



November 23, 2022

A Note from Pastor April

**Dearly Beloved,**

Like many, I appreciate the invitation this week to take time for gratitude.

I wanted to share with you the words of one of my favorite poets, David Whyte. These words invite us to be fully attentive to what is before us, and to allow our gratitude to be fully experienced... not as an illusory idea, but as a lived reality.

With gratitude to all of you and the gift it is to be on the journey together...

### **GRATITUDE**

By David Whyte

From his book *Consolations: The Solace, Nourishment, and Underlying Meaning of Everyday Words* (Langley, WA: Many Rivers Press, 2014), pages 89-91.



“Gratitude is not a passive response to something we have been given, gratitude arises from paying attention, from being awake in the presence of everything that lives within and without us. Gratitude is not necessarily something that is shown after the event, it is the deep, *a priori* state of attention that shows we understand and are equal to the gifted nature of life.

**“Gratitude is the understanding that many millions of things come together and live together and mesh together and breathe together in order for us to take even one more breath of air,** that the underlying gift of life and incarnation as a living, participating human being is a privilege; that we are miraculously part of something, rather than nothing. Even if that something is temporarily pain or despair, we inhabit a living world, with real faces, real voices, laughter, the color blue, the green of the fields, the freshness of a cold wind, or the tawny hue of a winter landscape.

“To see the full miraculous essentiality of the color blue is to be grateful with no necessity for a word of thanks. To see fully, the beauty of a daughter’s face is to be fully grateful without having to seek a God to thank him. To sit among friends and strangers, hearing many voices, strange opinions; to intuit inner lives beneath surface lives, to inhabit many worlds at once in this world, to be a someone amongst all other someones, and therefore to make a conversation without saying a word, is to deepen our sense of presence and therefore our natural sense of thankfulness that everything happens both with us and without us, that we are participants and witnesses all at once.

“Thankfulness finds its full measure in generosity of presence, both through participation and witness. We sit at the table as part of every other person’s world while making our own world without will or effort, this is what is extraordinary and gifted, this is the essence of gratefulness, seeing to the heart of privilege. Thanksgiving happens when our sense of presence meets all other presences. Being unappreciative might mean we are simply not paying attention.”

Happy Thanksgiving!

Pastor April



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God Loves You  No Matter What

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