

Beneath the Dry Creek Bed

The week before our riverside baptism, I got a call that the creek was "bone dry". I thought about canceling, and logistically trying to move almost three hundred people to a new location was going to be impossible. Instead I thought maybe we are supposed to stand in a dry creek when there is no water, and see what happens. There were nine people to baptize, and I wanted to make sure they and their families didn't feel slighted. So a cousin of a friend shipped us some bottles of hurricane Fay water that had just landed in Florida, and we distilled it, added some myrrh and lavender, and put it in glass containers. At the baptism a beautiful band was playing "God's Going to Trouble the Water," and we had four priests standing in the creek bed with healing oils made at Thistle Farms, and they anointed each baby and adult on their hands, feet, forehead, and mouth. I was a little fearful of how it was all going to unfold, but I think of the day as one of the best days of baptizing I have ever been a part of. Everyone was so loving, and the water from the grateful tears would have been enough to hold another baptism. I am so glad we didn't let the fear of no water stop us from coming to the creek. It is a great reminder to me to stand by all the dry creeks I have known in my life and feel grace and mercy coming my way like cool streams. It is powerful to stand on a bed of rocks and trust water is flowing underneath the limestone-- we just can't see it.

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Worn Limestone in a dry creek bed
Reveals chapped dirt and broken roots.
We stand on the skin of the earth,
Barefoot and thirsty, through this dry season.
We baptize babies in sweat and tears above
Ashes and dust that remind us we are human.
We celebrate the waters that led us all
To this blessed dry creek.

Dry beds teach us the bounty of a drop
Falling our way like grace.
Dry beds assure us even hurricanes die
Given time and space on forgiveness's shore.
Dry beds keep us searching for new life

That cuts its path through rocky ground.
Dry Beds give us hope in bounty coming
In new waves because water never dies.
Dry Beds point us to believe in water that
Runs deeper than we know.