

# When I Am Among the Trees

From First Lutheran/Bay Lake Camp to  
Northern Pines Mental Health/  
Bay Lake Retreat Center

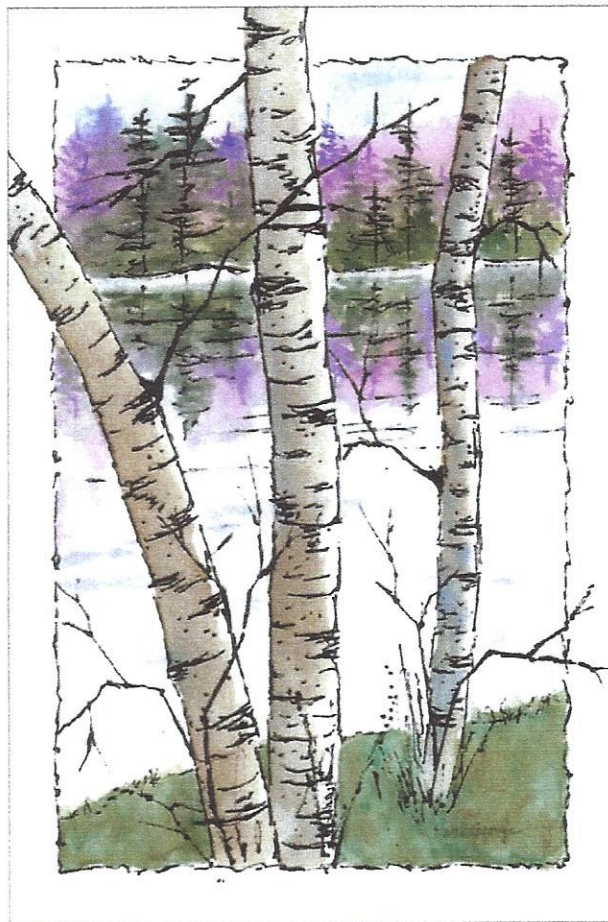
We have come here today to plant a tree - a symbol of the past, present, and future - of all the people who have come here over so many years to find healing and wholeness, to find meaning and purpose, in the beauty of creation. We come together in gratitude for each sunrise and sunset, for the forest and the water that brings peace to each one who *has* come and *will* come to walk the paths, swim in the lake, and to sit quietly among the trees.

We look to the words of many through the years who have spoken of this beauty, peace, and healing...

From Mary Oliver...

When I Am Among the Trees...  
especially the willows and the  
honey locust equally the birch,  
the oaks and the pines,  
they give off such hints of gladness,  
I would almost say that they save me...  
and daily.

I am so distant from the hope of myself,  
in which I have goodness,  
and discernment,  
and never hurry through the world  
but walk slowly, and bow often.  
Around me the trees stir in their leaves  
and call out, "Stay awhile."  
The light flows from their branches.  
And they call again, "It's simple,"  
they say, "and you have come  
into the world to do this, to go easy,  
to be filled with light, and to shine."



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From Helen Keller...

"To me a lush carpet of pine needles or spongy grass is more welcome than the most luxurious Persian rug.

From John Muir...

"Everybody needs beauty as well as bread, places to play in and pray in, where nature may heal and give strength to body and soul."

From Wendell Berry

"The care of the Earth is our most ancient and most worthy, and after all, our most pleasing responsibility."

From Kahlil Gibran...

"Forget not that the earth delights to feel your bare feet and the winds long to play with your hair.

From Las Tzu

"Nature does not hurry, yet everything is accomplished."

We plant a tree today - as a reminder that the earth is a gift to be cared for, that the earth can heal us and make us well, and that the earth will draw us together in a united purpose to bring peace and love and joy to a world desperate to know these things.

We dedicate this one birch with three branches to represent the three communities of First Lutheran Church, Northern Pines Mental Health, and the Bay Lake Community. For the love of this island and the love of this whole earth, we are united in the planting of this tree!