

## To Ponder: Breathing in the Silence Becky Eldredge

I found myself this morning reflecting on an experience that occurred a few years ago during a Charis retreat. It was a Friday night in March, and I stepped outside the chapel into the cool air during a period of sacred silence. As the doors of the chapel closed behind me, I caught a glimpse again of the 30 young adults who were in total silence and prayer.

The silence came with me as I took a few deep breaths outside. As I did, I noticed the world alive around me. Across our church's parking lot, a young woman along with her family and friends celebrated her Quinceañera in our main building. The pounding of the music and the laughter of the people inside drifted outside as the doors opened and closed. I breathed in the joy of the moment.

In the near distance, I heard the crack of a baseball bat and the cheering of the fans at the University of Georgia baseball game. I smiled at the cheers, knowing that something good had happened. I breathed in the excitement of the community.

Suddenly, I looked up because of the increasingly loud sounds of a helicopter. The helicopters were flying low and moving quickly with their lights frantically scanning. I breathed in the sadness of their search, for I knew they were looking for a young man who had shot and killed a police officer in our community days earlier.

Turning back to the young adults breathing deeply in the silence and in their time with God, I found myself overcome with the understanding that God was somehow in all of these moments at the same time: God speaking to each young adult uniquely in their silent prayer, God celebrating within the joy of the party, God savoring the experience of community at the baseball game, and somehow, at the same time, God was in the search for the young man, comforting the family and friends of the fallen police officer and comforting the family of the man on the run, and offering wisdom during the decisions of both the man and the officers who sought him.

T. S. Eliot The Four Quartets

At the still point of the turning world.  
Neither flesh nor fleshless;  
Neither from nor towards;  
at the still point, there the dance is,  
But neither arrest nor movement.  
And do not call it fixity,  
Where past and future are gathered.  
Neither movement from nor towards,  
Neither ascent nor decline.  
Except for the point, the still point,  
There would be no dance,  
and there is only the dance.  
I can only say, there we have been:  
but I cannot say where.  
And I cannot say, how long,  
for that is to place it in time.  
The inner freedom from the practical desire,  
The release from action and suffering,  
release from the inner  
And the outer compulsion, yet surrounded  
By a grace of sense,  
a white light still and moving

Sharing...

a word...

a phrase...

a reflection...

*A Thousand Years*  
*The Piano Guys*

*A Grace of Sense*



Our prayer is characterized  
by silence ~

Be still and know that I am God!

In that silence we listen for a new word.

God is present in all our lives.

God cares for us, and  
our life experiences are a source  
of deepening knowledge of God and self.

Inspired by God's Word in the silence  
we share from our hearts.

Thank You For Joining Us!

**Prayer Leader:** Peggy Gerovac  
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