

Second Reading

I live by a creek, Tinker Creek, in a valley in Virginia's Blue Ridge... The creeks -Tinker and Carvin's -are an active mystery, fresh every minute. There is the mystery of the continuous creation and all that providence implies: the uncertainty of vision, the horror of the fixed, the dissolution of the present, the intricacy of beauty, the pressure of fecundity, the elusiveness of the free, and the flawed nature of perfection.

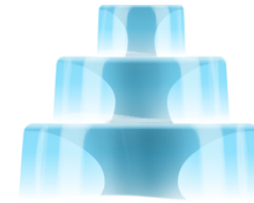
My God, I look at the creek. It is the answer to Merton's prayer, "Give us time!" It never stops.... You don't run down the present, pursue it with baited hooks and nets. You wait for it, empty-handed, and you are filled. You'll have fish left over. The creek is the one great giver. It is, by definition, Christmas, the incarnation. This old rock planet gets the present for a present on its birthday every day.

Then one day I was walking along Tinker Creek thinking of nothing at all and I saw the tree with the lights in it. I saw a backyard cedar where the mourning doves roost charged and transfigured, each cell buzzing with flame. I stood on the grass with the lights in it, grass that was wholly fire, utterly focused and utterly dreamed. It was less like seeing than like being for the first time seen, knocked breathless by a powerful glance. The flood of fire abated, but I'm still spending the power. Gradually the lights went out in the cedar, the colors died, the cells unflamed and disappeared. I was still ringing. I had been my whole life a bell, and never knew it until at that moment I was lifted and struck.

From **Pilgrim at Tinker Creek**
By Annie Dillard

The Seven Stages of Pilgrimage

- I. The Longing.** What passion carries us towards understanding and transformation?
- II. The Call.** By developing our ability to listen, we open ourselves to calls from special voices we don't always notice at first.
- III. Departure.** How we pack our bags defines our journey. You make yourself ready both on the outside and the inside.
- IV. The Pilgrim's Way.** The arts of seeing and walking, of staying open to diverging sidepaths and alleyways towards the center, of embracing the unexpected, and seeking out the hidden aspects of things.
- V. The Labyrinth.** The turning paths are all part of a larger pattern that creates balance and harmony, patience and peace.
- VI. Arrival.** While lately the fashion has been to emphasize the journey over the destination, Cousineau makes the case for the presence of the goal, especially, as he puts it, "...its presence demands yours."
- VII. Bringing Back the Boon.** There's more than photographs, postcards and souvenirs. It's the insights and understanding, how your perspective has changed, how you now fit in the world around you. It's the stories that thrill.



WIESBADEN
UNITARIAN UNIVERSALISTS

The Art of Pilgrimage



March 15, 2015

Wiesbaden Unitarian Universalists

15 March 2015

Love is the spirit of this church, the quest of truth its sacrament, service its prayer.

Centering Thought:
"I am a pilgrim, seeking...."

Welcome

Opening Reading #442 Singing the Living Tradition
"We Bid You Welcome" (read responsively)

Hymn #61 Singing the Living Tradition
Lo, The Earth Awakens Again

Chalice Lighting #448 Singing the Living Tradition
"We Gather This Hour"

Sharing of Joys and Concerns

We invite you to light a candle at this time as an expression of your joy or concern that you'd like to share.

"I light this last candle for all joys and concerns left unspoken this day."

Story for All Ages

All of You Was Singing

by Richard Lewis, Art by Ed Young

"Go now in peace, go now in peace/May the spirit of love surround you/

Everywhere, everywhere/ You may go."

Second Reading

From *Pilgrim at Tinker Creek* by Annie Dillard

Meditation

Hymn #123 Singing the Living Tradition
Spirit of Life

Homily

"The Art of Pilgrimage" John Keating

Discussion

What pilgrimages have you made?

What pilgrimages do you hope to make?

What boon did you bring back?

Hymn #1064 Singing the Journey
Blue Boat Home

Benediction

Wisdom, be thou more precious than possessions without end.

Truth, be thou more sacred than the pleasing of a friend.

Courage, be thou our strength to gain the distant goal.

Beauty, send thou a cleansing wonder to our souls.

Kindness, be thou our guide upon life's way.

Peace, be thou the benediction of our day.

Rev. Don Harrington

Extinguishing the Chalice In unison:

"We extinguish this flame, but not the light of truth, the warmth of community, or the fire of commitment. These, we carry in our hearts until we are together again."

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Please join us for refreshment and conversation after the service.

## Upcoming Events

4 April 14:00 Discussion Group, Hainerberg Chapel

Topic: #4 The Philosophy and Practice of Social Action

10-12 April EUU Retreat, Oberwesel Youth Hostel, Germany

Theme: *Many and Universal – Our Faith in the World*

Featured Speaker: Rev. Dávid Gyerő, current President of International Council of Unitarians and Universalists (ICUU)

18 April 14:00 Sunday Service, Hainerberg Chapel

Led by: Carolyn Burmedi