



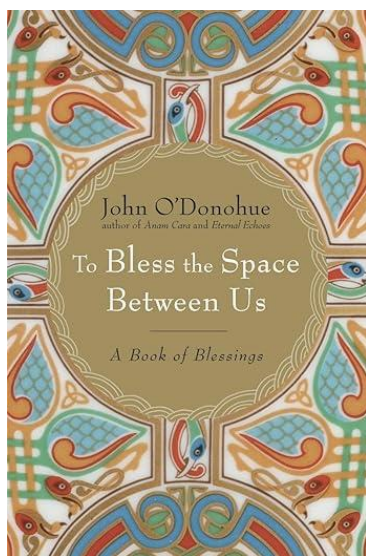
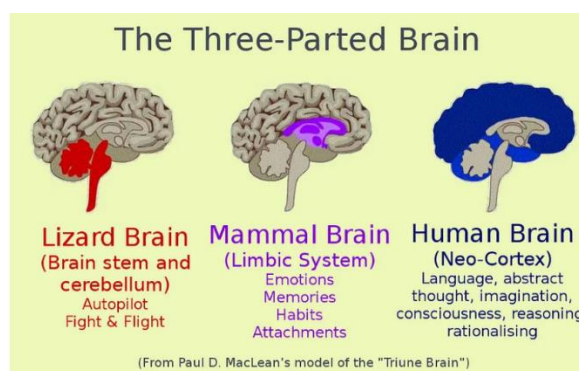
October 9, 2024
A Note from Pastor Jon

Dear Friends,

I was reading an article about human emotion and came across this phrase “paleomammalian cortex.”

I thought theological terminology was difficult enough, but as I read I learned that this is how engineering types talk about **the emotional centers of our brain.**

For me, finding this emotional center can mean reading scripture or looking at an image and entering into the scene. It means moving away from meditative prayer and into more contemplative prayer practices. In this season, for me, it also means reading some good poetry.



One of my favorite poets that I have encountered these last few years is John O'Donohue. It was in the fall of 2022 that one of my hospital chaplain educators — whose primary role is to train future chaplains to focus on the emotional centers of our brain — shared a blessing with me that came from a collection of O'Donohue poems entitled *To Bless the Space Between Us: A Book of Blessings*. I was so touched by the blessing I went and bought my own copy.

So, for this Letter of Encouragement I want to simply share a poem with you and encourage you to join me in the exercise of our paleomammalian cortices.

I offer to you John O'Donohue's poem called “For Equilibrium.”

May it bring a sense of peace to your spirit, as it does to mine.

A Blessing for Equilibrium

By John O'Donohue

Like the joy of the sea coming home to shore,
May the music of laughter break through your soul.

As the wind wants to make everything dance,
May your gravity be lightened by grace.

Like the freedom of the monastery bell,
May clarity of mind make your eyes smile.

As water takes whatever shape it is in,
So free may you be about who you become.

As silence smiles on the other side of what's said,
May a sense of irony give you perspective.

As time remains free of all that it frames,
May fear or worry never put you in chains.

May your prayer of listening deepen enough
To hear in the distance the laughter of God.

Blessings,

Pastor Jon



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The logo features a stylized cross with four quadrants in different colors: top-left is yellow, top-right is blue, bottom-left is red, and bottom-right is green.

Hilliard
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God Loves You  No Matter What

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