

Indeed “they” are not hearing. “They” responded with military force to this nonviolent event. According to Associated Press reporters Robert Burns and Michael Balsamo, the National Guard of the District of Columbia is investigating the use of one of its helicopters to make a “show of force” against protesters near the White House, while President Donald Trump is encouraging authorities to get tougher to quell the unrest over George Floyd’s death. The helicopter, normally designated for use in medical evacuations, hovered low enough to create a deafening noise and spray protesters with rotor wash.



Art Reflection Questions:

- What do you see in this painting?
- How would you interpret what you see?
- Can you imagine yourself in the midst of this group of people?
- What would be your reason for being there?
- What is your emotional response to the scene?

(Encourage response and conversation)



Spiritual Reflection and Lament:

The response to the violence against people of color we continue to witness must be lament — lament for the families who mourn for their loved ones who were killed; lament for the systemic racism that continues to ravage our peace; and lament for the direct acts of violence we hear about every day, especially during the trial of the officer accused of George Floyd’s murder.

We also lament for our own responses to injustice, for the times we might have stood beside a sister or brother and for the times when our voices might have made a difference in a just solution. It is not productive for us to blame ourselves for the times we have refused to be a part of advocacy, protest and positive change, but it is productive to allow our personal lament to become our inspiration to create a more just society. And it is also productive to let our lament be our prayer to direct a God who cares deeply about justice.



Meditation:

Spend a few moments in silence, guided meditation and prayer.



Questions and Thoughts for Meditation:

Lament before God can keep us open to hope even in the midst of despair.

How long, Oh Lord, must we endure ears that refuse to hear, systems that refuse to listen to the cries of the soul?

May our lament be our spiritual discipline this day as we cry out before our God of Justice.

Lament is the foundation for our prayer and meditation.

Spend a moment lamenting the reality that anguished cries for justice are not heard. Meditate on how you feel when your voice was not heard, today and in times past.

Has there ever been a time in your life when you felt your voice was not heard?
Were you angry?

Did you consider your anger to be a part of God's preparation for your calling?

Can you express angry lament when injustice seems to be rampant?

Are you courageous enough to persevere, to persist, to raise your voice before ears that will not hear your words?

Will you allow your angry lament to be transformed into holy resolve to seek justice?

Will you continue to protest and allow your heart to tirelessly cry out, "They're still not hearing us?"



Scripture:

*For the hearts of these people are hardened,
and their ears cannot hear,
and they have closed their eyes—
so their eyes cannot see,
and their ears cannot hear,
and their hearts cannot understand,
and they cannot turn to me
and let me heal them.
(Matthew 13:15 NLT)*



Prayer:

*O God, who heals our brokenness,
Help us to continue to lift our voices until ears are open,
until those who have refused to hear finally listen
to those who suffer injustice.*

Receive our angry lament and transform our anger into righteous action.

Hear the anguish of every mother assaulted by violence against her child.

Hear the angry shouts of young people as shouts of frustration, fear and despair.

*Grant us the courage to persist in shouting out your demand for justice,
for as long as it takes.*

