

Awaken to God's Presence | Celebration of Wonderful Things | Pride Month

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

LGBTQIA+, Howard Thurman, Pride, Worth of Persons, spiritual practice, Divine, community, contemplation

SPEAKERS

Tyler Marz

Tyler Marz 00:28

Hi, this is Tyler Marz, Community of Christ Formation Ministries Specialist and Spiritual Director. Part of my journey is finding the divine in everyday life. Today I invite you to join me in a practice celebrating the wonderful things found in life, and more specifically our LGBTQIA+ community.

Pride month stands as a time to celebrate, love, support, and uphold the worth of our LGBTQIA+ family, friends, and community. It's a time to continue the work of social transformation, noticing the inequality that still exists in our communities and around the world.

Theologian and mystic, Howard Thurman celebrated the beauty and complexity of life. While his work was largely focused on civil rights and social transformation, he took time to marvel at the wonderful moments found in our lives.

In our practice today, I will read a poem titled, *How Wonderful!* By Howard Thurman adapting the end to focus on the wonderful and beautiful things found within our LGBTQIA+ community. I will then ask a few questions for you to meditate over silently.

May this time be one of upliftment, renewal, and perhaps a call to action within your heart.

I invite you to close your eyes if that is helpful, or find something to focus your gaze on. Take a few deep breaths, noticing how the air fills your lungs.

Remember, if thoughts creep in that don't pertain to our practice, let them float on by like leaves floating down a meandering creek.

Breath in. Breath out.

How Wonderful by Howard Thurman
(Italics signify added text)

How wonderful it is to be able to feel things deeply!

The sheer delight of fresh air when you have been indoors all day;

The never ending wonder of sunrise and sunset;

The sound of wind through the trees and the utter wetness of the rain;

The excitement of finding something that was lost and is found:

My fountain pen,

A beautiful wood forgotten,

The return of an old book,

The reconciliation after estrangement,

The first step after months of illness.

How moving is the sheer wonder of being necessary to the life of another!

The source of food for a dog, a cat;

The giving of a gentle word when you did not know that such a word was desperately needed;

The sharing of so little at the crucial point of acute urgency;

The beauty of a rainbow, its colors, its complex and striking beauty;

The authenticity of pronouns and names;

The uniqueness of each family, bound in love;

The hope for equality and equity for all God's beloved around the globe remembering that each is precious and beloved just as they are;

The invasion of the mind and heart with a sense of Presence in which all of one's being suddenly becomes God's dwelling place.

I invite you for just a moment to ponder, what is wonderful to you? What line would you add?

Continue your breathing as you ponder.

(Pause)

Next, What is God calling you to during this time?

Perhaps it is a call to action, or an invitation, maybe it is one of personal celebration!

(Pause)

As we close our time of contemplation and prayer, may you remember just how loved you are. May you take time to see the wonderful, beautiful, and holy found all around.