

*Thoughts and Smiles... Monday, December 5, 2022*



Have you ever seen the series of paintings done by the late-eighteenth-century painter Edward Hicks? You may not recognize the name, but I bet you'd recognize his work. Hicks created the famous paintings bearing the title, *The Peaceable Kingdom*. These works have as their basis verses 1-10 from the 11th chapter of the prophet Isaiah.

To see more pictures of the painting, go to:

<http://www.worcesterart.org/Collection/American/1934.65.html>

In his paintings, Edward Hicks tried to capture the authentic flavour of what Isaiah was describing. He has a lion, a leopard, a tiger, a wolf and a bear, interspersed among a cow, a goat, a sheep and several other small animals. All of the animals are wide-eyed as if in wonder that they're all together. They have gathered along with three small children, one near school-age, the other two helpless toddlers. They all look happy and contented, and the children have at least one hand on hitherto dangerous animals. In the background of the painting is something of equal weight and importance. Off in the distance, behind the children and animals, you can see a group of Native Americans and several Anglo "settlers." They represent William Penn, the founder of Quakerism in America, and his group as they negotiated with the Lenni-LÉnape tribe in the Great Treaty of 1682. All of these people are separated from the



children and animals by a wide ravine, and there is a forked tree – apparently struck by lightning in the background. (see image below)

There is great symbolism in Hicks' work. There is a vast chasm or ravine between where we are – where we live – and the "peaceable kingdom" about which Isaiah speaks. On one side of the chasm are the warring people of the world, who, even if they espouse peaceful beliefs, tend to make and break treaties on whims and typically exhibit tendencies of little or no justice recognition. That is true of all people – even Hicks' beloved Quakers. On the other side of the ravine is that place promised to us by God through Isaiah. In the Kingdom of God, little children are never in any danger. Animals don't have to fight with each other – or eat each other – to survive. Lions and wolves eat hay, just like the cows and sheep. And people are **only** interested in peace and justice. But that forked tree in the background also says something about our nature. We have broken away from the beauty, wonder and goodness of God's creation and branched out on our own. Well, we will meet the wilderness prophet who will remind us of that admonition and hope are the precursors of PEACE this morning. May the Spirit move our hearts and minds to that recognition.