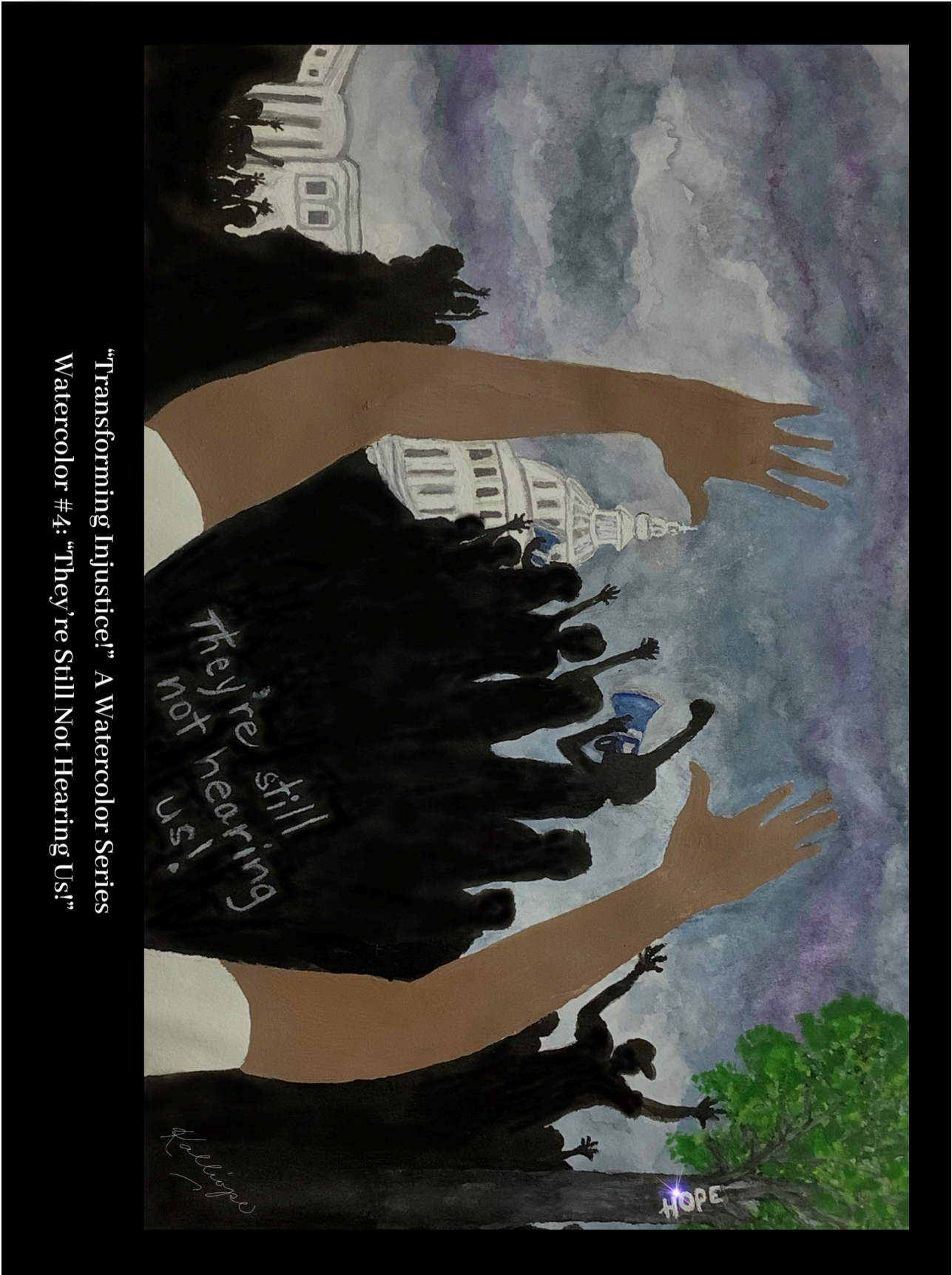
*When deep suffering causes us to lament, grant us Spirit wind and let us soar.
If we resist your call for justice, compel us to holy action.*

*May our soul's lament stir us to transform injustice,
in every place, for every person, whenever racism threatens,
for this is your will and our holy mission. Amen.*





Resources: (Images may be enlarged by color photocopying.)



**"Transforming Injustice!" A Watercolor Series
Watercolor #4: "They're Still Not Hearing Us!"**



ART REFLECTION QUESTIONS

What do you see in
this painting?

How would you interpret what
you see?

