

Today, Tuesday June 2, 2020, was not so hot as yesterday. Laini and I realized that when we set out to finish some banking business we could not complete yesterday. After lunch we started walking from Brooks Tower on 15th Street, between Arapahoe and Curtis. We strode up to 16th Street and saw the temperature was 85, ten degrees cooler than yesterday. As we walked uptown on 16th Street I wondered again why the free Mall buses were shut down at the beginning of the pandemic. We have watched the other, for pay, buses frequent 15th Street, in front of our loft, where we could see early on that they were almost always empty.

We made the transaction in the bank, two of five people in the whole facility: two tellers and a man who locks and unlocks the door for each customer. We did a bit of shopping afterward at the Target on 16th close to the bank, and then walked down 16th toward home. I believe 16th Street was busier today with pedestrians than any time we have observed them since the shut-down.

At home, we were going to play a card game when Laini again heard a noise from the street. We went out on the balcony to see a large column of marchers. They looked younger today and had two different chants: The first was "Black lives matter." The second one was "Don't shoot." As they shouted the second slogan they threw both hands up in the air, as if to surrender and show they had no weapons. I threw up both of my hands and shouted "Don't shoot." The marchers waved and smiled at us on the balcony.

Then I was transported to a different time in that same exact space. For over twenty years we have hosted a party for the Parade of Lights on the first Saturday of December. All that time I have been volunteering on Fridays at the St. Francis Center, Denver's large day homeless shelter some eight or nine blocks away at 2323 Curtis. The ticket to our Parade of Lights Party has always been a donation for the St. Francis Center.

The Parade comes down Arapahoe and then turns left on 15th to head back uptown. Marchers in the Parade see people, including children, out on our balcony. They wave at us and smile. The band players also wave when not giving us music. All of these parades merged in my consciousness with today's experience. Are they related? The Parade of Lights celebrates Christmas. But did today's parade act out Christian principles and values? I make bold to assert a positive answer to that question. These young people, many out of work and out of the classroom because of the pandemic, were marching to protest murder. By throwing up their hands they were testifying that they did not mean to retaliate violence with more of the same. And black lives do matter to Jesus and his followers at Trinity United Methodist Church and other Christian churches.

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