

## **Home Church Package, Sunday June 28<sup>th</sup>, 2020**

Materials prepared by Rev. Jenn Swanson

### *Spiritual Flavours: Taste and See Series, Week 3*

#### **“Soul Space: A Taste of Contemplation”**

#### **What is a Contemplative Service?**

Some think of prayer as thoughts or feelings expressed in words, and while that is one way or expression, there are many more. In words found on an Anglican Church website, we read: *“In the Christian tradition Contemplative Prayer is considered to be the pure gift of God. It is the opening of mind and heart - our whole being - to God, the Ultimate Mystery, beyond thoughts, words, and emotions. Through grace we open our awareness to God whom we know by faith is within us, closer than breathing, closer than thinking, closer than choosing - closer than consciousness itself.”*

In this week’s “flavour” of worship, we offer quiet repetitive or chant-like music, space to contemplate, imagery to rest in and room to breathe.

#### **Threshold Moment**

Psalm 34: Verse 8 says:

*“O taste and see that the Lord is good; happy are those who take refuge in him”.*

Taste and See.

There are many ways in which human beings connect with Spirit, with God, with the Holy, with the Divine, with Ground of Being. For some, it’s through nature...the beauty of God’s Creation. For others, it’s through the universal language of music. Some connect most deeply through meditation and prayer and contemplation, and for others the connection to God is through storytelling, movement and the arts.

Our world seems very different than it was a few long months ago, and in many ways, it is not fundamentally different, but things have come to surface...that needed to be in the light...and we need to talk about these things, to listen deeply to each other, to learn and to grow and work at making things better.

There is much pain, much challenge, much fear and yet, if you are able to be still for a bit...even just for a little while, you will notice that there is still much beauty and much good...and really, how could there not be if this indeed is God’s world?

For the next 4 services, we will be offering different “flavours” of worship...ways you too can taste and see that the Lord Is good. Some of these themes might resonate more with you than others, some may seem familiar and others may be new to you. Each one is an invitation to do as Jesus said in John 1 verse 39, “Come and See”.

And so we invite you...to open your hearts and minds to where the Spirit may move you and stir within you this day....to sink deeply into scripture, to listen to the whisperings within your heart...to close your eyes and be still and to know God...to find connection to God...to your Source of Being.

### **Opening Prayer**

*Written by Erin Counihan*

Come rest.  
Right here with me.  
In a place where you are known and seen and loved.  
Where you can be.  
Where you can be celebrated.  
Where you don't have to pretend to be okay.  
Where you don't have to pretend to understand.  
Where you can fall apart.  
Where you can rage.  
Where you can question and wonder and worry and doubt.  
Where you can be.  
Come rest.  
Take a moment. Let this love hold you.  
You as you are right now.  
You broken, wonderful thing.  
Come rest.  
For you are so very loved.  
And She wants you to know that.  
So She made this space.  
Just for you.  
To sit and rest and be.  
Loved.  
Come rest.  
Find sanctuary. Find space.  
Find you.  
Find help.  
Find hope.  
Find love.  
Find Her.  
Come.  
Amen.



## Scripture Reading: A Paraphrase of Isaiah 43

You are precious in my eyes,  
You are honoured and I love you.  
Do not be afraid for I am with you.  
I have called you by your name.....you are mine.  
Should you pass through the sea I will be with you  
or through the rivers they will not swallow you up.  
Should you walk through fire you will not be scorched,  
for I am Yahweh your Saviour.

### Lectio Divina:

*(literally means divine reading)*

There are traditionally five steps to reading scripture this way. You can do this in as much or as little time as you wish. The reading of scripture this way invites you into a deeper, more personal relationship with the text...and sometimes you will “hear” different things each time you do it. Here are the steps:

1. **Prepare:** perhaps light a candle, or take some deep breathes, or sit somewhere that makes you feel calm, then spend a few moments in a prayer of invitation...saying something like: “God, let me hear you speaking to me.”
2. **Lectio (Read):** read the scripture text. Listen carefully for any words or phrases that jump out for you. Don’t force this...just notice what arises.
3. **Meditatio (Reflect):** read the passage again, focusing on the points that jumped out at you the first time. Pay attention to where God has nudged you. Reflect on what God might be saying to you.
4. **Oratio (Respond):** read the text one more time and then respond by journaling or just by pondering what has arisen for you from this experience. Writing it down often helps to open up your ideas and so that you can come back to reflect on them again later.
5. **Contemplatio (Rest):** spend a few moments after you have written or pondered...in silent contemplation. Sit quietly and let God work! Be still...and see what happens. Then end your contemplation time with a prayer of gratitude.

You can practice this with the scripture reading from today, or any passage you would like to dive more deeply into.

**Closing blessing:**

*Philip Newell*

Early in the morning I seek your presence, O God,  
not because you are ever absent from me,  
but because often I am absent from you... at the heart of each moment...  
where you forever dwell.

Open my eyes to the mystery of this moment, that in every moment of the day I may know  
your life-giving presence; that in every moment I may know you as the One who is always  
now.

**And lastly:**

May this day and all of your days be blessed...and may you hear God whispering between  
the words on the page. May you feel Christ's love deep within you and may you sense the  
Holy Spirit whirling around causing you to smile. Amen.