

Home Church Package – Sunday, Jan 24 2021
By Rev. Julie Lebrun - Inlet United Church, Port Moody BC

It has been an interesting week in our world. I'm thankful there was a peaceful changing of power in the USA. Calmness was the word used to describe events in Washington this week. Cultivating Calm and Stillness is the theme of our worship this week.

Gather yourself together for a time of worship at home

We gather together now...taking a breath in and exhaling...letting go, for now, of any chaos and clutter...things that distract us from the quiet center...where God meets us... There is a space for the calm and quiet...setting aside striving, planning, and anxious thoughts...

We enter this time of worship and prayer...breathing in the gentle rest of God... Know that the Holy One meets you right where you are...the companionship of Jesus and the guidance of the Holy Spirit are alive and at work in and around us this day...in this time...

Lighting a Candle

This candle reminds us of the Light of Christ.
The Light shines in the darkness and the darkness does not overcome it.
Listen and watch for the Holy Spirit inviting you into the Light.

Opening Prayer

Celtic Benediction Page 77

In the busyness of this day
grant me a stillness of seeing, O God.
In the conflicting voices of my heart
grant me a calmness of hearing.
Let my seeing and hearing,
my words and my actions
be rooted in a silent certainty of your presence.
Let my passions for life
and the longings for justice that stir within me be grounded in the experience of your stillness.
Let my life be rooted
in the ground of your peace, O God,
let me be rooted in the depths of your peace.
Amen

Reflection

I have been reading the book “The Gifts of Imperfection...Your Guide to a Wholehearted Life” by Brene Brown. One of the guideposts to a Whole Hearted Life is “Cultivating Stillness and Calm.”

I think the Psalmist that wrote Psalm 46:10 while inspired by God, knew the importance of stillness when they wrote. “Be still and know that I am God.”

Take a moment now to slowly read the Psalm and drop one word as you go:

Psalm 46:10

Be still and know that I am God
Be still and know that I am
Be still and know that I
Be still and know that
Be still and know
Be still and
Be still
Be

Cultivating stillness and calm is about “being” fully present in the moment. Brene Brown writes, “Stillness is not about focusing on nothingness; it’s about creating a clearing. It’s opening up an emotionally clutter-free space and allowing ourselves to feel and think and dream and question.”

This reminds of times when I take a break from trying to do a certain task or solve a certain problem and then return to it with a clear head. Suddenly the answer is there or I’m able to complete the task much easier. Has this ever happened to you?

I like Brene Brown’s definition of calm: “I define calm as creating perspective and mindfulness while managing emotional reactivity. When I think about calm people, I think about people who can bring perspective to complicated situations and feel their feelings without reacting to heightened emotions like fear and anger.”

I have noticed being around calm people can be contagious. Our own calmness and stillness helps us be clearheaded, creative, and clears space for new ideas and perspective. But it also affects the people around us. Calm and stillness is powerful in good way.

Poem: From Earth, Fire and Water

by William Yeats

We can make our minds so like still water
that beings gather about us that they may see,
it may be, their own images, and so live for a moment with a clearer,
perhaps even with a fiercer life
because of our quiet.

Sending Forth

I hope and pray you can find ways to “clear the clutter” in your mind and life. To let calmness come from this clear place within you. It is difficult to teach someone how to do this. Maybe you experience being still and calm while singing, walking in nature, praying, journaling, silent prayer, quilting, drawing etc. I believe we all have our own way of cultivating stillness and calm.

I think, maybe in Psalm 23, God lead us beside still waters because the calmness of still waters is also contagious. We too, are to be like “still waters” and this does renew our souls. Thanks be to God.

Blessing – Psalm 23

The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.
 He makes me lie down in green pastures;
he leads me beside still waters;
 he restores my soul.
He leads me in right paths
 for his name’s sake. Even though I walk through the darkest valley,
 I fear no evil;
for you are with me;
 your rod and your staff—
 they comfort me.
You prepare a table before me
 in the presence of my enemies;
you anoint my head with oil;
 my cup overflows.
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me
 all the days of my life,
and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord
 my whole life long.
Amen