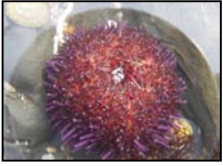


Harvest Time

April 25, 2011



Dear

Moss Beach, a town just north of where I live on the California coast, is famous for its tide pools. People coordinate their visits with low tide in order to search the exposed ocean floor for starfish, sea urchins and hermit crabs and to witness seals resting on the reef after long ocean voyages.



Years ago when I first began to sense I was to move from the busy-ness of Silicon Valley to the natural rhythm of the coast, I went to Moss Beach to pray for guidance. A few months earlier, a friend had introduced me to the Fitzgerald Marine Reserve and I immediately sensed the sacredness of the sandy cove and the cypress forest. When my children and I were ready to search for a new home, we went there to ask God to open the door.



I now live at a beach down the road. But still I am drawn to Moss Beach to walk in the trees, sit in the fenced in circle someone built up on the bluff, and search for treasures in the tide pools. Everything about that place invites me to drop deeper and to listen. It was the perfect place for Harvest Time's Board of Directors to gather on April 1.

When our board meeting began, we were in the midst of a moment of paradox. On the one hand, our vision was clear. My time at the monastery in February writing "The Journey with Wealth" had brought my understanding of Harvest Time's work into focus. I felt excited to continue to share what we have seen, lived and learned as a way of inviting people to journey with us.

On the other hand, our financial resources were running low and we needed to dip into reserve funds to function. Though we have worked to invite new gifts and have received many wonderful responses, there is still a gap between our current expenses and our current base of support. Going into our meeting, we had reserve funds to last through April and we had a matching gift in place to help turn the tide. I knew it was time to get creative, to listen and to make some decisions.



In Moss Beach, low tide is when the treasures are revealed. Our Board of Directors chose to see where Harvest Time is through the lens of low tide. So after considering our financial position and our learnings from the year, we searched for the treasures that lie beneath the surface, trusting the rhythm of nature and listening for how we could best be a part of the turning of the tide in the economic world.

In this letter, I would like to share what we saw and heard. I would also like to share some of the amazing gifts we received in the days immediately following our meeting. Finally, I would like to invite you to consider making a gift to help turn the tide.

Our Work Now

In Harvest Time, we have cultivated a practice of listening first for God's leading, trusting that if our vision is of God, doors will open and the resources we need will be given. We continued with that practice in Moss Beach. This is what we saw:



- We are receiving wonderful responses to our mailings
- Short introductory workshops have been offered inside of existing networks with ease and joy
- The conversations inside of the workshops on transformative philanthropy have been rich and powerful.



We also saw that we are in a very different financial moment culturally than when this ministry started eleven years ago. Some of specific observations we made were:

- The financial crisis has strengthened the spirit of fear that was already present in our culture when it comes to money. Many of us need companions to help us hear the leading of love in the midst of fear.
- Many of us are working with less money and know more people and organizations that are struggling to survive. We need support to figure out how to live inside of a new financial reality and/or how to work through overwhelm to clearly discern which needs to respond to and how.
- Many of us are excited about local, sustainable, and socially responsible economic models and believe these are key to the shift that the world needs. Some of us are looking for companions who want to step into ways of living and/or investing that support these economic models.

Reflecting on our work in Mississippi, we saw that the process we are engaged in there of gifting a farm has been a powerful experiment where we are learning about:

- The responsibilities that come with receiving and offering a gift of land
- Developing partnerships rooted in trust
- Stewarding land in a way that looks to long term sustainability
- Opening to the grace of reconciliation amidst historical wounding



We also saw that what we are learning in Mississippi is deepening our ability to companion people in our network who are involved in partnerships elsewhere.

After reviewing our work of the past year, we decided to focus our efforts on offering:

- Retreats for small groups that want to companion each other in an ongoing way
- One on one spiritual companionship around issues of wealth and faith
- Opportunities for small group reflection over the phone, over dinner, etc..
- One day workshops on transformative philanthropy with Be Present, Inc.
- One time retreats on specific topics (such as our investing retreat next fall)
- In depth writing, sharing learnings and stories
- Continuing to work toward gifting the Mississippi Farm in 2012

The Turning of the Tide

We then turned to consider our financial position and how we move from where we are now to where we would like to be. Inside of that conversation, we decided that we needed to



openly share with you our financial realities as well as what we are trying to do.

