

CLIMATE CHANGE CHRONICLE 43
This Ancient Love: Visions of a Sacred Land
By
Carolyn McDade

When someone asks me about my spirituality and I tell them I have an Earth spirituality, they often ask what that means. I sometimes have difficulty explaining it.

I might tell them I have an awareness of my relationship with a living Earth—a sense of being part of Earth, not separate from it. I might tell them about my awareness that I am damaging Earth and have a responsibility to help Earth heal itself. But usually this kind of response does not satisfy them. Why not? Because, for the most part, “awareness” is an intellectual construct in our minds. It doesn’t do a good job of communicating our feelings.

If we want to discover and communicate feelings to help create an Earth Spirituality we have to turn to others with different skills: the storytellers, poets, musicians, artists, nature photographers and video makers.

Fortunately I recently came across Carolyn McDade, a poet and song writer. She has managed to adopt most of these tools to explain her own Earth Spirituality.

She tells a story about her walks in a marsh and how this has created a sense of belonging to the marsh. This experience has also given rise to a mission—to communicate her feelings about the land to others. So she wrote a poem and used the words as lyrics in a hymn. She then combined the words and music in a beautiful video of the living marsh.

Here are the words to the hymn. I’ve provided the link to the YouTube video at the end of this chronicle. I hope you enjoy it as much as I have.

This Ancient Love: Visions of a Sacred Land

Long before the night was born from darkness
Long before the dawn rolled unsteady from fire
Long before She wrapped her scarlet arm around the hills
There was a love, this ancient love was born.

Long before the grass spotted green the bare hillside
Long before a wing unfolded to wind
Long before She wrapped her long blue arm around the sea
There was a love, this ancient love was born.

Long before a chain was forged from the hillside
Long before a voice uttered freedom's cry
Long before She wrapped her bleeding arms around a child
There was a love, this ancient love was born.

Long before the name of a God was spoken
Long before a cross was nailed from a tree
Long before She laid her arm of colors 'cross the sky
There was a love, this ancient love was born.

Wakeful our night, slumbers our morning
Stubborn the grass sowing green wounded hills
As we wrap our healing arms to hold what her arms held
This ancient love, this aching love rolls on.

Blessed be waters that rise and fall to rise again
Blessed be generations struggling to be free
For deep though the sorrow shining in the soul
Life lays a wing shaggy and whole.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fc7A2ZLteso>

Mike Bell, Comox Valley Climate Change Network.