

Weekly Meditation by Rev. Teri Lubbers

Mindful Steps

Jesus was a walker, not a rider. He took his sweet time. Those who wish to follow him more nearly might decide to take more of theirs too. A journey to Jerusalem is one way to follow his footsteps. So is walking anywhere, even around the backyard. While I am sure someone else has already thought of it, I would like to introduce the spiritual practice of going barefoot. This practice requires no props. You do not even have to be religious to do it. ... You have everything you need to ground yourself in God. ~ Barbara Brown Taylor, "An Altar in the World"

I built a backyard labyrinth this past week, not as big as the one at Agape', but it turned out pretty nicely. It has been a dream of mine for many years to have a labyrinth at home, available for daily practice. I dedicated it this morning – with the smoke of sage and sweet grass, with cornmeal, with water, and native flute music playing. I walked it a number of times until I could walk without hurry or affectation (or losing my balance!). It's very different than the hurried walk to cross a street before the light turns red, or the vigorous walk designed to get my heart rate up, or the impatient walk when the person in front of me is going slower than I want to go. Most of the time, we aren't paying attention to our walking. We tend to care over much about our destinations. But what if we walked with attention?

Thich Nhat Hanh is well-known for teaching walking meditation. He reminds students they don't have to set unrealistic goals like: "I will practice for an hour." He encourages them to start with just one mindful step. He says that if you can take one peaceful step, you can probably take two or three or more. Celebrate the spring equinox today by letting your feet kiss the earth with a few mindful steps.

Prayer: Spirit, slow my thoughts, slow my feet, open my heart. May peace have its way throughout this day. Amen.