

Fellowship Circle Resources - Topics: Beauty and Grace

Chalice and Opening Words

Check-in/sharing

Reading/Topic:

"About five years ago, I saw a mockingbird make a straight vertical descent from the roof butter of a four-story building. It was an act as careless and spontaneous as the curl of a stem or the kindling of a star.

"The mockingbird took a single step into the air and dropped. His wings were still folded against his sides as though he were singing from a limb and not falling, accelerating thirty-two feet per second, through empty air. Just a breath before he would have been dashed to the ground, he unfurled his wings with exact, deliberate care, revealing the broad bars of white, spread his elegant, white-banded tail, and so floated onto the grass. I had just rounded a corner when his step caught my eye; there was no one else in sight. The fact of his free fall was like the old philosophical conundrum about the tree that falls in the forest. The answer must be, I think, that beauty and grace are performed whether or not we will or sense them. The least we can do is try to be there." Annie Dillard, poet and essayist.

Questions for Discussion

Wendy Palmer, in her book *The Intuitive Body* tells us that we get what we pay for when we pay attention. In the opening reading, Annie Dillard paid attention to the sky and was rewarded with the experience of beauty and the sense of grace. What are some times you have experienced unexpected beauty? Have you ever experienced anything you would call grace? Describe how that felt to you. If you have not had such an experience, is there anything getting in your way? How might you change that?

Likes and wishes

Check-on

Closing

May we learn to pay attention to that which we want in our lives. If that means slowing down and letting go of what we don't want, may we have the courage to admit that we have control over how much happiness we experience.