

WE MUST BE PREPARED

AWAKE

Before reading this poem, which will set the tone for this time of reflection and action, we invite you to breathe deeply as guided in this short **meditation**.

We Must Be Prepared by Ken Sehested

A brief meditation for the living of these days

We must be prepared. Things are likely to get worse before they get better. We must listen to the news, from a variety of sources. But we must not draw our bearings from that news. Ours is a larger horizon.

We must be prepared to take emergency action, to go completely out of our comfort zones, in resisting the Powers-and-Principalities' sway over current events.

In the meantime, however, we must not neglect our common duties:

- to care for those close, especially our young ones, in guiding them toward a life commitment to empathy, simultaneously brave and humble;

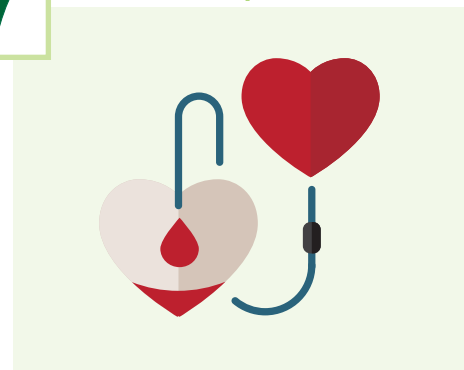
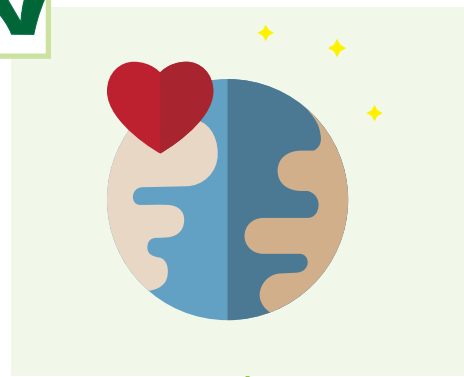
- to care for neighbors, for friends and acquaintances and co-workers — no less than for the earth itself.
- to be faithful in communities of faith, in whatever form that takes, to listen for and proclaim the Word's invitation and direction;
- to building a culture of peace in the zip codes, the watersheds, the time zones, in which we live and with special attention to advocacy for those who presently have no seat at the table of bounty;
- to risk the status we have been given in *the world as is present* on behalf of *the world that is promised*.

In light of these and an endless list of other similar commitments, we plead:
Lord have mercy on our frail appeal; and grant what we need for the living of these days.

Ken Sehested is curator of prayerandpolitics.org, an online journal at the intersection of spiritual formation and prophetic action.

AWARE

Daily breathing exercises help our body and mind to become at rest. We must be prepared to take any necessary action, but from a place of stillness that is both peaceful and alert. For most of us, until now, getting out of our “comfort zones” meant taking minimal responsibility to push beyond the limits of the norm. What distracts and discourages you from living faithfully into the larger horizon of God's infinite care while living responsibly within the finite limits of the here-and-now?



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ALIVE

It is suggested that you use the poem above as a meditation on the meaning of being prepared, taking emergency action and resisting the “Powers-and-Principlalities” that exhaust our limits. As thoughts, memories and sensations arise, observe them with a quiet mind and, if you like, write what is speaking to you in your journal.

Write your reflections here

ABIDE

Our Lord demonstrated his high calling by being prepared and watchful. As he entered the Garden of Gethsemane he said to his disciples, and now to us, “I am deeply grieved, even to death; remain here and stay awake with me.” (Matthew 26: 38, NRSV) Reach out remotely, but in real time, to encourage a friend or friends to “stay awake” and be prepared.

ARISE

Today the poet Ken Sehested helped us accept the obligations of being prepared that we each face during this time of pandemic. He also urges us to balance our lives in the direction of health and wholeness by getting our bearings from a “larger horizon.” While we are socially isolated, exercise your deeper values of care, compassion and connection in remote ways that communicate love. Remember to:

- Read this poem daily.
- Awake to clear your mind by listening to the breathing exercise clip.
- Check in with your partner or virtual group.
- Continue to make contributions to your journal.
- Safely express “care for neighbors, for friends and acquaintances and co-workers.”
- “Be faithful in communities of faith, in whatever form that now takes, to listen for and proclaim the Word’s invitation and direction.”

