

Inspiration

What has this year held for you? What simple joys have come your way? What profound loss and sorrows? Where have you stretched beyond your comfort zone to say, “Yes, I will BE Love in All Actions”? Which relationships call to be BLESSED in all their messy, human, complexity so that DIVINE light can heal?

- Gratitude for the complex, messy relationships that have taught our souls
- Gratitude for walking a path in community at Unity of Albany, in a circle of faith, hope, holding the high watch for each other, and how that helps us hold the high watch for those in our other life-circles

Trust ([from grateful.org](https://grateful.org))

We cannot predict the future, and living with this uncertainty asks us to experience a level of vulnerability that can often feel disconcerting. We understandably don't desire to be surprised by difficult things, but in a state of vigilance we can also reduce our capacity to notice and experience wonder and delight.

When we invite ourselves to *surrender to*, rather than control, life, we can cultivate greater ease and trust in all that we cannot know. “Courageous trust” is how Br. David Steindl-Rast refers to faith. Grateful Living calls us to actively cultivate courageous trust in life as we open ourselves to the mystery and possibility held in every moment, allowing us to expand our capacity to feel more at home in our dynamic, miraculous world.

Curiosity ([from Grateful.org](https://Grateful.org))

The action of opening — we open up to, we open our eyes, we open our hearts — grounds us in grateful living, and curiosity is the means by which we open... Inextricable from acceptance, curiosity opens the door to *life as it is* and the possibilities therein. Without the capacity for open-hearted inquiry, we live as sleepwalkers, deadened to the world around us.

The Zen concept of beginner's mind reminds us that we can strive to approach life without assumption, preconceived notion, and opinion, as though we have everything to learn and understand. Because we do.

Even if we feel like we've experienced something before, we aren't the same person now as we were then and we can never fully know anything. Endeavoring to stay curious, ***we humble ourselves in the face of mystery, opening up to both not knowing and – even in that space of uncertainty – deeper relationship with what is...(emphasis mine)***

Through deep listening, we can create space for and cultivate trust in our inner voice as a guide...

The trust of our inner voice that comes with deep listening can unleash us into greater trust in life. While we endeavor to act mindfully, we also surrender since curiosity – bound as it is with not knowing – asks that we relinquish control.

Yet we don't need to muster courage to navigate this tension. Delivered into the unknown through attunement and inquiry, *we simply arrive at courage*. And so, our open hearts support us through life with all its ease and difficulty. We acknowledge we don't know what's to come – we never did – and that this space of possibility alone affords us a sense of profound abundance. We open to surprise and to the possibility that life will deliver us into beauty, into joy, and into the grace of tenuous understanding.

Labyrinth by Leslie Takahashi

Walk the labyrinth

Within your heart: guide your steps into its questioning curves

This labyrinth is a walk leading you deeper into your own truths

Listen in the twists and turns.

Listen in the openness within all searching.

Listen: A wisdom within you calls to a wisdom beyond you

And in the dialogue lies peace.

Guided meditation for 1-21-22

As we come into the sanctuary of time listening to the voice of God within, feel free to close your eyes if that's comfortable, or simply let your gaze soften.

Sense the places where the back of your body rests wherever you are sitting and let your body surrender into that support...

Feel your body supported, and notice the rhythm of your own breath, your breath that is the very breath of God... notice too...with compassion... any areas of your body where tension is held, and invite those areas to surrender and soften...

Sense the soles of your feet resting on the floor, imagine your feet rooted to the earth... sense your legs and hips...and feel all the places where your body is touching your chair... and feel yourself rooted and grounded...

Sense the length of both arms, inviting shoulders to soften..Notice where your hands are resting, at your side or on your legs, and I invite you to open your palms, ready to receive... .

Breathing in we come into the fullness of Spirit ... breathing out...we come into the fullness of Love...

Breathe in...and hear the voice of peace...

Breathe out...and hear the voice of peace...

Breathe in...and hear the voice of wisdom...

Breathe out...and hear the voice of wisdom...

Hear the voice of Wisdom that arises to meet you...

This blessing is whispering to your heart... a witness to your sacred purpose

Hear your word of inspiration calling, drawing near as near as your own heart

Drawing Near by Jan Richardson

It is difficult to see it from here,
I know
but trust me when I say
this blessing is inscribed
on the horizon.
it is written on
that far point
you can hardly see.
Is etched into
a landscape whose
contours you cannot know
from here.
All you know
is that it calls you,
draws you,
pulls you toward
what you have perceived
only in pieces,
in fragments that came to you
in dreaming
or in prayer.
I cannot account for how,
as you draw near,
the blessing embedded in the horizon
begins to blossom
upon the soles of your feet,
shimmers in your two hands.
It is one of the mysteries
of the road,
how the blessing
you have traveled toward,

waited for,
ached for
suddenly appears,
as if it had been with you
all this time,
as if it simply
needed to know
how far you were willing
to walk
to find the lines
that were traced upon you
before the day
you were born.

May it be so. And so it is. Amen.