

Soul Stroll

Summer 2022

*drawing upon the resources of
'Stroll for Your Soul' Spring 2022
offered by Janice MacLean
& Caroline Bindon.*

*To see more of Janice's resources
for spiritual growth and nourishment:
The Prayer Bench
<https://prayerbench.ca>*



This spring, for 21 days, I received daily emails as part of a 'Stroll for Your Soul' online email retreat.

The theme 'Everywhere You Go Always Take the Weather', was drawn from the song 'Weather With You' by the New Zealand band, Crowded House.

**As Janice MacLean affirmed:
'We can't avoid weather. It dictates our behaviours and what we can and can't do. It influences our moods. It disrupts our lives. It is part of every day.**

So each Stroll highlighted an aspect of weather, which was used as a lens or a metaphor to reflect on our journey with the Divine.

**With Janice's generous permission, I offer these 4 Soul Strolls for your spiritual nourishment:
*What's the Temperature Today?
Singing in the Rain
Accepting the Weather
What Grows the Grass?***

You will note that at the end of each Stroll we are invited to pause with the same 'weather' blessing – a familiar, and perhaps, Irish blessing:

***May the road rise up to meet you.
May the wind be always at your back.
May the sun shine warm upon your face;
the rains fall soft upon your fields
and until we meet again,
may God hold you in the palm of his* hand.***

** we will interchange with the word her or their or God's*

May our attention to the weather deepen our awareness of the Divine atmosphere all around and in all things.

MaryBeth

WHAT'S THE TEMPERATURE TODAY?

Today's Weather... I don't know about you but checking the weather app for the temperature outside is part of my morning routine. Will it be spring-like enough today to shed a layer of winter clothes? When is the high of the day for the warmest stroll? We have a trinity of people to thank for bringing us the ability to know the high's and low's of the day and the "feels like" temperature.



Meet Galileo. He is credited with inventing the thermometer in the 1590's. Meet the German scientist, Gabriel Fahrenheit, the first person to use mercury in thermometers and gave his name to the Fahrenheit scale for measuring temperatures. Meet Anders Celsius, a Swedish astronomer who developed the simpler scale that is used by scientists and most countries. He made the freezing point of water at 0 degrees and the boiling point at 100 degrees.

Weather with You... Pause indoors to check the temperature outside. Perhaps you have an app or a weather thermometer or you just stick your head out the door to make a guess.

Make a silent prayer of thanks for all who bring you that number that makes sense of the temperature out there.

As you begin your Stroll today allow yourself to sense the temperature of the day. Is the sun warm upon your face? Are you shivering as you start out? Welcome the sensations and allow them to ground you in the present moment. You are here now, in this moment, in the weather of this day. So often we walk through the day with our heads in the future or ruminating on something that already happening. Be. Here. Now.

Here is a scripture that might work as a mantra. Memorize it or sing it while you Stroll. Make an intention to return to the verse during pauses in the day to ground yourself in praise, gratitude & presence:

"This is the day that God has made.

Let us rejoice and be glad in it."

Psalms 118:24

Our Weather Blessing

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may God hold you in the palm of God's hand.

SINGIN' IN THE RAIN



*I'm singing in the rain, just singin' in the rain
What a glorious feeling, I'm happy again
I'm laughing at clouds so dark up above
The sun's in my heart and I'm ready for love
Let the stormy clouds chase everyone from the place
Come on with the rain, I've a smile on my face
I walk down the lane with a happy refrain
Just singin', singin' in the rain*

Today's Weather... There's nothing like a bit of spring rain to grow the grass and turn every living thing green. Yet for all the goodness brought by spring rain, it is often associated with tears and sadness. Children the world over liken drops of rain from the sky with their own tears freely falling from their eyes. How many parents have marvelled at the words of wisdom from their preschooler who authoritatively states, 'the sky is crying.'

Singin' in the Rain has in more recent years attracted a new fan base with the stage show based on the 1952 movie. Tickets sold to the stage show often include complimentary rain ponchos for the first few rows to protect theatregoers from the spray of falling rain. Part of the fun for many is to obtain seats in the rain zone.

