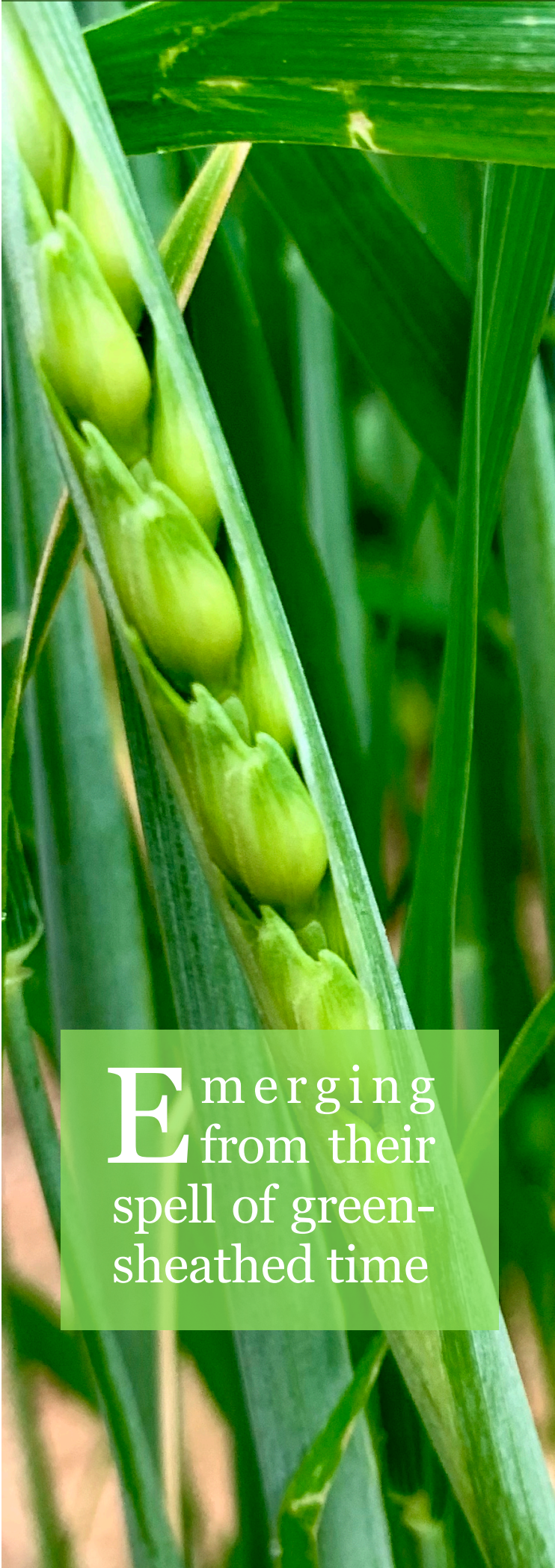


DAILY BREAD

“Grain of Hope : Slice of Heaven”


EXPECTING



As the stem elongates, the ear of wheat begins to develop, tightly furled inside the flag leaf sheath, hidden from fungal spores, invertebrates and the weather. Once the flag leaf blade is completely visible, the booting stage starts. During booting, the flag leaf sheath extends, swells and begins to split. This ‘time of ‘gestation’ is hugely significant in laying down the structures that will allow the wheat plant to reproduce. Or from a human point of view, produce grain.

Emerging
from their
spell of green-
sheathed time

Sara's wheat growing in West London, showing the emerging ear of wheat 70 days after sowing. I was surprised how low on the stalk they emerged.



The **Flag** leaves are responsible for 75%-80% of the photosynthesis of the wheat plant and produce the energy to fuel the filling of the grain.

Green-wombed

It is Pentecost.
Wheat which was sown in Lent
pushes its first ears
into the sun:

I think about those fumbling followers
whose spirit-growth
had been enfolded by Jesus,
suddenly thrust

into a future gaping huge
and unknown; into the shock
of a self they did not know;
into hurricane-disruption, fierce scorching

of Spirit-fire.
At St. James's, ears of wheat
are emerging from their spell
of green-sheathed time;

from the protecting flag leaf
which swelled round their growth
like an expectant womb:
all of a sudden forced

into sun-fire,
into the assault of wind,
the random attack of storms,
even as they produce their pollen.

And I, in my home,
think how this isolating time might serve
not as a prison-cell,
but rather a womb

that insulates us from what is known
all too well;
that for a while protects us
from the thought-habits that control our lives;

so that when we are thrust
headlong into a strange and threatening world,
out of this womb-time we might birth
new forms of living:

so much seems possible
when I watch these wheat-ears
carve out their shapes in the air
and begin to flower.

Diane Pacitti, 2020



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