

Consider the Birds

Self-Guided worship outline

Wendy Janzen

May, 2021



Whether you are an avid birder or not, the words of Jesus to 'consider the birds' invites us to reflect on what we can learn from our avian neighbours.

GROUNDING

Begin by taking some time to ground yourself. First, find your spot - it may be indoors by a window where you can see a birdfeeder, maybe it is in your backyard, by a local pond, or in a park - wherever you are able to comfortably pay attention to the birds. Make a conscious shift into a worshipful posture of reverence and curiosity, letting go of other distractions. Take some relaxing breaths, and feel a connection to the living world, and to the birds, through the common air that you breathe.

PRAYER

Spirit of life who hovered over the deep
at the beginning of time like a bird,
who soars like an eagle,
who gathers her brood under her wings,
who descended from heaven as a dove:
Open our eyes to see you today.
Open our ears to hear your song.
Open our spirits to sense your presence
here in this place, among the birds,
open our minds to new insights,
and open our hearts to a
deeper connection with you and with
these feathered creatures you love.
Amen.

READINGS

"Don't fuss about what's on the table at mealtimes or whether the clothes in your closet are in fashion. There is far more to your life than the food you put in your stomach, more to your outer appearance than the clothes you hang on your body. Look at the birds, free and unfettered, not tied down to a job description, careless in the care of God."

- Matthew 6:25-26, The Message

*"Hope is the thing with feathers -
That perches in the soul -
And sings the tune without the words -
And never stops - at all -"*

- Emily Dickinson

TIME TO WONDER

Enter into a sense of wonder. Spend time noticing the birds. Don't get caught up in trying to identify their species. Just appreciate their presence, and notice what you notice about them. Wonder at their ability to fly. Praise their beauty or resourcefulness. Enjoy their songs. Ponder what these birds have to teach you today. How might they reflect characteristics of God?

RESPONSE

- Do some journaling about your experience with birds today.
- Photograph, sketch, or paint a representation of a bird you see.
- Consider a gift of reciprocity - thank the bird(s) by offering them some sunflower seeds, bird seed, or frozen peas (never give ducks or geese bread). Give them thanks for the gift of their presence.
- Commit to learn more about the birds in your area - which are common? Endangered? What are their biggest threats? How can you support their habitat?

BLESSING

Blessed be each bird,
Blessed be the open sky,
Blessed be water of life,
Blessed be this day,
and every day,
Blessed be this place,
and every place. Amen.