Weather with You... Finding hope amidst sadness is hard. It's easier to watch a movie or show about singin' in the rain than singing in the rain ourselves. Yet hope often breaks through our sadness when we least expect it, bringing a ray of sunshine into our gloom. It is often in the rainy days of our lives we get to see a glimpse of God at work.

Ponder times when you've felt sad and alone and you've felt a sense of God's presence breaking through. Whether it's rainy or sunny outside, wrap yourself up and go outside for your Stroll. You may even like to try a few dance steps or singing as you Stroll.

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ACCEPTING THE WEATHER

Todays Weather... Today we talk about weather fronts. A front is "a boundary between two air masses of different densities." There are cold fronts and warm fronts and what happens when they meet creates "weather." Sometimes that is a thunderstorm and sometimes the weather clears.



"On weather maps, cold fronts are illustrated by blue lines with sharp "teeth" pointing in the direction of the wind. Warm fronts are illustrated by red lines with rounded bumps pointing in the direction of the wind."

Learn more at: the National Geographic Society

Weather with You... Anthony De Mello tells a story that sums up the best way to live with weather:

Traveler: "What kind of weather are we going to have today?"

Shepherd: "The kind of weather I like."

Traveler: "How do you know it will be the kind of weather you like?"

Shepherd: "Having found out, sir, I cannot always get what I like, I have learned always to like what I get. So I am quite sure we will have the kind of weather I like." "

I wonder if you have confidence that you'll get weather you like for strolling today. What might we need to let go to have the acceptance of the shepherding the story? How might a practice of accepting the weather help us with the grace needed to let go control in other circumstance of life when we are called to do so?

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may God hold you in the palm of their hand.*



Enjoy Your Summer ~ Strolling Blessings

*May the sun bring you new energy every day.
May the moon restore you by night.
May the rain wash away your worries.
May the breeze blow new strength into your being.
May you walk gently through the world
And know it's beauty all the days of your life.*

WHAT GROWS THE GRASS?

Today's Weather... Grass needs four important things to grow and in spring grass is usually at it's 'growiest' best. With sunlight, moisture, carbon dioxide and soil temperature all in alignment, we can have a thick, lush carpet of grass. The good news is, that when we don't have enough of one or more of these things our grass can still survive.



Starting below the ground, grass roots pull water and nutrients from the soil, transporting the goodness to the tips of the leaves. This is where the growth happens. The leaves absorb carbon dioxide from the air and use sunshine to make food. The more food the grass produces, the more it grows. As it grows, it generously gives oxygen back into the air. When there's lots of sunshine, the grass stores excess sugars and starch deep in the roots, saving the food for a little snack in the months when there's not enough sunshine, moisture, warm soil and carbon dioxide for growing and the focus shifts to maintaining.

Weather with You... Spring is a growing season. The growing grass reveals this to us. We have growing seasons too, where we flourish and thrive and store up energy for ourselves as we grow strong and robust. We have maintenance seasons as well, where we must draw from these stores to manage our daily lives as best we can. And like the experience of the growing grass, the seasons turn and change, and a maintenance season becomes a growing season and the cycle starts over.

As you go out to Stroll today, find a patch of grass to walk through. If you find the right grass and the weather is warm enough, why not take your shoes and socks off and walk on the grass with bare feet. If that's too challenging, place a towel or blanket on the grass and sit down for a time. Reach around you and feel the grass with your hands. Pick a blade or two to hold as you continue your Stroll.

Ponder your current season. Are you in a growing season or a maintenance season?

What do we need to grow?

> Good health for our bodies with rest and sleep, healthy nutrition and exercise and maybe medicines and treatments to help us become stronger.

> Love and companionship, with people who walk with us, sharing, caring and bringing a warmth into our lives so we in turn can share this love with others.

> Stimulation of new ideas, fresh thinking, creative pursuits, challenges and work that we enjoy.

> An awareness of God as we draw from the source of strength we find in our faith.

These four things; physical, emotional, mental and spiritual bring balance to our lives.

We find very little in the Bible about Jesus' growing years but perhaps this verse from Luke sums up the best of any growing season.

*And Jesus increased in wisdom and in years,
and in divine and human favor.*

Luke 2:52 NRSV

Ponder your own current physical, emotional, mental and spiritual needs. Pick a blade of grass for each need and name your need in a series of one word prayers, inviting God to be with you in your growing or maintenance season.

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