CONTEMPLATIVE PRAYER SERVICE

Inspired by the Taizé Community Sunday January 15, 2017

BE RECONCILED ALL YOU WHO ENTER HERE

Parents, children, partners, friends, enemies; Believers and those who cannot believe; Christians and their fellow Christians.

(Variation of greeting posted outside the Church of Reconciliation, Taizé, France)

We begin by centering ourselves in silent prayer.

CALL TO WORSHIP

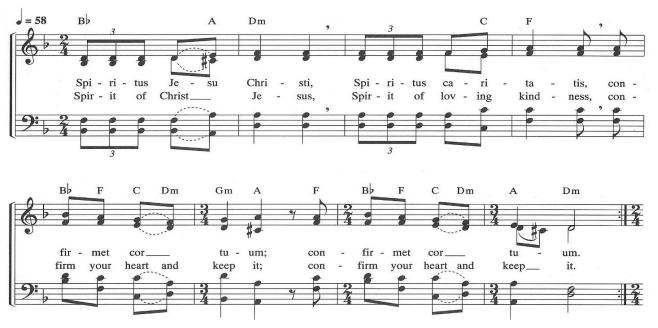
Breath of God, breath of life, breath of deepest yearning, Come Holy Spirit.

Comforter, Disturber, Interpreter, Enthuser, Come, Holy Spirit.

Heavenly Friend, Lamplighter, Revealer of truth, Midwife of change,

The Lord is here

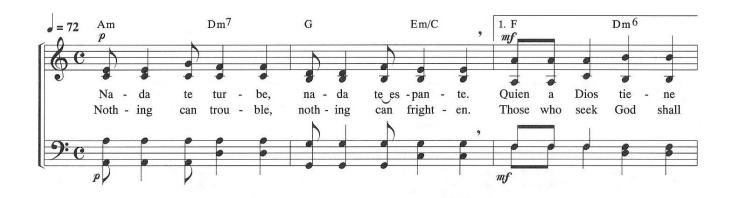
God's Spirit is with us.

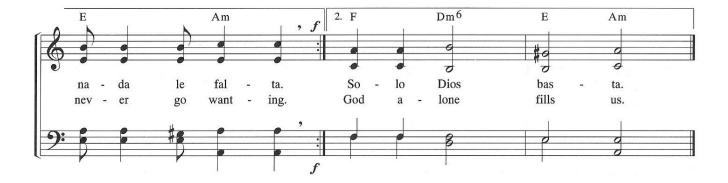


PRAYER

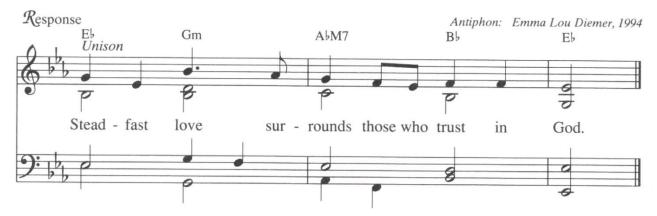
Lord, teach us the silence of humility, the silence of wisdom, the silence of love. the silence that speaks without words, the silence of faith.

Lord teach us to silence our own hearts and minds that we may listen for the movement of your Holy Spirit, and feel your presence in the depths of our being. Amen.





Psalm 32



R

¹Happy are those whose transgression is forgiven,

whose sin is covered.

²Happy are those to whom God imputes no iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no deceit.

³While I kept silence, my body wasted away through my groaning áll day long.

⁴For day and night your hand was heavy upon me; my strength was dried up as by the heat of summer. \mathcal{R}

⁵Then I acknowledged my sin to you, and I did not hide my iniquity;

I said, "I will confess my transgressions to God," and you forgave the guilt of my sin.

⁶Therefore let all who are faithful offer prayer to you;

at a time of distress, the rush of mighty waters shall not reach them.

⁷You are a hiding place for me; you preserve me from trouble; you surround me with glad cries of deliverance. R

8I will instruct you and teach you the way you should go; I will counsel you with my éye upon you.

⁹Do not be like a horse or a mule, without únderstanding, whose temper must be curbed with bit and bridle, else it will not stay near you.

¹⁰Many are the torments of the wicked, but steadfast love surrounds those who trust in God.

