

Treasures from Our Time Capsule

A time capsule is something people bury or stash away, filled with treasure for future generations. It's meant to be opened sometime in the future, with great ceremony, and a sense of awe, reminding people of past joys. We have 25 years worth of mementos to share with you: Ideas, pictures, memories, even a couple of games. It's all in the spirit of remembering our way forward, into a future that is firmly rooted in our mission, our values and, of course, in our community.





Treasures for you from the Fools' Team

Here's one from Sam Dennison

Our life at the Fools is populated with all manner of wonderful beings. There are friends visiting from afar (Spain, Scotland, Alaska, not to mention Ecuador and Nicaragua) to neighbors we've known for more than two decades (yes, poets and artists, but also nurses and pre-school teachers, spouses, parents, and wanderers). There are even some who at first glance don't seem quite real—magical or imaginary, some say. But to us, they are real and we are real to them (or so we hope). I offer you a glimpse of Pete and RePete, two pigeons who have settled on top of a bookshelf in our library. They made a nest of Oscard's old hat. It was, to their mind, abandoned housing and it was perfect

for the two of them. Before long a little one appeared. They are waiting for it to hatch, but we don't have the heart to tell them that they are nurturing a clown nose ... Perhaps they will watch it and love it and talk to it so much that one day it will give birth to a full grown clown, one we've never met before!!!

One of the art pieces hanging on a downstairs wall corner in our Faithful Fools Here's a treasure from is an auctioned painting from the Coalition on Homelessness that our team bid on during the pandemic when access to make the second s living-learning space reads, "America tear down 'your' wall... build some homes." This a lie a layne during the pandemic when access to many services and resources were not available to the most vulnorable in our site the most vulnerable in our city, state or country; those experiencing homelessness.



As a formerly homeless youth and for most of my college years, this was a lived trauma I experienced that I know could have been resolved. The barriers that I faced connected to a lack of support on where to start my housing assistance search.

When I look at this painting, I am reminded of the ways we Faithful Fools have connected with our unhoused community members; many from homeless to housed or in need of supportive housing assistance to remain in their units.

Through our Faithful Fools' advocacy and accompaniment work, we are able to assist folks trying to navigate the homelessness and supportive housing process. It isn't until someone is able to secure a stable, safe and healthy home, that they can become a productive and active participant in society.

For Fools Everywhere Leah and Jesse Johnson

A time capsule treasure from Leah Laxamana

I am including in the Fools' time capsule an art piece of musicians by Charles Blackwell that's hanging in the library. Over the years, the Fools Court has become a home for the sacred works that countless friends and neighbors have created, filling each nook and cranny not only with color and artistic energy, but producing a tapestry of the lives of all those who have come into meaningful connection.

Faithful Fools has contributed to cultivating artistry in the Tenderloin for the past 25 years, and I imagine this will be the case in the years to come. A common thread across the people we've known in the Tenderloin and worked with who have experienced significant challenges is how art has played a transformative role in their coping, healing, and even liberation. People's paintbrushes, pen and paper, and their voices and hands have been lifesaving and life-giving tools.

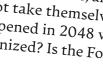
This artwork by Charles represents for me how art, in a way, adds music to our lives and having two musicians in the painting is also a reminder that music, like life. is sweeter when shared with others. Leah

Musicians by Charles Blackwell



And one from Carmen Barsody

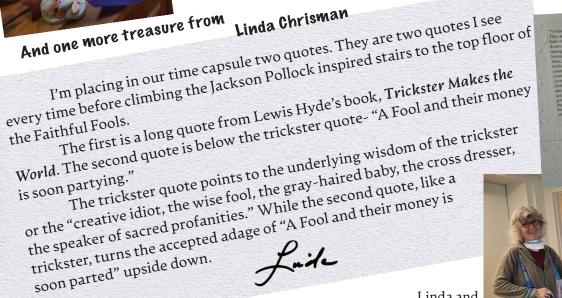
I place in this time capsule a Jester, a Fool, with two pennies at its feet that jingle with each light, but firm step. A Nicaraguan flag is in one hand and a mirror for continuous reflection together with a purple ball of yarn in the other. The words of the Fools' mission statement is written on a purple sash that's securely tied around the jester's waist, and the red clown nose reminds everyone to not take themselves too seriously. When the time capsule is opened in 2048 will these foundational images be easily recognized? Is the Fool's Carmen





