

## **Reflections on Maine Paintings**

*Everyday, We are invited to live at the edge.  
Where water meets land.*

*Every day, we are on the shores of renewal.  
Where what feels solid meets what is moving.*

*When we stand in this place where water meets land,  
On these shores we have an opportunity to remember  
Something truer about ourselves and about each other and about this earth.*

*On these shores,  
We feel peace.  
Not because everything is okay.  
Not because we are certain how things will go.  
But rather, because  
We know this moment.  
Where there is movement, possibility, loss and new beginnings.  
We know that this moment at the edge is  
Where we can find renewal.*

## **A Blessing for Convocation**

Loving God of star-filled galaxies and nutrient filled soil, we thank you for this opportunity to gather. Thank you for the ways our lives have aligned to make it possible for us to be here. Thank you for our bodies and minds well enough to be present. Thank you for the leaders and presenters that are sharing their vision to help inspire us. Thank you for this community, this sense of connection and shared longing and hope that binds us together.

As we gather,  
May we release our grip on other responsibilities in life, and find ourselves grounded and present, here, now.  
May we put aside our todo list and step into this space curious and open to what is offered and how it might inspire and inform the way we move in the world.  
May we be gentle with anything that aches in our bodies, in our relationships, in our work, in our earth.  
May we be generous with our stories, our hopes, our vulnerability and let the community here lift, inspire, and encourage us.  
May we surrender what is not working, what is holding us back, past failures, ...  
And offer them as compost, that might be transformed for future growth.

May we smile and be playful exploring a creative part of ourselves too often neglected.  
May we be observant and reverent for the way spirit moves in unexpected ways.

As the earth holds us, may we remember to hold each other.

Amen.

May we open ourselves to a renewal of body, mind and spirit.

- How might we grieve the losses of the world we once knew and embrace an abused and broken Mother Earth?
  - How might we rearrange our lives, our priorities, our resources, and our relationships in a climate-changed world?
  - How might faith communities adopt supportive, comforting, and prophetic practices in a climate-changed world?
  - How might congregations welcome the stranger, the displaced, and the migrant in a climate-changed world?
  - What do inclusiveness, justice, and equity look like in a climate-changed world?
  - How will we – spiritual leaders in many different contexts – maintain determination, courage, and empathy in this climate-changed world?
- we pray that God will till the soil – *us* –and plant seeds for a future that is not our own.

will inspire and challenge us to ground our spiritual leadership in the common good and in the sacredness of our planetary home. We look forward to this blend of online and offline experiences, which will weave together to facilitate learning, nurture respite, and deepen community.

### About the Inspiration

It was delightful to spend time in the studio working on this large piece. As you'll see I first did many smaller explorations. There was something exhilarating with this large piece. A special energy in my chest. A sense of newness and vulnerability met with groundedness and familiarity. Though the size was intimidating from afar, I found comfort and ease as I stepped into the process. As I worked I considered the work of the BTS Center, the ways you have innovated and pivoted, open to the spirit moving, open to new calls. The mixture of a strong two hundred year foundation alongside start-up energy. The path the BTS Center is on, reminds me so much of the path of every individual. Filled with familiar ways of being and yet an invitation to be new. This so beautifully echoed in the subject matter of this painting. The rocks, how old? The trees returning over generations. The water crashing on the shore--new each moment. Never the same. I find painting moving water to be a particular delight because it reminds me of the movement in my own life. So often I think my life is 'same ol', same ol' and yet that is far from the truth and the ocean reminds me of this. I hope this painting will be a reminder of the energy of the coast, new beginnings, strong roots, being created anew each day.

*A Prayer for the BTS Center Team*

*Thank you creator for this opportunity to begin again.  
Thank you for the gifts we have inherited and the energy and spirit that sustain us.  
Thank you for the beauty of creation that motivates us to protect, heal, and connect.*

*May this center be a meeting place of spirit with earth.  
May this center be a meeting place of inspiration with action.  
May this center be a place where hope is defiant, expansive and resilient.*

*May any discouragement be held with the gentle strength of community.  
May any restlessness be met with enduring spaciousness.  
May any despair be met with wonder and curiosity of a future beyond imagining.*

*May this center be a space of hospitality, rest, and empowerment.  
May this center be a space of creativity, imagination, and discovery.  
May this center be a place of renewal of spirit, mind, and earth.*

*May all who enter this space know the beauty of creation (and their part in it).  
May all who enter this space be open to new ways of being.  
May all who enter this space feel belonging in this sacred work.*

*Amen.*