

Awaken to Gods Presence | Sacredness of Creation | Wendy Brian

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

water, earth, presence, air, creation, meditation, freshness, gather, honor, deep cleansing breaths, teach, breathe, moment, peace, sacredness, inhale, direction, awaken, gift, item

SPEAKERS

Wendy Brian

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Greetings, sojourners. My name is Wendy Brian. I am a minister, spiritual director and spiritual formation specialist in Community of Christ. It's good to be with you today.

In Community of Christ, we have nine enduring principles that guide our lives, our ministry and our stories. These nine principles are All are Called, Worth of All Persons, Responsible Choices, Pursuit of Peace, Unity in Diversity, Blessings of Community, Grace and Generosity, Continuing Revelation, and Sacredness of Creation. Today, I offer you a meditation on the sacredness of creation. But first, press pause and gather a symbol around you. One for each element of fire, air, water, and Earth. We will use these as we move through this meditation. If you are stuck on some ideas, perhaps a candle for fire, a wind chime for air, a photo of your favorite body of water for water, and perhaps some dirt or a stone for Earth. Collect whatever has meaning for you and return back. I'll be right here.

Welcome back. For most of this meditation, we will be facing the directions of south, east, west and north as we complete a circle of the globe. If you can orient yourself to face the South, this is where we will start. As we begin, please know that silence in meditation is a gift. It is a chance to listen. For some, from time to time in this process today, there will be silent moments. Let them speak to your heart.

Now, find a comfortable spot for your body. We will take three deep cleansing breaths to center ourselves in this moment. Deep in. Deep out. In. Out. In. Out. Listen carefully to Community of Christ scripture from the Doctrine and Covenants section 163:4b. "The earth, lovingly created as an environment for life to flourish, shutters in distress because creation's natural and living systems are becoming exhausted from carrying the burden of human greed and conflict. Humankind must awaken from its illusions of independence and unrestrained consumption without lasting consequences. When we participate in honoring our Earth, it becomes a more peaceful and just place for all creation. When we honor the Earth, we develop a deeper attachment to it. When we honor the Earth, we create peace. When we honor the Earth, we are giving back to God, what is God's."

If possible, as we move through the next few minutes, remove your shoes so that you may feel grounded to the Earth. Frederick Buechner, a gifted Presbyterian preacher and theologian, writes, "Using the same materials of Earth, air, fire and water, every 24 hours, God creates something new out of them. If you think you are seeing the same show all over again seven times a week, you're crazy. Every morning you wake up to something that in all eternity, never was before, and never will be again. And the you that wakes up was never the same before and never will be again."

First we will honor the element of fire. The direction of this element is South, the direction of the sun's warmth. Please hold your representation of fire and face the directions of the South.

Welcome fire. We give thanks for your presence. Thank you for your gift of discernment, focus, and passion. Thank you for your warmth on a cold winter's night. Thank you for giving us a place to gather around you with friends in the freshness of summer. Thank you for helping us find our way back to the path when we have lost our way. Thank you for your flame that lights the way and warms our heart when darkness threatens to close in and around us. Thank you, fire, for your presence.

Place your item representing fire aside and gather your representation for air. The direction of air is East, the direction of the sun rising and new beginnings. Face the East and place your item in your hands.

Welcome air. We breathe deeply and give thanks for your presence. Thank you for your gifts of movements, sounds in the trees and energizing freshness. Thank you for teaching us how to dance lightly with the beauty of all that is. Thankful, thank you for your playful presence in the way you mess up our hair to remind us that life is too short and too beautiful to be taken too seriously. Thank you for blowing away the clouds of uncertainty. Thank you air. We breathe deeply and take in your energy. Settle comfortably into your space. Let your whole body relax from the top of your head all the way down to your toes. Close your eyes. Notice the air that you breathe in and out all day and all night. Notice how the air surrounds you and gently touches your skin. Inhale deeply through your nose and exhale and let all the air out. Sip in the air and blow it out through your mouth. Inhale again and exhale as slowly as you can. Breathe naturally. In. Out. In. Out. Rest in this rhythm for a moment.

Next, we will turn our attention to water. If you have a container of water, dip your fingers in and feel the moisture. If you have another item that represents water, hold that item in your hands and in your mind, visualize the relationship of your water item and what it means to you. Now, let's lift our water to the West, the direction of water, giving thanks for the presence of water in our lives and how water nourishes and teaches us.

Water, we give thanks for your presence. Thank you for your gifts of fluidity, gentleness, patience, and persistence. In your mind, take yourself to a beach and imagine the sound of a crashing wave and all its power. Listen now for a trickling brook as it flows over stones in a winding stream. Feel a cool drink of water on your parched throat on a hot day. Notice the smell of rain as it falls, nourishing the earth. Immerse yourself in a steamy hot bath on a cold winter's night. Watch falling snow as it gathers quietly outside your window. Imagine floating on water as waves move you up and down, up and down gently calming all that is arising within you. Thank you water for teaching us how to go with the flow, how to

roll with the twists and turns of this amazing river of life. Thank you for the deep cleansing and clearing you offer us for the way that you wash through us and around us renewing us each moment. Thank you water for being our guide and our teacher on this sacred path.

Now we turn our attention to Earth. Hold your item representing Earth and turn to the direction of the North.

Dear Earth, you are here always and in all ways, holding and supporting us no matter what we do or where we go. Give us wisdom to know how to appreciate you and protect your supporting presence so that you are fully available for future generations of people and creatures. Help us live our stewardship of protection for you. Help us build a foundation in you. Teach us how to create peace here, on your soil, on your rocks, on your beaches, and in our hearts. Let us take a few moments to silently pray for the Earth. Earth, we thank you for always being here to catch us when we fall. Thank you for being our standing stone. We are grateful for your strength, resistance, stability, and unconditional presence. Awaken us to the energy we need to care for you.

Oh, God of creation, of beauty, and Earth. We offer these elements of fire, air, water and Earth back to you. We are grateful for their presence for without them we would cease to exist. Dwell in us, God, as we dwell with them. Let us appreciate their uniqueness, as each one of us is unique. Let us create peace in them and in those who inhabit, in those we inhabit the Earth with. Teach us, God, to create peace here. Amen.