

"For I will pour out water on the thirsty land
And streams on the dry ground;
I will pour out My Spirit on your offspring
And My blessing on your descendants;
And they will spring up among the grass
Like poplars by streams of water."

Isaiah 44:3-4

unlocking the ice

THE VAGARIES OF WEATHER, especially what does or does not fall from the sky, is a reliable refrain here in the Midlands. And this has been a week of almost schizophrenic transition around the pond.

In the period of just a few days we have experienced ice, snow, melting, blizzard conditions, sunshine, rain, and shirtsleeve temperatures—all perfectly normal for the month of March in the Midwest. Early in the week we braved all of the above in just a twenty minute drive to rehearsal. We passed in and out of blizzard-like conditions, sunshine, melting and freezing, blowing wind and utter tranquility. The capricious atmospherics were not just entertaining, but speak most eloquently of this annual period of change from winter to spring. We are entering that delightful period in which the land shakes off its frozen slumber to anticipate the reawakening spring.

The vista is still painted in dull browns and grays, and there is still plenty of snow on the ground, but last week the first robins arrived (traditional sign of approaching spring) and it will not be long before the first wood ducks land upon a newly thawed pond. The temperatures this week have hastened the transition of the pond from a block of ice to liquid. And as soon as the surface is unfrozen, the wood ducks will make their appearance. Male and female, arriving in couples, the small brilliantly-colored ducks begin their yearly process of looking for a place to nest and raise their family.



This is the time of year when humans, too, are transitioning. Those of us living where there is real winter are anxious to break the seal

on our windows and once again let fresh air into the house. After almost four months of smelling nothing fresher than the layer of dust deposited on the furnace filter, it's time to throw open the shutters and inhale the revitalizing aroma of spring. Give us temps marginally higher than freezing and we're quick to shed our layers

of winter protection, to strip down to shirt sleeves and embrace the quickening warmth, to inhale the forgotten musk of thawing soil and the sweet fragrance of reborn grass.

The cloistering winter can also bring a stale lethargy to our connection with God, as if the leaden clouds of snow have somehow shuttered our view of Him—as if our normally Spirit-rich oxygen

William P. Mackay

has been replaced by stale, recycled air.

As we throw open our windows to breathe in the fresh air of spring, let us also throw open the dusty confines of our hearts to breathe in a fresh revelation of God. As we welcome back the warming temperatures and the returning beasts of the field, let us welcome again the Spirit of God to revive and revitalize our lives to His service.

However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him. If Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, yet the spirit is alive because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.

Romans 8:9-11

