**Sermon: Embracing the Gift of Delight**

**June 4, 2023**

Story: The Circle of Joy (author unknown )

One day, a farmer knocked hard on a monastery door. When the monk tending the gates opened up, he was given a magnificent bunch of grapes. "Brother, these are the finest my vineyard has produced. I’ve come to bear them as a gift."

"Thank you! I will take them to the Abbot immediately, he’ll be delighted with this offering."

"No! I brought them for you. For whenever I knock on the door, it is you who opens it. When I needed help because the crop was destroyed by drought, you gave me a piece of bread and a cup of wine every day."

The monk held the grapes and spent the entire morning admiring it. And decided to deliver the gift to the Abbot, who had always encouraged him with words of wisdom.

The Abbot was delighted with the grapes, but he recalled that there was a sick brother in the monastery, and thought: “I’ll give him the grapes. Who knows, they may bring some joy to his life.”

And that is what he did. But the grapes didn’t stay in the sick monk’s room for long, for he reflected: “The cook has looked after me for so long, feeding me only the best meals. I’m sure he will enjoy these.”

The cook was amazed at the beauty of the grapes. So perfect that no one would appreciate them more than the head teacher; many at the monastery considered him a holy man, he would be best qualified to value this marvel of nature.

The teacher, in turn, gave the grapes as a gift to the youngest novice, that he might understand that the work of the universe is in the smallest details of Creation. When the novice received them, he remembered the first time he came to the monastery, and of the person who had opened the gates for him; it was that gesture which allowed him to be among this community of people who knew how to value the wonders of life.

And so, just before nightfall, he took the grapes to the monk at the gates. "Eat and enjoy them – he said. For you spend most of your time alone here, and these grapes will make you very happy."

The monk at the gate understood that the gift had been truly destined for him, and relished each of the grapes, before falling into a pleasant sleep.

Thus the circle was closed; the circle of joy and delight, which always shines brightly around generous people.

Importance of Delight

* Delight is a sacred emotion
  + bubbles up from within us, filling us with joy and a sense of contentment.
  + reminder that life is meant to be enjoyed
    - we should seek out those things that bring us true happiness
* Delight ignites our spirits and brings warmth to our souls
  + the gentle breeze that whispers in our ears
    - reminds us to embrace the beauty and goodness that abound in our lives.
  + not contingent upon external circumstances or material possessions
    - inner state of being, accessible to all who open themselves to it

Wunjo rune

* Delight is a universal concept
* Diverse spiritual paths connect with the concept of delight
* In Heathenry, runes are letters, but also symbols representing significant concepts, forms of energy
* Anglo-Saxon rune poem (7th century CE):
  + Who uses it knows no pain,  
    sorrow nor anxiety, and he himself has  
    prosperity and bliss, and also enough shelter
* Represents joy, harmony, and the boundless delight that flows through our lives
  + delight is not a fleeting emotion but a state of being
    - profound way of experiencing the world around us

Delight in the everyday:

* When we cultivate delight, we cultivate a spirit of gratitude.
  + We find delight in the simplest moments
    - chirping of birds
    - warmth of the sun on our skin
    - taste of a perfectly ripe fruit
    - the embrace of a loved one
    - Walking through a forest
    - Sitting quietly in meditation
* Delight kindles our sense of wonder and awe.
  + invites us to marvel at the mysteries of the universe
    - the grandeur of the cosmos
      * contemplate the vastness of the night sky
    - the intricate patterns of life
      * witness the delicate petals of a flower
  + beckons us to engage with the world and expand our understanding
* Wunjo encourages us to find delight in the present moment
  + to cherish the blessings that surround us
  + to foster gratitude for the experiences that shape our lives.

