

Gifts of the Dark Wood

Sunday, March 5



Our worship series, *Gifts of the Dark Wood* is about “seeing life through new eyes.” When we allow ourselves to accept the journey within the Dark Woods, the Holy Spirit Guide tends to nudge us, awaken us, to a fuller life. But life is messy. Life is uncertain. Rather than a problem to be solved, what if we saw uncertainty, failure, emptiness, and loss as gifts? What if we saw how these uncomfortable times can actually help us let go of all we cannot know so that we can live more wholeheartedly? Let us begin the journey ...

This week we focus on “The Gift of Uncertainty”

Prayer

Unexpected Love, enter our lives
and open us to the gifts residing deep within the Holy Darkness of our lives.

Walk with us,
speak to us,
call to us.

In your many names, we pray. Amen.

God dwells with us, no matter how sure or unsure we are.
God is not uncertain about whether or not we are worth of love.
God is with you, forgiving and restoring you to wholeheartedness.

Scripture Reading

Says Paul, “When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child; when I became an adult, I put an end to childish ways. For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then we will see face to face. Now I know only in part; then I will know fully, even as I have been fully known.”

~ 1 Corinthians 13:11-12 NRSV

Contemporary Reading

“You are like Rilke’s Swan in his awkward waddling across the ground; the swan doesn’t cure his awkwardness by beating himself on the back, by moving faster, or by trying to organize himself better. He does it by moving toward the elemental water, where he belongs. It is the simple contact with the water that gives him grace and presence. You only have to touch the elemental waters in your own life, and it will transform everything. But you have to let yourself down into those waters from the ground on which you stand, and that can be hard. Particularly if you think you might drown ... Let go of all this effort, and let yourself down, however awkwardly, into the waters.” ~ Brother David Steidl-Rast

Is there a place that you are being called in your life? Is fear of the unknown keeping you from moving forward? What if, like the swan, you took a step towards letting go of your fear and entered the waters where you will thrive as you become fully alive? Trust the call and take a small step.

Gospel Reading

Read John 5:1-13 and reflect on the following:

It seems like an odd question when Jesus asks the man at the Pool of Bethesda, “Do you want to be made well?” Of course he does ... doesn’t he? It turns out that the answer is more like, “Maybe yes.” Or maybe not. Each of us carries something in need of healing, inside us. It hurts. But we’ve become accustomed to that particular brand of pain.

Healing means change – and also, the discomfort of uncertainty. It takes courage to open ourselves to Jesus’ transforming power and exchange life as we’ve known it, however painful, for a new way of living. Take time to reflect on where you may be in need of healing in your life. Think about how you will answer Jesus’ question, in light on your own circumstances. Do you want to be made well?

* All information in this insert is taken from Dr. Marcia McPhee’s worship series titled, “Gifts of the Dark Wood.”