



## **Boring in the Time of Corona**

After a tumultuous few months, culminating in the events of January 6<sup>th</sup> when a heated mob attacked our nation's capital, it was a relief and a reassurance to watch the peaceful transfer of power today as Joe Biden became our 46<sup>th</sup> president. Likewise, Kamala Harris, in becoming Vice President, became the first woman, and first woman of color, to hold this office.

In watching what for me was a proud moment in our history, I couldn't help reflect back upon the emotions of the past four years. These years were *anything* but boring.

Frequent were the times when I would advise people to simply turn off their Televisions, Facebook and Twitter feeds, and give themselves a mental break.

Today, I do not think that our country is any less divided, but I do think that there is a certain amount of exhaustion. Looking at the past year, unemployment, pandemic, racial tension and civil unrest...our society was getting to resemble something very biblical indeed. Let's all take a deep breath and breathe. Let us find within ourselves that empathy, that love, that resiliency that has always made our nation great.

Perhaps now is not a time to return to a "new normal", but to the "old normal" where we observed certain norms, engaged in rigorous political debate, and yet, we understood that we were a nation that was stronger when we came together. Truth. Symbols. Traditional American values...all have a place in our society and we deny them at our own peril. In the words of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. "*We must come to see that the end we seek is a society at peace with itself, a society that can live with its conscience.*"

Boring does not have to mean that we are bored. Far from it. There is much to be done. We can not paper over that which ails this country. And if we decide to sit the next four years out, we do ourselves and our country a disservice. We should all remain involved in our political process. Fight for our beliefs and our values. Support candidates who uphold those values. That is the American way.

In every prayerbook for the past 200 years, the reform movement has always included a prayer for our government. The authors of our prayer book understood that the fate of our people, like that of all people, is dependent upon the wisdom, vision, and empathy of those in charge.

When I was in elementary school, it was popular to memorize popular passages of the prayer book. We would recite those prayers in public before an audience composed of parents, grandparents and teachers who understood that going through this ritual, boring though it may have been for some, was nonetheless a method of continuing those values from one generation to the next.

My prayer came from Gates of Prayer, and I conclude this essay with these words:

*Grant us peace, Your most precious gift, O Eternal Source of peace, and give us the will to proclaim its message to all the peoples of the earth. Bless our country, that it may always be a stronghold of peace, and its advocate among the nations. May contentment reign within its border, health and happiness within its homes. Strengthen the bonds of friendship among the inhabitants of all lands, and may the love of Your name hallow every home and every heart. Blessed is the Eternal God, the Source of peace.*