

³⁷ Jesus replied: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.”^[a] ³⁸ This is the first and greatest commandment. ³⁹ And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’^[b] ⁴⁰ All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.”

I wonder which of our global neighbours we struggle to love? As the next video plays You are invited to think about completing the sentence ‘I will love my neighbours’. some suggestions might be your Muslim neighbours, your asylum seeking neighbours, your elderly neighbours, your sick neighbours, your working class neighbours, your noisy neighbours... who is it that you struggle to love?

THE BEAT OF THE DRUM

Guinea

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4qaNO1vLeWI&list=PL6Rxb5Vai_byCXST8dJhE0WIkHq3MOwvB

UBUNTU

There’s a Zulu word that summarises this idea of co-humanity. It is ‘Ubuntu’ which can be translated as ‘I am because we are’ but is often used in a more philosophical sense to mean the belief in a universal bond of sharing that connects all humanity. Let’s hear what Archbishop Desmond Tutu has to say about it...

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0wZtfqZ271w>

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THE BEAT OF THE DRUM

Thailand

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YKa7q7zhnQ0>

This performance an interesting metaphor for worship – how in tune are we to God? Are we playing the same rhythm? Are we in time with how the Holy Spirit is moving?

POEM

Adrian Mitchell was one of the most exciting popular voices in British poetry for almost half a century before his death a few years ago. This is his Poem, 'human beings'

HUMAN BEINGS

look at your hands, your beautiful useful hands
you're not an ape, you're not a parrot, you're not a slow loris
or a smart missile, you're human

not British, not American, not Israeli, not Palestinian, you're human
not catholic, not protestant, not muslim, not hindu, you're human
we all start human, we end up human, human first, human last, we're human, or we're nothing

nothing but bombs, and poison gas, nothing but guns and torturers
nothing but slaves of Greed and War, if we're not human

look at your body with its amazing systems of nerve-wires and blood canals
think about your mind which can think about itself and the whole universe
look at your face which can freeze into horror or melt into love
look at all that life, all that beauty
you're human, they are human, we are human, let's try to be human

dance!

THE BEAT OF THE DRUM

Damat the Techno Street Drummer

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KEXGCayU1Rk>

POEM

Dvora Amir – Israel

I wanted to do something pointless
(except for my wanting it, which is of course the point).
I entered the open conch of my eyeglass case . . .
My eyes slowly grew used to the dark
and it was warm and pleasant
and I asked myself why I should leave
for what purpose?

Let's spend a moment reflecting on that poem – I wonder if faith / spirituality or religion feel like a darkness we have become used to? Have we become comfortably warm and content with what we have? I wonder if we've taken off our glasses to the world outside, to the needs and the disparities, the challenges and the call to mission? I wonder if you've ever asked yourself why you should leave that place of comfort

THE BEAT OF THE DRUM

Costa Rica

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TcCpCHv1CJE>

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