Carmen with Arlen Casco & Mercedes Gonzales

A Fool and his money are soon partying



Linda and Io Smith

TRICKSTER Makes This World

"Trickster figures - Coyote, Hermes, Mercury, and more -and all tricksters are 'on the road." They are the Lords of in-between.' A trickster does not live near the hearth; does not live in the halls of justice. the soldier's tent, the shaman's huts, the monastery...Trickster is the spirit of the doorway leading out, and of the crossroad at the edge of town (the one where a little market springs up). They are the spirit of the road at dusk, the one that runs from one town to another and belongs to neither... The road that trickster travels is a spirit road as well as a road in fact. In short, the trickster is a boundary-crosser. Every group has its edge, its sense of in and out, and trickster is always there, at the gates of the city and the gates of life, making sure there is commerce. We consistently distinguish - right and wrong, sacred and profane, clean and dirty, male and female, young and old, living and dead - and in every case trickster will cross the line and confuse the distinction.

Trickster is the creative idiot, the wise fool, the gray-haired baby, the drag queen, the speaker of sacred profanities. When someone's sense of honorable behavior has left them unable to act, trickster will appear to suggest an amoral action, something right/wrong that will get life going again. Trickster is the mythic embodiment of ambiguity and ambivalence, doubleness and duplicity, contradiction and paradox. The best way



to describe trickster is to say simply that the boundary is where they will be foundsometimes drawing the line, sometimes crossing it, sometimes erasing or moving it, but always there, the god of the threshold in all its forms."

> Lewis Hyde Trickster Makes This World

THE TALE OF THE FISHER KING

The tale begins with the king as a boy having to spend the night alone in the forest to prove his courage so he can become king. While he is spending the night alone he is visited by a sacred vision. In the fire appears the Holy Grail, a symbol of God's divine grace. A voice said to the boy, "You shall be keeper of the Grail so it may heal the hearts of all people." But the boy was blinded by greater visions of a life filled with power, glory and beauty. In this state of radical amazement he felt for a brief moment not like a boy, but invincible, like God. So he reached into the fire to take the Grail. And the Grail vanished leaving him with the hand in the fire to be terribly wounded.

As this boy grew older his wound grew deeper until one day life, for him, lost its reason. He had no faith in any human, not even himself. He couldn't love, or feel loved. He was sick with experience. He began to die.

One day a fool wandered into the castle and found the king alone. And being a fool he was simple minded; he didn't see a king; he only saw a man alone and in pain. And he asked the king, "What ails you friend?" The king replied, "I'm thirsty. I need some water to cool my throat."



So the fool took a cup from beside his bed and filled it with water and handed it to the king. And the king began to drink. He realized his wound was healed. He looked at his hands and there was the Holy Grail—that which he sought all of his life. He turned to the fool and said with amazement, "How could you find that which my brightest and bravest could not?" The fool replied, "I don't know. I only knew that you were thirsty."

FOUNDED IN 1998 FAITHFUL FOOLS **CORPORATE PURPOSE** AS ENUMERATED IN ITS BY-LAWS AND AUTHORIZED BY THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA We intend to foster awareness and analysis of deteriorating social conditions in the United States and the world at large, seen from the level of the streets. and to facilitate individual and collective responses thereto. (HAME! Faithful Fools AND ONCE WE LISTEN, WE HAVE TO ACT. THE CAPACITY THAT COMES FROM LISTENING IS COMPASSIONATE ACTION. IF WE DON'T LISTEN, WE CAN'T ACT WITH COMPASSION. Bearing Witness by Bernie Glassman Street Ministry

I don't have any money. I don't own a gun because I won't be violent. So the only real power I have is to organize.

