Sacred Wheel Prayer

by Jim Kenney, Executive Director, Common Ground

Imagine a great wheel whose immense and beautifully carved spokes converge in a tiny glistening hub.

In the center of the hub, there is only the brilliant blue of empty sky.

In the Hindu tradition, the wheel is a symbol of human spiritual experience.

Each of the spokes is uniquely shaped and decorated, and each symbolizes one of the world's religious paths.

The rim of the wheel represents the most superficial level of involvement in and understanding of one's own tradition. It is the level of greatest diversity.

The hub is the center from which each spoke emerges and the point at which they all come together. It represents the common source and the deepest level of each and every tradition.

It is the point of unity and the source of promise.

As the seeker grows in understanding, he or she moves along one of the spokes, from the gigantic rim to the unimaginably small hub at the center.

At the rim, the distance which separates the spokes is tremendous and yet, as the spokes converge on the center of the hub, their separation vanishes.

As we move deeper into our respective traditions – as we move down our spokes – suddenly, it's clear that our paths are convergent; they share a common center.

Just as the wagon wheel needs both its circles, the rim and the hub, so the symbolic wheel, the human spiritual heritage, requires the diversity, the color, the pageantry, and variety of the outer circle as well as the unity of the inner.

But it is convergence, "inclining to a center," that makes a wheel a wheel.

Prayer and image reprinted with the permission of the author.