

Asilomar

Frank Henninger

Come with me now, to a place I know,
Come with me and be free

Free to be you, and free for me to be me,
Free to be yourself, just as you are,
However you came to be on this path you're on

Close your eyes and come with me now, to a place I know
Close your eyes and wander with me, in a place out west
A place I love

A place by the sea so blue
A place of rock and dunes

Of sage and heather
Of wood smoke and sea mist
Of beach grass and pickle plant
And of the twisted cypress and the sticky monkey flower

Come with me to a place of humans
A place of ministry and treatment

Of speakers and songwriters
Of pagans and goddesses
Of angels and elders
And of children and the inner child . . .

O come with me, my friends, to a place I know
To a place of spirit

A place of prayer and passion
Of intention and renewal
Of commitment and purpose
Of clarity and wholeness
And of laughter and joy . . .

Come stay with me a while, in this place I know
A place of action

A place of singing and dancing
Of workshops and play
Of drumming and journaling
Of mudras and the labyrinth
And of shooting stars and crashing ocean swells

Come with me now, in your waking dream
To summer camp for seekers

A place of unity, of diversity
A place of stillness, of peace
A place of solitude, of vision
A place of wisdom, of meditation
A place of traditions, of freedom
A place of fellowship, of old friends and new
A place of open minds, of wide-eyed wonder
A place of many voices, and a place of the still small voice within

Take a path with me now through the rolling dunes, in this place I know
Walk with me now through the grounds,
To Merrill Hall, and to Crocker, to Willow Inn and to Triton
To Longview and to Scripps, to Spindrift and to Sanderling
And to Nautilus and Embers

And come, come with me at last, to the "Sermon by the Sea"
Recited in the same small wooden chapel where it was first spoken,
Where the carved inscription proclaims
"Sing o heavens, and be joyful o earth,
And break forth into singing o mountains,
Above the voices of many waters,
The mighty breakers of the sea,
The Lord on high is mighty"

And now, as our journey in this place we know comes to an end
Hold this memory dear, my gentle friends
Of that special feeling that only warm hearts and cool ocean breezes
Can shape

And place
And hold there in your souls

For we have gone to Asil-o-mar
That refuge by the sea
And we will return
In place or in spirit
Again and again
And again and again

Excerpted from "Asilomar" by Frank Henninger, ©2004. A member of the Greater Philadelphia Church of Religious Science in Paoli, PA, Frank is a college bookstore director, amateur mountaineer, writer, and poet.