

# Beloved Community

By Larry Ward

*Into the circle of all beings we have come, with the sunshine, Tree, Raven, Coyote, and Deer, Rabbit, Stars and precious Moonlight. May our feet walk gently in the sands of time, echoing purpose, peace and creative caring on this blue pearl.*

*Beloved Community: our hearts' greatest desire, our human birthright, our destiny in every moment. It lives in our bones and minds as if a dream deferred.*

*And yet here we are, now, touching and being touched by its true presence. Celebrate this moment, this gathering of working dreams.*

*I join my hands and pray that Buddhas and Bodhisattvas throughout space and time rise up from the earth at this precious hour. May these sacred energies bless us with boundless love and awaken within us our very best selves. So we may sing the songs of men and women who have come through the mist of ignorance.*

*May the cup of compassion within our hearts pour out covering the whole earth, both near and far. May the nectar of kindness touch our lips as we speak, may we find in ourselves the vast blue sky of inclusiveness and may our hands turn the wheel of time toward a more just world, a more beautiful world, a world worthy of our holy lives.*

Larry Ward, True Great Sound, has been an ordained Christian Minister since 1972 and received the Dharma teacher transmission from Thich Nhat Hanh in 2000. He leads retreats in mindfulness and Engaged Buddhism around the world. With Peggy Rowe-Ward, he co-authored Love's Garden: A Guide to Mindful Relationships. About "Beloved Community," Larry wrote: "This theme was one of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s last visions, of which I understand he and Thay spoke during their last meeting. This piece was written for an opening ceremony of the Winter Gathering on Whidbey Island, Seattle, Washington, initiating a week of mindfulness events in January 2015."