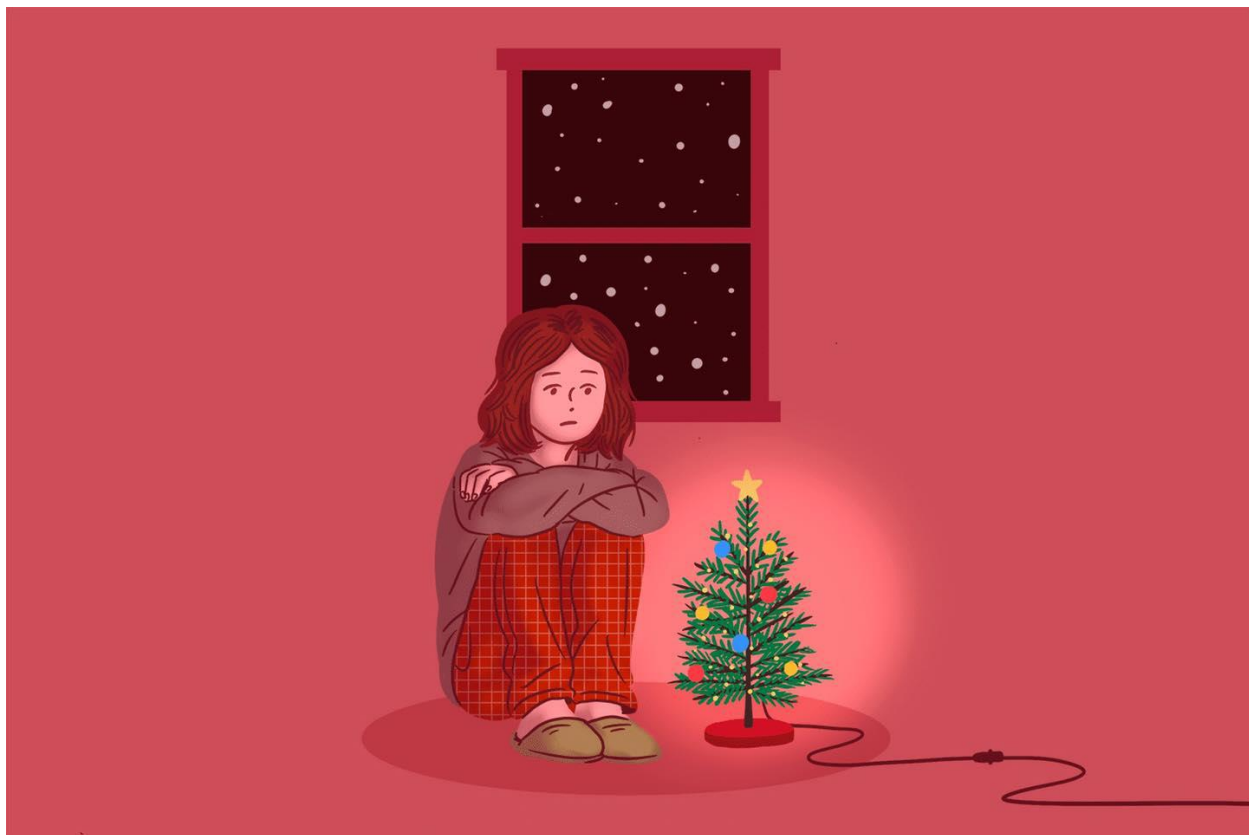


*Do you know what people really want?  
Everyone, I mean.  
Everybody in the world is thinking: I wish there  
was just one other person I could really talk to,  
who could really understand me, who'd be kind to  
me.  
That's what people really want, if they're telling  
the truth.*

*~Doris Lessing  
(Book: The Golden Notebook)*



*(Art: 'Conversation' by Zack Zdrade)*



If you haven't sent cards this year, or planned the perfect gifts.  
If you don't have the perfect tree or the perfect family, for a perfect festive photograph.  
It's okay.

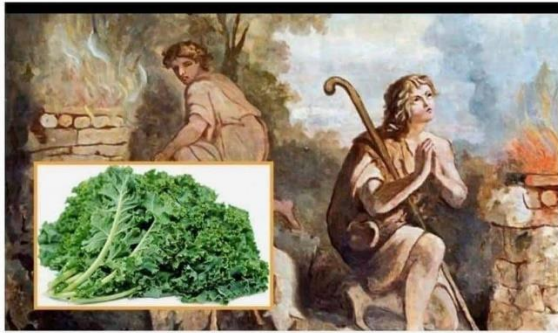
If you don't feel like watching your favourite Christmas movies,  
and you can't source the energy to be merry and bright.  
That's perfectly okay too.

No one should be measuring your 'festive'.  
It must not become a badge of honour.

Just hang on in there, finding any joy you can, in any little way.  
And remove guilt and pressure, from your already overloaded Christmas list.  
Because no matter how sparkly your advent, you can feel the sentiments of the season.  
Your way.  
Peace, love and goodwill to all.

*Donna Ashworth*  
*Art by Joshua Seong.*

*On the lighter side...*



New Evidence Suggests That  
Cain's Rejected Offering Was Kale

**Got an email yesterday'  
explaining how to read  
maps backwards.**

**It was spam 😂**



MARY, EXHAUSTED,  
HAVING JUST  
GOTTEN JESUS  
TO SLEEP, IS  
APPROACHED BY  
A YOUNG MAN  
WHO THINKS TO  
HIMSELF ; WHAT  
THIS GIRL NEEDS  
IS A DRUM SOLO



***Have a terrific week!***

***Blessings to you all!***

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*Check out "David's Blog" on the Sauble Beach United Church website.*  
<https://saubleunitedchurch.ca/category/davids-blog/>

Catch last Sunday's SBUC service at:  
<https://youtu.be/Vu1mD5QlqbU>



*Go ahead, groan.....*



**"I hate bothering you, but my wife  
wants to know if she passed  
her driver's test."**