LEFT

TURN

POOR

GOODWIL PEOPLE

I AM A PERSON WH I AM I AM TENDERLOIN I AM A PART OF YOUR COMMUNITY

I WANT TO BE TREATED WITH ANDIWANT DIGNITY TO TREAT YOU THE SAME VOTE

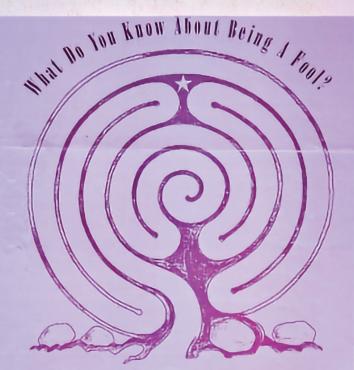
Tenderloin Votes, a voter registration and mobilization collaborative, worked out of the great room of the Fools' Court from 2014 to 2018. From tabling to marching to the polls, TLvotes was our collective response in difficult times.



Faithful Fools bring red & blue to you disguised as purple

Jesse Johnson, Tenderloin poet and activist

In 2016, USF students donned banana suits to hand out bananas with poll locations written on them, and our 2016 feast nominated Oscard for President dressed in purple to win as many votes as possible. We are called to a life of presence that acknowledges each human's incredible worth.



Education and Walking the Healing Labarinth

FOOLS FABLES 2014

"We are all in arrears to our self expression... We all have a little catching up to do." —Keith Walker, aniist/meditation teacher

FOOLS FABLES CITIZENSHIP

Fools Fables



Accompaniment



From the very start, you were there. Yes! Fools everywhere! And we had to stay in touch. There was no Facebook, no email, no Tik-tok or chat. There was only "Fools Fables" (printed on paper!) in your mailbox. They are our very rare mailings (stamps!) to share questions, reflections, and connections.

Our greeting to you from the Summer of 2002

Dear friends,

"Welcome All Fools" is the greeting that meets you at our front door. We invite you in. We invite you to join us in our personal reflections of what it means to live within the neighborhood where the face of suffering is not masked.

As we walk the streets, we meet signs saying "No loitering," "No public restrooms," "No laying down," "No sitting on the grass," "No trespassing." We come face to face with power that withholds. And we come face to face with our participation in the withholding.

The fool in the king's court is looked upon to speak the truth. While living and working within the Tenderloin, we aspire to be fools, to tell the truth of what we witness. One truth is this: Your liberation is bound up with mine—homed and homeless. privileged and deprived. Our action is not to push people away and out of sight. It is to acknowledge the worth and dignity of each person such that we walk together towards healing and the potential of a better life.

Fools Fables is a messenger. It brings the news from the Fools Court and the active daily life of the Faithful Fools. We hope it inspires you to come join us.

We say to you, "Welcome All Fools."

Lay Carmen_

OUR LOGO TODAY



The Faithful. Fools A ministry of presence in the Tenderloin of San Francisco EARLY DAYS FOOLS' LOGO

How Can it be? (for 9/11/2001)

Felt sort of detached the first five days and wondered if something was wrong with me. Didn't watch Farthful Foog much TV at all. After taking in some information from KQED Sunday evening, woke up Monday morning with the realization that a lot of people elsewhere in the world have been living with profound fear in their daily lives. I've known for years how much I wanted the world to be different. but I never realized how really bad it had gotten. It took the proximity and the magnitude of the 9/11 occurrence for a voice way down deep inside me to start screaming. -Barbara Meyers

> WE BEAR WITNESS. WE BEGIN BY BEARING WITNESS. ALWAYS.

Where there is violence & HARM, WE BEAR WITNESS. WE SEEK HEALING.

> WE SEEK OUR COMMON HUMANITY.

Community . . . in a street Zendo

"I'm just sitting here trying to make a Fool out of myself." Keith Walker, Zendo Fool

Reg

SR





Protective eye, photo by rAmu Aki

This Morning

By Katie Loncke Vol VII Fools Fables, 2004-2005.