¹¹Be glad in God and rejoice, O righteous, and shout for joy, all you upright in heart. R

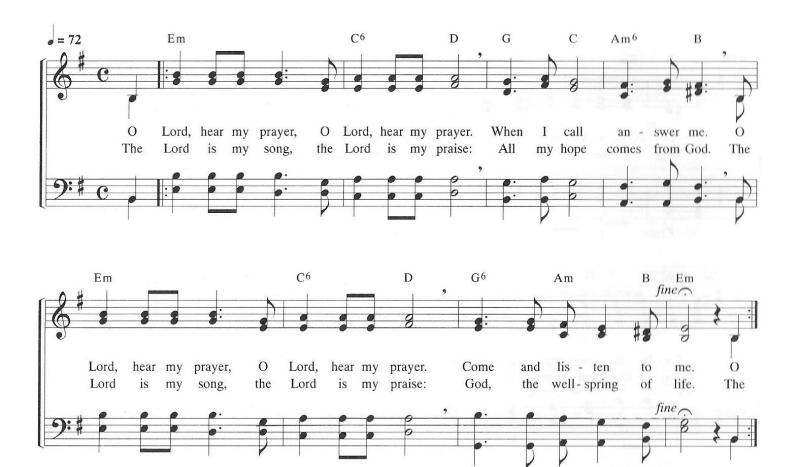
READING

This is God's Word and it can be trusted.

We know love by this, that Jesus laid down his life for us-and we ought to lay down our lives for one another. How does God's love abide in anyone who has the world's goods and sees a brother or sister in need and yet refuses help? Little children, let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action. And by this we will know that we are from the truth and will reassure our hearts before God whenever our hearts condemn us; for God is greater than our hearts and God knows everything.

This is God's Word and it can be trusted.

- I John 3, 16-20



SILENCE

Remaining in silence in God's presence, open to the Holy Spirit, is already prayer.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Let us pray.

Holy God, though this world depends on your grace, it is governed and tended by mortals.

So we pray for those who walk the corridors of power in the legislatures of this and other lands, whose judgments we value or fear.

May they always consider those they represent, make decisions with courage and integrity, and resist any temptation to abuse the trust placed in them.

Lord hear us.

Lord graciously hear us.

We pray for those who hold key positions in the worlds of finance, business and industry, whose decisions may profit some or impoverish many.

May they always value people higher than profit; may they never impose burdens on the poor which they would not carry themselves; and may they never divorce money from morality or ownership from stewardship.

Lord hear us.

Lord graciously hear us.

We pray for those in the caring professions, who look after and listen to kind, cruel and cantankerous folk, and for those who make decisions regarding the nation's health and welfare.

May they always sense the sanctity of life and every person's uniqueness; may they help and heal by their interest as well as their skill; and may they be saved from tiredness and an excess of demands.

Lord hear us.

Lord graciously hear us.

And let us remember those for whom we are responsible and to whom we are accountable in what we do today.

May we show to them the thoughtfulness, tolerance and kindness of Jesus.

Lord hear us.

Lord graciously hear us.

Lord, hear our prayers, and if today we might be the means by which you answer the prayers of others, then may you find us neither deaf nor defiant, but keen to fulfill your purpose, for Jesus' sake. **Amen.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.



CLOSING PRAYER

From where we are to where you need us,

Jesus, now lead on.

From the security of what we know to the adventure of what you will reveal, **Jesus, now lead on.**

To refashion the fabric of this world until it resembles the shape of your kingdom, **Jesus, now lead on.**

Because good things have been prepared for those who love God, **Jesus, now lead on. Amen.**

Prayer Services will continue on the third Sunday of every month (weather permitting).

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About Taizé: Taizé is a tiny village hidden away in the hills of Burgundy, in the eastern part of France, not far from the town of Cluny. Since 1940, it has been the home of an ecumenical community of brothers whose prayer, three times each day, is at the center of their life. Today, Taizé is a place to which visitors of all ages and backgrounds come on pilgrimage, to participate in international meetings of prayer and reflection.

Taizé's vocation is to strive for communion among all. From its beginning, the community has worked for reconciliation among Christians split apart into different denominations. But the brothers do not view reconciliation among Christians as the end in itself; it concerns all humanity, since it makes the Church a place of communion for all.

Singing is one of the most essential elements of Taizé worship. Short chants, repeated again and again, give it a meditative character. Using just a few words, they express a basic reality of faith, quickly grasped by the mind. As the words are sung over many times, this reality gradually penetrates the whole being. Meditative singing thus becomes a way of listening to God. It allows everyone to take part in a time of prayer together and to remain together in attentive waiting on God, without having to fix the length of time too exactly.