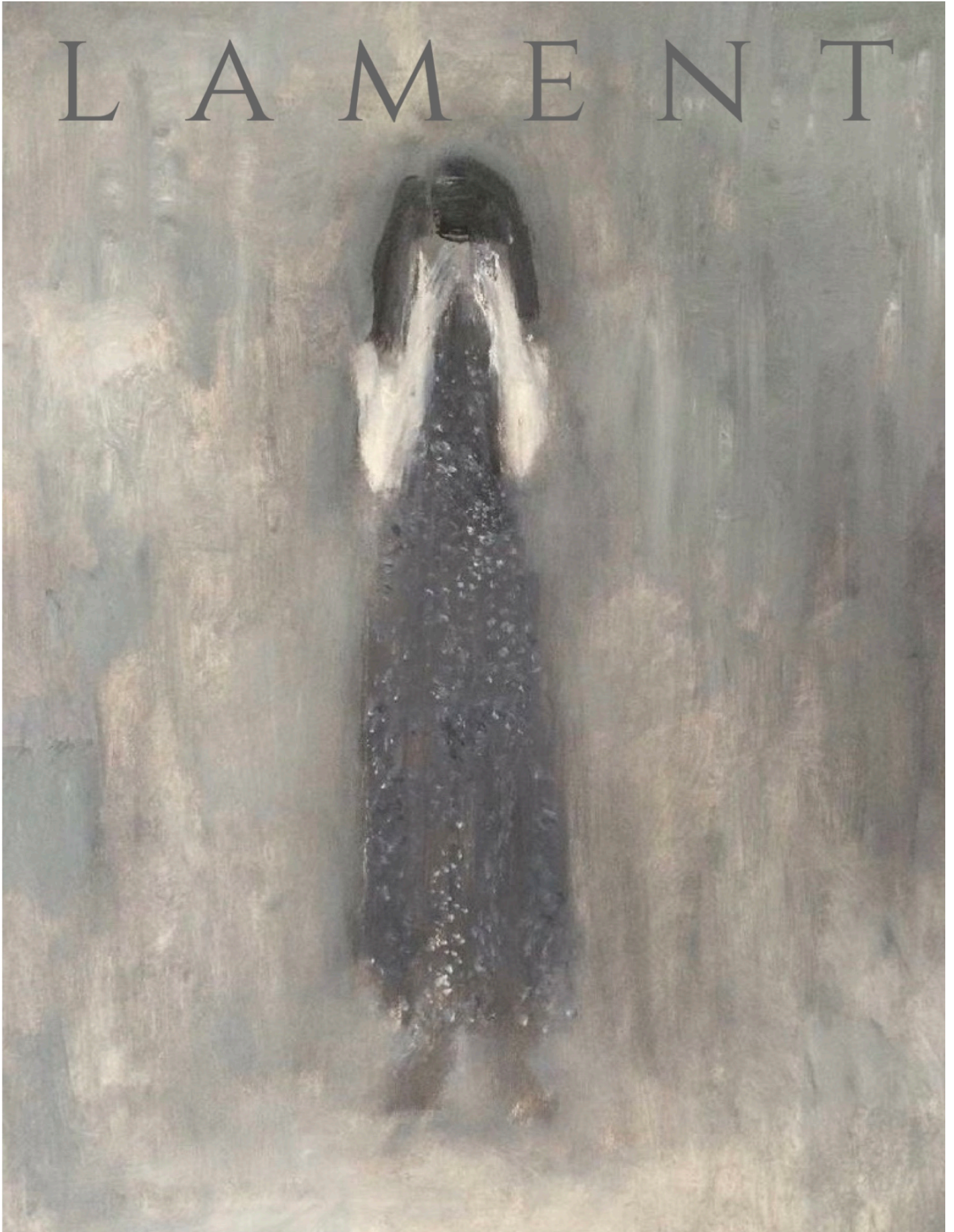
Can you imagine yourself in the
midst of this group of people?

What would be your reason for
being there?

What is your emotional
response to the scene?



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People protest near the US Capitol in Washington, DC, on June 3. Jacquelyn Martin/AP