This morning, Friday meditation with ZEN FOOL Keith is finished, and L leave the Zendo, shoes in hand, padding down the hallway to the staircase.

There in the front lobby is

Stone, reclining in an armchair. He's dressed in as usual: torn jeans, a filthy coat, matted hair, a hat, and snazzy sunglasses. As I drop my shoes to the floor with a smack, I realize he's in one of his not uncommon accusatory moods.

"Angry again today?" he asks me from behind his shiny opaque shades.

"Not particularly," I reply.

"Well, it sure seemed like it when you beat and assaulted me in Golden Gate Park."

"Oh. Goodness. When did that happen?"

"Oh, about a month ago or so. It was one of those things, where they combined the marijuana with the hashish, and you can burn it to make fuel. And you and your friends, you came and burned me. And every time I came around the park, you called them, and they came and attacked me."

"Wow, Stone. That sounds painful. I'm really sorry. I shouldn't have done that."



Zendo Fools do more than sit on pillows. For example, Fools Keith Walker and Dana Lederhos met the challenge of engaged on cleaning a room that was stem to stern dirty laundry, drug gear, and trash.

Katie and rAmu, also a Tenderloin poet & artist, sit together during a street retreat in 2004.



With this sincere engagement, I can almost see the steam being released from his mental engine of blame. The motor slows and slows, whirring to a stop.

"Well, yeah," he says thoughtfully. "You know, these things happen. And it seems like you're in a good place of character now. Lessons can be learned. As long as you don't repeat it."

I turn to walk up the staircase. "Thanks for your understanding, Stone. How's your morning going?"

"Oh, you know, pretty strange, pretty weird, as usual." He laughs a little. "Things change, you know, and it's hard to keep up."

"Ain't that the truth," I say, "Well, take care, it's good to see you."

He waves with five soot-stained fingers and resumes looking out the window.



Faithfoool Fools:

Stone Allen 2018

A place, a clearing; In the wooods, or a house:

A LOVE BOMB FACTORY Where?

Buddhism when they took A righter can trade their blindness, (and) their sword and discover the pen. Where you can eat, meet — The mean, and rob blindness of its maiming power.

> Mostly — learn the mystery an eternal, an infinite process of what fuel doth power these Fools, when they are sleeping not on earth.

Stone Allen Tenderloin poet Faithful Fool

Love Letter to The TL

From Elise Youssoufian 2019 Fools Fables

I don't know what I want to say... Something Significant. Something with Presence. Something that touches people, touches me. Something that makes change and shakes us to the core, Wakes us up from the death-drive nightmares Of capitalism and greed poisoning the waters of our only world. Something that opens our eyes and our hearts, That makes visible the threads of our lives Weaving us together and shining all around us. As I walk the streets, sometimes our threads gleam With the almost blinding light of reflection Bouncing off gold teeth and broken glass And the shattered dreams glittering the sidewalk. On the streets, the threads of our lives catch On every unkind word and all the hugs and sirens and smiles, On social justice street art and new police badges and old wheelchairs, On invisible poets without shelter and the howls of cacophonous cat calls, On school kids laughing and drug deals making life terribly bearable, And on my sewing needles and visions of marigolds and Peace Poles, Uplifting an army of us Fools, walking in time With the thrum of the streets That dances a duel with our beating hearts. Now and then our intertwining threads are lit by the sun, Through the tiny window at noontime when its warming rays Reach the streets, frozen for a few moments, Caught between temples of concrete and glass. Stifled by the silence of steel beams and starless skies, Where can I breathe? Where can we seek refuge? Into the streets I go, again and again, Walking and asking... So, what do I want to say? Something with Presence, That allows me to witness and be witnessed. Something that helps me remember Not all the beauty is revealed at once. I step into the streets, And everything changes...

