Thanks for your interest in using these spoken word pieces, some written for the Baptist Union of Scotland assembly in October 2018, and others for other events. I am more than happy for them to be used in churches or other settings, but ask that you use them as written, or that chunks are used in their entirety.

In the coming months, Foolproof Creative Arts is redesigning its website to include a shop facility where resources like these will be available as downloads, so keep an eye on the website and our social media for more!

If you’d like to know more about Foolproof’s work, then please visit www.foolproofcreativearts.com or follow us @creativefools (twitter) or @foolproofcreative (insta). You can also make a donation to our work if that is something you feel able to do.

Many thanks

Fiona Stewart
Whom Shall I Fear?

The Lord is my light and my salvation - whom shall I fear?
The Lord is the stronghold of my life - of whom shall I be afraid?

Spiders and field mice and streets after dark
Gangs of young people who wait in the park

Violence and murder
Dying alone
Burglary, bullies, dropping my phone

Forgetfulness, pain, losing the plot
Disapproval of others
Dismissed without thought

Nuclear holocaust
Putin
And Trump

Losing a loved one
Emotional slump

Brexit
The markets
Global unrest

Unconfessed secrets
Not doing my best

Being wrong
Being right
Being left
Being white?

Loneliness
Poverty
Falling behind
Words, long ago spoken,
Bought back to mind

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Dark corners
Loud noises
Silence
and grief

Losing my faith

Not knowing belief that points to the one
who sheds light in the dark
Whose word is salvation
Whose hands bear the mark
Whose victory over the things that I fear
Means future secure and presence right here.

My stronghold
My saviour
My Father
My rock

Give grace for the journey and strength for the walk
That I may wait patient
And trust in your word
With courage
And faith for all that I’ve heard

May I hold to the promise
Be strong and take heart
See the goodness of Jesus
Not fail in my part

The Lord is my light and my salvation - whom shall I fear?
The Lord is the stronghold of my life - of whom shall I be afraid?

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You were made for him

Do not be afraid
For you were made
For more than that which holds you back

You were made for His delight
For a yoke that is easy
And a burden that is light

Do not be afraid
For you were made

To cast aside that weighty bag of pride
That weighs you down, to sink and drown
Submerged in murky waters of comparison and dread

For he has said you have been freed

So live as one who runs and does not tire
Defy the gravity of expectation
And rise to soar
And swoop with ease
On thermal breath of his breeze

And do not be pulled down by sin
And lies that hold your gaze in sideways glance at those around
That will not let you lift your eyes
To see Him face to face
And take your place

That place prepared,
Before a word was said, when only Word was
and let there be on tip of tongue was poised
to say

That place of fearless freedom
Where the welcome of the Father
Runs with open arms to say
You are here
You belong here
It is well here
You are mine

Do not be afraid for you were made for him.
Banqueting Table

This is not a table for the proud, for the sorted, for the smug
Nor a banquet for the strong, for the self-reliant or the perfect
This is not a feast for the ones who, by their own efforts, succeed at this world’s game.

This table is not for the likes of them, for by their own declaration they proclaim themselves as those who do not need to feast here.

**This table is not for the strong.**

But for those of us who are weak, for those of us who struggle daily to submit,
Who feel the pain of suffering and know the disappointment of loss,
For those of us who envy and fall short,
Who, full of malice, slander, hypocrisy and deceit look upon our sin and weep
Who hunger after righteousness and thirst for the presence of the One who wept and bled for us.

For us there is bread to share and wine to drink.
For us there is forgiveness to receive and new promises to hear.
For us this table groans under the weight of his mercy
And reminds us of his grace poured out in abundance.
**For us this table awaits.**

This table is for those who know they are weak.

*Come* and receive the bread, broken as He was for you.

*Come* and receive the wine, poured out as He was for you.

*Come and feast.*

**For we will be** a royal priesthood, a holy nation
A people belonging to God

And we will declare the praises of Him who called us out of darkness and into his wonderful light.

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Dry Bones

Quiet
Still
Empty barren place
Distant call of lonely circling eagle far above
This long deserted battleground
Where unnerving rattle of desiccated skeleton signifies certain desecration.

All fragment of life is gone.
Nothing remains
But bone on splintered bone.

Remains of what has been,
Of what could yet be,
Bake in slow heat of midday sun.

Can these bones live?
Can these fragments of what is not,
And bleached out reminders of what was
Move and dance and sing and love once more?

