

Conveners Corner

By Michael Wright, Convener for Illuman of Oregon

Greetings, brothers, from the inspiring natural beauty of the Great Northwest. I am Michael Wright, the convener for Illuman of Oregon. My connection with Illuman began with my MROP at Skalitude (Washington State) in 2017. I have recently come into this convener role as of January 2021. I am still learning and exploring what it means to be a convener. As I navigate this role and am learning what it means to be present in this way, I am deeply grateful for the brothers who journey with me as we support, encourage, and embrace each other in our collective and individual journeys. As a developing Illuman chapter, we are still finding our path and vision for how we are sensing the movement of the Spirit in this transforming work of standing “shoulder to shoulder” with men.

I am blessed to have the gracious, seasoned wisdom of many other brothers who call the Northwest home. As has been the case for many with the ever-changing dynamics of the pandemic, we have been holding our monthly Council gatherings via Zoom. The consensus is that while we appreciate the ability to connect virtually, we feel a deep longing to see and experience each other face to face. I am certain many within Illuman can resonate with this feeling. We remain hopeful that we will have the opportunity to join once again around a fire by mid to late summer, as most of our group have been vaccinated.

Over the course of this past year, in addition to our two regular monthly virtual Councils, we were able to facilitate a virtual retreat. Our initial desire for this retreat was to meet in a local park in the Portland, Oregon area that allowed for socially distanced gatherings. Unfortunately, the ever-changing and unpredictable weather common in the Northwest prevented us from gathering in this way. Yet, those who participated via Zoom reported a sense of meaningful connection and gratitude.

Illuman of Oregon is also exploring expanded partnership with Illuman of Washington and the Illuman brothers from the Vancouver, British Columbia (Canada) region, as we recognize our broader identity as men from the Pacific Northwest—a connection that transcends state and country borders. We have a humble sense of appreciation for the many indigenous communities that stewarded this Northwest land before us. We desire to honor that stewardship in our care for the land and the other-than-human

world. There is a shared excitement as we together envision how these partnerships will take shape and what powerful fruits will be experienced!

As my experiences and interactions with brothers locally, regionally, and nationally grow, I am filled with heartfelt gratitude. I appreciate these relationships and am enriched to be a part of the journey with each of you as we together embrace the great mystery that is so actively present in our lives.

Blessings to all,

Michael Wright