



## Spiritual Practice Week 3 Theme: Wonder

### Paying Attention - Wonder

#### 3 Wondering Questions:

*What is unknown right now?*

*What moments of awe or wonder have I experienced?*

*What does it feel like to trust God?*

*Reverend Emily Meyer, Director of [The Ministry Lab](#), invites you to wonder through contemplation and movement. Please note, this content is also available as an audio recording on the website:*

*[www.uccmn.org](http://www.uccmn.org).*

#### Tips for this week's Spiritual Practice:

\*You may listen or read.

\*There is no “wrong” way to participate: whatever is appropriate for you in your context is “right”.

\*Non-judgmentalism is key: be kind and forgiving to yourself and others. This is called a “practice” because it is never “perfect”.

\*If safety and health protocols allow, let this be an excuse to get out of the house, away from screens, and into the out-of-doors.

\*In this practice, each “directive” is followed by silence, during which you are invited to “take as long as you like...” Recorded silences last 15-30 seconds. To stretch the silences, push pause on your player; push play when you are ready to proceed. There is no “proper” length to this: what is right for you and/or any Littles who may be practicing with you, is right.

\*That being said, don't be afraid to stretch the silences a bit further over time: extended time can help deepen our connection with the Divine and has the delightful side-effects of developing patience, non-judgmentalism, creativity, compassion, and attention spans!

\*This practice concludes with an invitation to journal and reflect. Both are highly beneficial and are highly recommended. You may want to bring paper and writing/drawing materials with you so reflection can follow as part of the practice. If this is not possible, you might return home in mindfulness and journal and reflect there.

\*If circumstances prevent all forms of reflection, please be kind to yourself and others by moving slowly from the practice back into “normal” life: the jump from silence to normal-volume life can be jarring.

\*Take your time. Wonder....





**Work out the Wiggles:** If you're going outside, go ahead and step out the door, but before you leave your front porch or sidewalk, let's work out the wiggles to help our bodies, minds, hearts and souls get ready.

Let's do some easy calisthenics: try a few jumping jacks, skip in place, do a few deep squats or high knee lifts. Pump your fists up over your head and out to your sides. Now put your arms and legs together: kick and punch at the same time (can you do it!!??).

Okay: let's give our whole bodies a big shake, like a dog getting out of the water: shimmy out the wiggles and let yourself be loose.

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**Stretch:** Now let's invite our body, mind, heart and soul to settle into the practice by stretching.

Take a moment to reach to the sky and stretch out all your fingers. If you can, stretch all the way up onto your tippy-toes. Think of energy shooting out your fingertips and toenails, into the sky and down through the ground.

Then curl all of those stretched-out parts back in and drop your body forward. Say, "Hello!" to your toes, and give them a little tickle.

Slowly roll your torso back up and take a deep breath.

**Name Your Intent:** Today, we are going to use two short phrases to remind ourselves what this time is about. Naming what we are doing - and why - can help our body, heart, mind and soul know that this is different from just "going out for a walk" and remind us to stay focused.

Naming our intent also helps us remember what it is! Our intent today is to WONDER: about ourselves, about others, about the world around us, and about God. Let's say these words to ourselves as we breathe:

*Breathe in:* Open my senses...

*Breathe out:* ...fill me with wonder.

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**Practice:** With all your senses on alert, I invite you now - whether you are inside or out - to move through your space: take a little stroll and notice all that surrounds you. As you move, start to notice the details of everything around you: pay attention to the smallest things you can see and the slightest sounds you can hear and the faintest smells you can smell and the gentlest touch you can feel.

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Moving along your trail, or through your room, let all your senses fall on the smallest things. Begin to notice what might be small enough for you to pick up in your hand. Let your eyes or ears get “snagged” by something: pay attention to a something that seems to want your attention. What is that something? Can you safely pick it up? Let your attention land on something small enough to safely fit in the palm of your hand - and pick it up.

