

A LAST WORD FOR 2016 FROM THE BILBO BAGGINS

*“Go back? No good at all! Go sideways? Impossible!
Go forward? Only thing to do! On we go!”*

Morgan's Moment...

*“When the song of the angels
is stilled
When the star in the sky
is gone
When the kings and the shepherds
have found their way home...
The work of Christmas is begun...”*

I hate hearing that word “work!”
so close after Christmas...
when tasks are all around me.
Kings and angels and stars
don’t go back into boxes unassisted...
so much to do after Christmas.
I avoid the poet’s thrusting point...
that Jesus-praising and adoration
is not the point of Christmas.
So what would mystic Christian
and poet Howard Thurman say
in 2017 to a nation soon to be ruled
by billionaires and ex-generals?
Give up ego-fed partisanship
for a Jesus inspired agenda
of priority for the least among us?
Food security for everyone...
health care for those who are sick...
basic humane justice for all?
I’m thinking it’s time for preachers
to preach the Prophets
that Jesus followed.
It’s a time for some thunder and fire
. about the perils of wealth and power...
and the demands for moral justice.
Preach it! Do it! Pray it!
Stand with those only Jesus noticed.
The work of Christmas is begun!
Art Morgan

Those on the losing side of this election (some are calling it a “mudslide”) are expected to be sad and depressed. I catch some comments, probably fed by the talk shows, reporting how the American people are handling the election results.

Those who make any kind of questioning remark about what might be ahead are to be understood as poor losers.

I have tried to see whether this is true.

As most people know, Oregon tends to lean toward the “left coast” politically. There are plenty of partisan camps out here, but it is a blue state.

While almost everyone, including the winning party, is quite surprised at the outcome, I fail to hear much “blue” talk. Wariness and wonder, maybe. Even some fear and trembling. It’s too early to know what is coming.

I notice that our Men’s Winter Shelter is open again this year, in spite of opposition. Volunteers still show up every night to keep it going. And fund-raising has succeeded in keeping a whole variety of housing available for those in need.

I notice that the Meals on Wheels program is well and functioning. I talked with a man who volunteers as a Dial-a-bus driver to take people to doctor’s appointments and shopping. He is not sitting around feeling blue. He is still cheerfully continuing his rounds.

Habitat for Humanity is still building houses. Some doctors and dentists still volunteer health care services to those who don’t fit into other programs. Some fear for the health care system and high costs.

The more I look, the more I see. What I don’t see are people looking sad and depressed, although they could have good reason. Good things that need doing are still being done. They are not just church people. Some of these are Christians.

I like my Hobbit friend, Bilbo. He has a good idea for life that works for the New Year

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Go forward? Only thing to do! On we go!”*

Art Morgan, New Year’s Eve Eve...2016