Fools' Word Search 2013

lan	Y	D	U	Т	S	С	Т	Υ	С	R	Ε	М	MERCY	PAW	JOKE
Fafarman	K	Ν	Е	Ε	S	Ε	L	С	Υ	С	F	Ν	FOP OPEN	MIMIC ACCOMPANY	MILD SEEN
a Fai	Е		Α	0	0	L	S	0	Т	0	Ε	Р	CARRY SIT	BEFRIEND TESTIFY	EBB KNEES
Meliss	S	Κ	U	Ρ	Р	L		S	W	Ρ	Ε	Α			
d Mé	Ε	0	0	Ε	М	0	Т		0	Ν	L	W	MET	BIBLE STUDY	EMOTION
Andrea Dolan and	Y	Y	0	J	Ν	0	Α	R	Ν	М	S		TWO CYCLES PENNY YOU LEG EQUAL	CABLE BEARING WITNESS CLOWNS MIRACLE	POET REBBE KIND BABY ENJOY CELL
	F	В	М	-	М		С	Y	S	R	S	Т			
	0	Α		М		R	Α	С	L	Ε	F	Ν			
	Р	В	L	Е	В	Е	R	С	Α	В	L	Ε			
by .	S	L	D	Ν	Ε		R	F	Е	В	В	S	WON	FEELS	REBEL
reated	Ε	Ε	Q	U	Α	L	Y	Ν	S	Ε	Т	S	YES	BLESS	PEN
Cre	Т	G	Ν		R	Α	Е	В		В	L	Ε		EARN	AIM

In 2013, we were celebrating 15 of discovering on the streets our common humanity, and here we are, one decade later, celebrating 25 years together . . . and still discovering our common humanity on the streets. In 2013, we published a word search in the Fools Fables, so we figured, heck, we could do it again!!! So here you are: Fools' Word Search 2013 and 2023. Enjoy finding the words and circling each and every one of them. With a little luck, you will get the next one in 2033.

Г	T 7		-	D		•	D	T		•
	V	W	F	B	W	0	R	Τ	H	Α
	C	Η	Α	0	S	C	E	F	S	C
	A	Α	Ι	D	0	Ε	W	G	Ι	C
	S	Ν	Т	M	R	L	Ι	Α	Ν	0
	L	Ν	Η	Т	P	Ε	S	J	G	Μ
	R	Ι	S	Ε	V	B	Ε	K	Т	Р
	Ε	V	S	Q	X	R	S	X	Т	Α
	Т	Ε	D	U	C	Α	Т	Ι	0	Ν
iyne	R	R	L	Α	R	Т	S	Ι	W	Ι
na La	Ε	S	Ε	B	Ν	Ε	U	Z	M	Μ
Created by Silena Layne	Α	Α	D	V	0	C	A	C	Y	Ε
ted b	Т	R	U	J	0	Y	Ε	L	Α	Ν
Crea	W	Y	K	R	Α	L	Ι	G	Η	Т
CHAC JOY SING)MPANIN)S)CACY	1ENT		DANCE LIGHT STREET ANNIVI EDUCAT	ERSARY	I I	LOVE FIME Arts Faith Retreat	WISEST CELEBRATH FOOLS RISE WORTH		

Fools' Word Search 2023



"Yo lo hago por el amor al arte," dijo Heidi Francis Meza, fundadora y directora del Colegio San Francisco de Asís en Managua, Nicaragua, cuando reconocemos la energía y compromiso requerido de ella para crear y sostener una escuela primaria. Heidi es una "artista." Ella da expresión a su visión de educar a niños y niñas. Heidi y su hermana Graciela proveen una oportunidad para estudiar en medio de un barrio lleno de lucha económica y humana. Muy poco llega el agua por los tubos y pasan muchas horas sin luz. Heidi, junto con su esposo e hijo, vive en el barrio.



"I do it for the love of the art," responded Heidi Francis Meza, founder and director of St. Francis of Assisi School in Nicaragua, when we acknowledged the energy and commitment required of her to create and sustain a primary school. Heidi is an "artist." She gives expression to her vision of educating children. Heidi and her sister Graciela provide an opportunity to study within the barrio that is filled with economic and human struggle. Water seldom comes through the pipes and there are long rationed hours without electricity. Heidi, together with her husband and son, lives in the barrio.