Notice every detail you can about this small object: pay attention to its textures, the shapes and contours that make it up. Feel its weight in your hand. If you are used to taking in a lot of information with your eyes, you might close your eyes and observe this tiny object with your ears, your hands, or your nose.

Begin to wonder about this small object. You might wonder about this object with wondering questions: How did God make this? Where is this from? What does this do? Or, you might wonder without questions and simply let the object in your hand lead you into awe and amazement.

Using as many senses as you can, spend some quiet time wondering about the little object in your hand. *Take as long as you like... [from 1-5 or more minutes].*

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I invite you to gently place that little object back where you found it and once again move through your space. Let your eyes, nose, ears and skin notice your surroundings: feel and smell and hear and see as much as you can.

Let your attention be drawn to things that are about the size of a hug: look and listen for things that you could hold in your arms...





Let your awareness be drawn to something specific that seems to need a hug. You might find a big rock, a tree, a stuffed animal: all sorts of things need hugs. Go ahead and hug this hug-needing thing you've found.

As you spend time really, really close to your object, try looking straight up: what do you see?

What do you hear? Is this different from when you are further away?

Now, look straight down. What do you see now? What do you hear now? How is this different from what you expected?

Notice how this object feels on your skin. Notice how hugging this object makes your body, heart, mind and soul feel.

What do you wonder about, being so close to this object?

What kind of wonder does being so close to this object stir up in you? Let yourself wonder about this huggable object.

*Take as long as you like... [from 1-5 or more minutes].*

Let go of your hugging object and once again move through your space. If you can, find a place where you can see as much of the outside as possible: the sky, a long, open vista, the tops of trees, a body of water, the wind at work: set yourself up to see as far, as wide and/or as high as you can see.

You can sit or lie on your back: whatever lets you see the big and wide of the world.

If you are not able to see a large stretch of open space, close your eyes and imagine your favorite wide open scene: the night sky, the rolling ocean, a sweeping prairie, whatever big space fills you with awe.

Take it all in. What is out there that makes you wonder? If your eyes are open, close them for a time: what do you hear or feel - with your skin or your heart - that makes you wonder about the bigness that's out there?

You can wonder with questions about space or sky or wind or waves, or you can simply





observe - with all your senses - and let yourself be filled with wonder. *Take as long as you like... [from 1-5 or more minutes].*

**Rest:** I invite you to wiggle your toes and fingers; gently roll your head or shoulders...

Take a few deep breaths: in and out...

And rest for a moment. *Take as long as you like... [from 10-30 seconds or more].*

**Reflect:** It can be really helpful and fun to reflect a little bit on what you wondered. You can do this by writing in a journal, drawing a picture, doodling, or talking with someone who walked and wondered with you.

Today, you may find drawing especially enjoyable: draw a picture of each of your focal objects or draw a really careful picture of the object that made you the most wondrous.

You might also journal by writing down the questions you created. What did you wonder about? Create a list of wondering questions; you can add to it every time you use a wondering practice like this.

When you have finished drawing your focal object(s) and/or writing down your wondering questions, you might enjoy sharing what you experienced with someone who shared the practice with you. If you need help getting the conversation going, you might share where you felt or experienced God in your wondering. You might also reflect on this week's Wondering Questions:

What is unknown right now?

What moments of awe or wonder have I experienced?

What does it feel like to trust God?

*Take as long as you like to journal and reflect... [from 1-5 minutes or more].*

*Some people like to keep all of their writing or drawing in one book or place. After many days, weeks or even years, looking back over these writings and drawings helps people see where God has been in their lives and in the world, and helps them notice God in new ways. It's a way to write or draw your own personal story of God.*

**Bless:** *You might end your writing/drawing/chatting time by taking a final deep breath in,*





*letting it out slowly, and saying a single word or phrase of closure or blessing, like “Amen”; “Blessed Be”; “Thank you”; or “We walk in peace”; etc.*

*Then, walk yourself home or into the rest of your day!*