Can these bones live?
You deaf skulls hear the word of God
You blind sockets see what he will do
You limp limbs leap once more.

Quiet
Still
Empty barren place.

But now, hear this,
The whisper of creation’s command
Rattles through this valley
Breathes life to long abandoned parts

Louder still
The valley fills
With sweet air of hope
As ligaments and tendons stretch
As flesh and skin take shape
And skeleton formed
Is filled with heart and lung and liver
 Backbone grown and muscles flexed
In glorious first stretch of new day’s dawn.

A breath
Commanded
Come,
From distant compass point

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Come, breathe life
To those slain here
That they may live
In bold defiance of deathly fear.

A cough
A flexing of the vocal chord
As tentative gasp of air
Rushes through
In rhythmic rise and fall
Of living word

And then

Louder still
Soul finds voice,
Spills out triumphant songs of sheer delight
That fill this long abandoned valley
With colour, joy and light

And now, awash with life
Breathing, swallowing, sweating life
This army stands
Refreshed
Revived
Ready

So now, hear this,
The whisper of creation’s command
Rattling through this valley
Breathing life to long abandoned parts

And louder still
The valley fills
With sweet air of hope

You souls, find voice
Spill out triumphant songs of sheer delight
Rejoice
That breath of God commanded still will fill
This long abandoned valley
With colour, joy and light.
Another Country

My friend has gone to another country
A land of absence
A place of loss
And we feel the gaping rift of lonely agony that he endures.

My friend has gone so far from here, so far from love, that we wonder if he will return. If he can return.

And like a living sacrificial lamb he waits
Lions crouch and bulls surround
Mocked, despised, insulted, broken
He is poured out
His heart melts within him
His legs collapse beneath the weight of his body and the burdens that he bears
Laid in the dust of death
So far from here

My friend has gone to another country and we wonder if we will see him again.

And what mystery is this,
this forsaken son,
this abandoned one
on whom the Father will not look.

Broken
Beaten
Naked
Condemned
Nailed
Forsaken
Finished

What mystery is this?

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And so we **wait and wonder**
**Wait in wonder**
Might we see him again?
Will he come back from that far country?

**What wonder** is this
That he will not stay **in that abandoned place**
Of **agonised face turned far**
But will return.
And in the darkness, doubt and pain
We wait and trust that **he has done it.**

My friend will return and we will live.
**What mystery is this?**
**What wonder is this?**

That other country has no hold on him
Its sting is lost
Its grip released
It has no power
And like a slain beast
**It is finished.**

**He has done it.**

My friend will return **and so we will live.**

What wonder.
What mystery.
Not far but close.
Trans/Form

Who am I?

One or
Other
Loved or
Lover
Male or
Female
Gay or
Straight
He or
She

Transitioning

Positioning myself against the crowd
To whisper aloud, ‘Who am I?’

Bi
Binary
Non-binary
Trans

Formed
Transformed

...wait

Who am I?
Loved or lover
Good or bad
Designed, refined, broken, mended
Knit together, formed, intended for...what?

To live forgiven
Driven
To seek and save
as you have done

A living sacrifice
Wriggling, refusing, stubborn, confusing
Sacrifice of a life laid down

To say that you alone are holy
but I am wholly yours
Offered to you in worship

To do as you would please
Conformed not to this world and all its talk of ‘me’s’

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For who I am in you, **I AM**, is

An offering  
Holy and pleasing **to you**  
Transformed  
**Made new**

In mind and heart and soul and body

Bound to you

And to your will - good, pleasing and perfect will  
Tested and **approved**  
Heart aligned and **spirit moved**  
To seek and save the lost

So who am I  
To scorn and **hate**  
To **miss the point**  
**Fall out of joint**  
Through lack of love  
And **sense of place**  
To **win the race**  
But **miss the face**  
Of God that **weeps and keeps** and **waits**

Who am I but **yours alone**  
And so I fall **before that throne**  
And say I offer who I am  
To be **transformed**  
**Reformed**  
**Re-assigned**  
**Aligned** with your purpose

For who I am is found in you

And one or  
Other  
Loved or  
Lover  
Male or  
Female  
Gay or  
Straight  
He or  
She

**Transitioning**  
**Positioning** themselves against the **crowd**  
To whisper **aloud**, ‘Who am I?’  
Can be transformed within the One **Who Is**.

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