Delight in interconnection

* Pagan: importance of living in harmony with nature, finding beauty in all things
  + Delight allows us to appreciate wonder and magic of the world around us
    - Reminder that we are not alone in this world, and that the universe is full of beauty and wonder.
    - Feeling delight is opening to the divine energy that surrounds us
    - Delight teaches us to be present
      * savor the richness of life's offerings
      * express gratitude for the interconnected web of existence that sustains us.
* Delight in its purest form recognizes the worth and dignity of every person.
  + invites us to delight in the uniqueness of each individual
    - appreciate their diverse experiences
    - cherish the tapestry of humanity that we are all woven into
* Delight invites us to embrace the freedom to explore diverse spiritual paths and perspectives with open hearts and open minds.
  + It encourages us to engage in conversations that challenge our assumptions
  + to learn from one another's experiences
  + to celebrate the richness that arises from our shared humanity
* Wunjo
  + reminds us of the interconnectedness of all things.
  + invites us to celebrate the beauty of diversity, to find delight in the vibrant tapestry of humanity.
  + Just as each stroke of the rune intertwines with the next, we too are interwoven in the grand design of existence.
  + When we recognize this interconnectedness, we embrace the opportunity to
    - find delight in our shared experiences
    - celebrate our common humanity
    - extend love and compassion to all.

Challenges

* Modern world is a whirlwind of busyness and stress
* In the face of even the most difficult moments, delight can be a guiding light
  + uplifts us
  + empowers us to find beauty in the midst of darkness
    - to seek hope amidst despair
    - to discover resilience in times of struggle
* Wunjo reminders:
  + pause, seek moments of stillness
  + immerse ourselves in the beauty of nature
    - find solace, inspiration, profound sense of delight

Delight helps us to find our Purpose

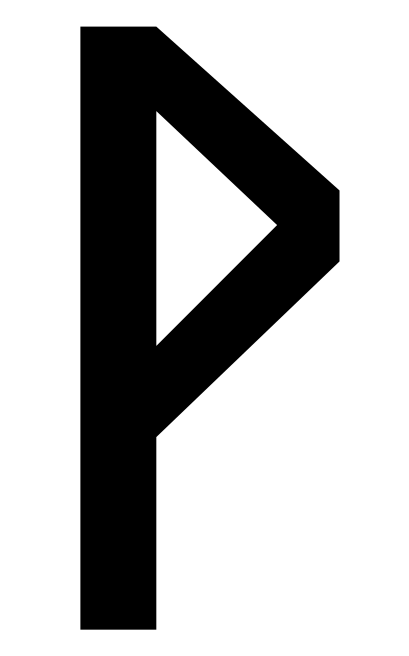
* Finding purpose in life sounds grandiose
* Delight is transformative
  + encourages us to release negativity
  + let go of past burdens
  + open our hearts to healing energy of joy
  + In doing so, we create space for growth and transformation
  + Delight infuses our lives with renewed purpose and meaning
* Delight is not just a fleeting emotion.
  + It is a state of mind that we can cultivate and nurture
  + When we make a conscious effort to seek out those things that bring us joy, we are actively creating a more positive and fulfilling life for ourselves
    - Take the time to indulge in our passions
    - to spend time with those we love
    - to make room for the things that make our hearts sing
* Delight invites us to embark on a journey of self-discovery
  + - connect with our true essence
    - find joy in the core of our being
  + helps us become attuned to the joys that life has to offer
  + not solely dependent on external circumstances, but a well that resides within us, waiting to be tapped into
* Cultivating joy is not a selfish pursuit but a sacred responsibility.
  + Embracing delight in our lives = becoming beacons of light
    - radiating positivity and inspiring others to find their own joy
* Wunjo is not a short-term, passing joy
  + It is the joy of being in alignment with your purpose
  + Delight is the indicator that you are on the right path
    - The right path means you are aligned with your purpose

Call to Action

* Strive to find delight in your lives
  + to seek out those things that bring joy
  + fill our hearts with happiness
* Be grateful for the blessings that we have been given
  + take time to appreciate the beauty of the world around us
* Embrace the gift of delight.
  + nurture it within ourselves
  + share it generously with others
  + Like love, delight knows no boundaries—it is a force that unites us all

Blessings

* May our lives be infused with the magic of delight, inspiring us to live with compassion, gratitude, and a deep appreciation for the interconnectedness of all beings
* May we carry the light of delight within us, helping us discover the depths of delight within ourselves, illuminating our paths, and enriching our lives
* As we walk this path, may we extend the gift of delight to others, creating a ripple in the well of Wyrd in our communities and beyond

\*