

# A Song of Hope

Trisha Boetto



*Look up, my people,  
The dawn is breaking  
The world is waking  
To a bright new day  
When none defame us  
No restriction tame us  
Nor colour shame us  
Nor sneer dismay.  
Now brood no more  
On the years behind you  
The hope assigned you  
Shall the past replace  
When a juster justice  
Grown wise and stronger  
Points the bone no longer  
At a darker race.  
So long we waited  
Bound and frustrated  
Till hate be hated  
And caste deposed  
Now light shall guide us  
No goal denied us  
And all doors open  
That long were closed.  
See plain the promise  
Dark freedom-lover!  
Night's nearly over  
And though long the climb  
New rights will greet us  
New mateship meet us  
And joy complete us  
In our new Dream Time.  
To our fathers' fathers  
The pain, the sorrow;  
To our children's children  
the glad tomorrow.<sup>i</sup>*

Oodgeroo Noonuccala's (Kath Walker) poem 'A Song of Hope' is as relevant now as it was when she wrote it in 1964. She was an Indigenous poet, black rights activist, environmentalist and educator. Her poem encapsulates the struggles and pain of her people and yet she believes in the hope of a better future. Her words touch me deeply.



Similarly, I am rivetted when I hear the words of Tim Winton being spoken on an ABC podcast.<sup>ii</sup> His latest book *Juice* is set in a dystopian future, the result of climate change where it is so hot that people live underground during the summer. His love and passion for the natural world is palpable. He says, 'We must not let apathy and despair paralyse us.'

These words go straight to my heart. I understood that hope and action are essentially connected.

All around me, people are trying to make sense of the world and to figure out how to respond in a positive way. In a hopeful way.

In December, a group of women friends organized a Peace Bus to go and talk to Parliamentarians about Human Rights. These women encourage expression through the arts, and they host peace vigils and organize talks to help inform and foster understanding - always from a place of a shared humanity. A place of hope.

What is Hope? As I ponder and stay with the CEN focus for this year, I find that hope comes in many forms and is found in many places. 'Hope is not cancelled' says a mural at a local train station. And a few streets away - 'Active hope'.

When I see a multicoloured rainbow arc across a turbulent, grey, cloudy sky I feel a sense of awe and hope. Nature is hope in action.

And is Easter not the ultimate celebration of Hope - the ultimate victory of light over darkness...of life over death? And as Easter people we can rejoice in Pope Francis' declaration of 2025 as a Jubilee Year of Hope. exhorting us to be Pilgrims of Hope - Prophets of Hope.

When Sr Joan Chittester visited Melbourne a few years ago and spoke at Melbourne Town Hall she urged us to be Pilgrims in our time - Prophets of Hope.



I remember her words: 'The time is now - we are all called to be prophets - the people who stand up against injustice and are truth-tellers. The prophet unmasks what is already there. They risk rejection and ridicule and need uncommon courage. Prophets broaden the conversation.'

She also tells us that prophets need a deep spiritual life, a community of hope and connection, deep prophetic friendships and they need time and space, love and laughter. They need to play and laugh a lot!

This is what is being asked of us at this critical time in our world. How might we do that and be prophets of hope in a world of injustice, conflict, climate catastrophes, misinformation and distraction such as ours?

The Contemplative Evolution Network (CEN) is one way of helping us to address this question and respond to the Easter call today. CEN is a network of people from all over the world who seek to change the violent and hurting situations there through the power and intention of contemplative time together and so help evolve the world through Love. This, its mandate and goal provides one context for bringing hope to a hope starved world. CEN is my community of hope and connection.

A friend from CEN shared with me – *We hold the pain of the world with love – to make even a small shift in the vibrational field of our world. To hope is to Love.* She helped me see that my own personal hope can be expanded to a *'field of hope'*, that a group can hold suffering, and it can hold hope at the same time. And this can be a powerful force for good.

Ilia Delia (a Franciscan sister of Washington, DC, theologian, author, and university professor specialising in the area of science and religion,) has written a blog called *'Looking at a Buttercup through Easter Eyes'*<sup>iii</sup>. In it she speaks of a friend of hers, a Jesuit priest and theologian who described that the highlight of one of his recent retreats was staring at a buttercup flower. *'During his entire retreat he stayed with this tiny little flower each day, fully present to it, being drawn into the miracle of its delicate life...He discovered God in the most unexpected place, the fragile delicate petals of a buttercup flower.'*

She concludes her post: *'This is the Good News of the Easter Message. God is not dead or absent or retired; God is active and alive here and now; in the very stuff we call matter. Matter matters to God, but we have to disconnect from our devices, get out of our cubby-holes, and open our eyes to see. God is doing new things and we are invited into this dance of ever-flowing life...God is the great cosmic adventurer who offers a divine invitation to rise from the dead and join in the exuberant celebration of life, for indeed, Christ is risen!*



Hope is a buttercup! Hope is a field of buttercups! We are invited to see with new eyes and allow ourselves to be drawn into hope and joy by the simple colour and aliveness of such ordinary things as these...around us everywhere.

May this Easter be a time of Blessing. A time of integration of suffering and joy, a heartfelt celebration of Hope and, as Oodgeroo Noonuccala says of Hope for a *'glad tomorrow'*.

---

<sup>i</sup> A Song of Hope by Oodgeroo Noonuccal (Kath Walker)

Source: <http://www.creativespirits.info/aboriginalculture/arts/a-song-of-hope#ixzz3bCRjfehP>

<sup>ii</sup> ABC podcast 'Not Stupid' October 14 2024 [Extra Stupid: Tim Winton's vision for our precarious future - ABC listen](#)

<sup>iii</sup> <https://christogenesis.org/looking-at-a-buttercup-through-easter-eye>