_iLa Lucha Sigue! The Struggle Continues!

So declares the t-shirt I bought while living in Nicaragua in the 1990s. It called my attention as it simply stated a truth. Here in San Francisco, I often find myself saying that there's no such thing as happily ever after. To work for a more just, a more equitable, a more compassionate world requires continuous commitment. That's been my experience in Nicaragua and on the streets of San Francisco and it is surely true throughout the world.

Descubrimos en las Calles Nuestra Humanidad Común



For our global community of Faithful Fools, the streets of the Tenderloin and the streets of Nicaragua are one street. As governments change, as freedoms are given and taken away, as climate change brings extreme weather that affects the most vulnerable communities, we Faithful Fools, north and south, link our hearts and tightly grasp one another's hands and commit ourselves anew to walk our mission together.

Carmen Barsody 2023





We Discover On the Streets Our Common Humanity

This story about Heidi Francis Meza and these photos where originally published around 2010.

Even Fools have a Dream Team



Left to right: Quentin Olwell (kneeling), Carmen Barsody, Yeilbonzie Johnson, Carlton Smith, Diane Sherman, Susan Knutson, Alex Mercedes, Kay Jorgensen (with that famous clown hat), Joanne Klinert (in blue), Jody Shipley, and Karen Day (our very first Unitarian Universalist ministerial intern).

2000

When they roamed around 234 Hyde Street for the first time, Joanne Klinnert came upon a pile of pennies and a champagned bottle, the only occupants of a storeroom in the back of the building. Quentin Olwell said, "It's no longer <u>IS THIS</u> the place? <u>THIS IS</u> the place, so how do we move towards it?" He was right and just 22 years later, the building was paid off.



OUR FIRST FIDUCIARY FOOLS

It was one thing to file paperwork to become a 501c(3) corporation, but setting up budgets, accounting procedures, files, taxes

was another thing entirely. That's when Anton Jungherr slipped his card to Kay Jorgensen at the UU Church. "I will be your business manager for \$1 a year," he said. After that, Anton became our "Chancellor of the Exchequer" (that's CFO in lay language) and with his partner Lori Chinn, spent many hours laying our organizational foundation, even neatly labeling every last file folder. To keep that foundation strong, Anton hired Daisy Xie to keep us and our books in good order, which she has done ever since. Our foundation is secure thanks to these Founding Fiduciary Fools.

LIVING ON HYDE STREET

Has anything changed in the last 25 years? Well, yes and no. Over the years, we've seen people come and go

> and murals change, but the underlying problems remain the same: City policies still

prioritize the appearance of calm over collective wellbeing, life expectancy for those living in poverty is far too short, and the voices of those who bear the burden of poverty remain unheard.

2023



When someone at the Fools announces that there will be a reflection, I usually have a tickle of excitement. I am always curious about the path that any reflection will take. When I am in reflection with a group of people, I often find that what I take for granted might not be true at all. Here is one aspect of reflection that I find particularly interesting:

We talk here at the Fools about reflecting fearlessly. This definitely takes some courage and letting go of attachments. It is especially valuable when we analyze the effectiveness of an activity, or reflect on some new endeavor, digging in deep to figure out if it fits with our mission statement. In reflecting fearlessly, we avoid reflexive pats on the back and work to be open and honest.

> Polishing the Mirror by Jackie Hider 2015 Fools Fables

Jackie Hider Coming Fool Circle 2023 1943

We are called to a life of presence that acknowledges each human's incredible worth.

& aithful Foo

Aware of our judgments, we seek to meet people where they are through the Arts, Education, Advocacy, and Accompaniment.

We participate in shattering myths about those living in poverty, seeing the light, courage, intelligence, strength, and creativity of the people we encounter.

We discover on the streets our common humanity through which celebration, community, and healing occur.

www.faithfulfools.org

(415) 474 - 0508