**An Invitation to a Meditation with Jesus**: ‘Come see me where I am.’

*Materials from Pathways to God and The Celebration of Discipline (Richard Foster) were sources for this meditation.*

I join in rejoicing that our Region and province have moved into Step 3 where we are able to experience less restrictions of Covid 19. Mostly I join in rejoicing that the spread and harms of Covid 19 are lessening. We look forward to working with the City on forming a return to worship plan at CMCC in the coming weeks.

This Sunday morning you are invited to join in a meditation with Jesus, inviting Jesus to join you in a place familiar to you.

Richard Foster writes,

“The purpose of meditation is to enable us to hear God more clearly. Meditation is listening, sensing, heeding the life and light of Christ. This comes right to the heart of our faith. The life that pleases God is not a set of religious duties; it is listening to His voice and obeying His word… Meditation is a more passive Discipline. It is characterized more by reflecting than by studying, more by listening than by thinking, more by releasing than by grabbing. In the Discipline of meditation, we are not so much acting as we are opening ourselves to be acted upon. We invite the Holy Spirit to come and work within us—teaching, cleansing, comforting, redirecting.”

This is a prayer exercise to help us pray in a place familiar to us. In a favourite spot in our home, in our yard or garden or in a place in nature that is familiar to us.

**Introduction**

At the start of John’s gospel two of John’s disciples ask to see the place where Jesus was staying. ‘Come and see’, he says.   (John1:35-39).  In this time of prayer, I ask Jesus to be with me in the place where I am sitting.  ‘Come and see’, I say to Jesus.

In the same way that I can be tempted to skim over a well-known gospel passage or a familiar psalm, I might have become so used to my surroundings that I barely notice them. In this prayer, I seek to encounter Jesus afresh in the ordinariness of my surroundings; not by setting up a still-life as an artist might do but by simply noticing and being with things as they are.

Instead of reading scripture, I am ‘reading’ the space where I live. I do so with a listening heart. I trust that God is alive and active in all things and can speak in and through my surroundings, the surroundings I have spent much time in during the various restrictions of Covid-19.

If nothing much happens, I simply sit with what I see and trust that Jesus is my companion as I look.

A number of years ago, Lois Steckley introduced me to simple prayer of invitation to God. You may choose to start your meditation with this prayer. Speak it slowly. Be still until you find yourself in the presence of God:

*God, You are here. I am here. We are here together. Amen*

**Prayer Exercise**

Without thinking too hard about it, I find a spot somewhere in my home or yard/garden or nearby spot in nature or even sit down where I am and get comfortable. I take time to grow still.

Several slow readings of Psalm 46:10, “*Be still and know that I Am God*” bring us to a place of quiet focus on God.

How am I?  I choose three feeling words that describe me in this moment. Don’t rush.

I imagine God with me, looking at me, loving me exactly as I am.

Without hurrying, I ask myself the questions:

What might God want for me in this moment?

What do I want?  (In Mark 10, Jesus asked Bartimaeus, **51**“What do you want me to do for you?” )

I tell God. (You may choose to write this down.)

Now I look gently at what is around me.  I notice colours, shapes, lines, patterns and textures. I notice how light falls over and onto what I see, the shadows this creates, the spaces in between things, the sense of movement, stillness and contrast. I just let my eyes roam for a while.

I continue to ‘roam’ until something catches my eye; even from the corner of my eye. What strikes me? What ‘detail’ of my surroundings is calling for my attention?

I stay with what catches my attention. I ‘frame’ it, like a picture, letting go of other things around it. I let my gaze linger with it; savouring and giving thanks for it.

I imagine Jesus joins me and together we look closely at my ‘framed picture’.  We savour it together.

As we continue to look at it I answer the questions:

Which part draws me in further?

Is there a part that is particularly absorbing my attention?  I explore it.

What words would describe it?

Is there a part I am less keen to look at? I notice that, without judgement. I let Jesus hold or touch this. I tell Jesus what I notice.

I listen as He tells me what He sees and what He says about it.

I imagine my ‘framed picture’ speaks to me. What does it say? Maybe one part speaks to another.

I talk with Jesus about what is arising in me and share any thoughts, feelings, memories, stories, songs, words, (day)dreams that have surfaced. I listen to what Jesus says.

You may choose to write down these observations and words of Jesus to return to.

I draw my imaginings to a close, giving thanks for what I have experienced.  I bring myself back to the wider room / garden/ yard/ space in nature.  After a little time, I reflect with some of the questions below.

A benediction to close this time with Jesus:

**Loving and Wise God,
guide my thoughts and my memories.

In the light of your love,
may I see
what is important for me to remember,
what is important for me to
hold to my heart,
and what I need simply to
let go of in peace,

for I trust you to be my guide.

Through Jesus Christ,
Amen.**

**Concluding my time with Jesus**

At the end of my prayer or within the next 24 hours I might reflect over these questions:

* What stays with me?
* What do I want to give thanks for?
* What might God be saying to me?
* How do I want to respond?
* What words describe my prayer?

You may choose to keep to yourself as a treasure the words or images given to you in this time.

You may want to share part of your experience with your community of faith, as an act of encouragement. If you would like to share, please email your reflections to Catherine Catherine@gatheringchurch.ca

May you know the depths and heights of God’s great love for you this week.