Typically, Harvest Time asks for permission to be in fundraising conversations. We do that because we are aware that sharing financial realities can bring up a variety of feelings, reactions and questions and we desire to do our fundraising as respectfully as we can.

In this moment, we feel it is important for us to be transparent. At our recent meeting, as we found ourselves weighing options such as furloughing or laying off staff, we realized that before we did so, we needed to be in conversation with our friends who care about this ministry as, obviously, any one of those steps would impact our ability to further our mission.

Having said that, I need to share that one of the great joys of the board meeting for me was the spirit of creativity and trust present among our board and staff even in the midst of a challenging financial moment.



I mentioned earlier that at the time of our board meeting we had funds to last through April. In the days immediately following our board meeting, we received gifts and pledges from seven people for a total of \$16,000. Those gifts will be matched by Judy for a total of \$32,000 which will allow us to function through May and into early June.

Immediately after the board meeting, I also received the following email:

"Judy's challenge grant and Rosemary's call to come and see have inspired me to do something "big" to support a very small organization to continue to do "great things." Once Judy's challenge is met, I will replicate it with my own challenge grant of up to \$50,000 (with a one to

one match and payable by me this year and next). God bless you all."

So although our funds are tight right now, there is much reason for hope. Two incredibly generous matching gifts have been offered to support this ministry. We still have \$34,000 to go to fulfill the first matching gift. If we do that, then the second matching gift will kick in.

I invite you now to consider making a gift to Harvest Time to help us continue our ministry. I invite you to be a part of the turning of the tide.

High Tide

In 2006, when I took my children to Moss Beach to pray for guidance, I was in a very low moment in my life. It took a huge leap of faith to imagine thriving at a time when surviving each day was hard. What I learned then was how powerful it is to be willing to see and move toward a vision of life even when I cannot imagine how it can happen. I also learned that when what I see is genuinely of God, the Holy Spirit steps in to open doors. I was able to move to Half Moon Bay because I received an unexpected gift of love that came in the form of money.

I recognize that it takes a bit of boldness for an organization to stand in a moment of financial challenge and not just say this is what we need to survive, but also to say this is what we need to thrive. But as my life experience has taught me over and over again that God can make the seemingly impossible manifest, I have learned the value of sharing dreams out loud and of trusting God to know which dreams are to manifest and when. So before closing this letter, I want to take a moment to share the full vision of where we would like to move.



Rooted in the biblical vision of economic justice which calls us to receive the gifts of God's abundant harvest in such a way that everyone has enough.

We are obviously living in a moment in history where the economic world is in need of transformation. At Harvest Time, we have spent the last eleven years walking with people as they allow God to change their hearts and minds so that money can move through their lives as gift. In the course of that, we have witnessed amazing transformations in people's lives, relationships, and spiritual journeys. And we have seen the powerful impact each of those individuals has in their communities when they become free enough to allow their resources and lives to flow from a place of call.

In this next phase of Harvest Time's journey, we are seeking to share those stories and what we have been learning as a way of inviting others to transform their relationship with money. In the months to come, I will be focusing much more of my time on writing.

At the same time, we would like to continue to offer a variety of programs to open conversations about money and faith. So we continue to hold the vision of another person on staff with skills that complement mine. We see this as key to offering well-supported programs and to building our network, which, in turn, is related to our long-term financial sustainability, as most of the gifts that sustain our work come from people who participate in our programs.

My dream is to hire a co-director this summer. If you would like to talk with me about how to help us take that leap, please call me at 408-960-9139.

Much love,

Rose



NOTE: Photographs generously contributed by Judy Bork, Janey Yett and Noa Mohlabane

UPCOMING EVENTS

HARVEST TIME BOARD MEETING JULY 24-27 IN THE BAY AREA

If you would like to help us in the visioning and planning for Harvest Time, we welcome you to join us at this meeting.

INVESTING AS A SPIRITUAL PRACTICE WEEKEND RETREAT SEPTEMBER 29 - OCTOBER 2 IN THE BAY AREA

Please call me if you are interested in either of these:
408-960-9139

Rooted in the biblical vision of economic justice which calls us to receive the gifts of God's abundant harvest in such a way that everyone has enough.