

First United Methodist Church of Saginaw

CONTEMPLATIVE SERVICE IN THE STYLE OF TAIZE

December 2, 2020

Employing Lament to move from Fatigue to Hope

The beginning of the service will be denoted by the ringing of a bell.

Song: "Wait for the Lord"

from #12 from *Songs and Prayers From Taizé*, c1991 Ateliers de Presses de Taizé

The musical score is written for voice and piano. It consists of two systems of music. The first system begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The vocal line starts with the lyrics "Wait for the Lord, whose day is near." The piano accompaniment features a steady, contemplative rhythm. The second system begins with a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic. The vocal line continues with "Wait for the Lord: be strong, — take heart!" The piano accompaniment provides harmonic support, with a slight increase in intensity.

Scripture: Psalm 130:1, 5-8

Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord, hear my voice!

Let your ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications!

I wait for the Lord, my soul waits, and in his word I hope;

My soul waits for the Lord

more than those who watch for the morning,

more than those who watch for the morning!

O Israel, hope in the Lord, for with the Lord there is steadfast love.

It is he who will redeem Israel from sin.

Reading: A Lament for the Weary

Across the annals of time, from a rock-hewn cell,
Whispering on the wind through seven centuries
The words of the anchorite, Julian of Norwich,
still pierce the heart and strike the soul with hope:

“All shall be well, and all shall be well and all manner of things shall be well.”

True. By Faith. But not yet.

All is not well. All manner of things are in disarray.

People are ill, businesses flailing, spirits fatigued.

Stressed. Stretched. Struggling.

It's Christmas time, or it's supposed to be.

And the loving thing is to hold people at an arm's length;

At two arms' length, an elbow bump; and a wave.

Christmastime, pandemic mode.

How does one lament the weariness of these days?

How does one lament the loneliness exacerbated by the season?

How does one lament the exhaustion of too much change?

How does one not sound like a petty numskull, lacking gratitude?

How does one not become jaded?

All is not well. All manner of things are in disarray.

But God is no circus master. Oh no.

God does not deal in chaos.

God orders chaos...in time...in time.

So raise your laments, your grief-laced prayers.

Voice your sorrow at empty chairs at the table.

Voice your need to be rid of empty gestures.

Bring your weary soul; your aching brain;

your exhausted limbs to taut to dance.

Stressed. Stretched. Struggling.

And lay them down.

Breathe out the angst; breathe in the song;

Breathe out the stale; breathe in the hope.

And hear the whisper of promise with seven centuries of street cred:

“All shall be well, and all shall be well; and all manner of things shall be well.”

In time...in time.

How long, O Lord?

Not yet. Not yet.

But in time.

Song: "Come to Me"

from #3094 in *Worship & Song*, c2011 Abingdon Press

Come to me, come to me, weak and heav-y lad - en; —
 lad - en, lad - en;
 lad - en: —
 trust in me, lean on me. I will give you rest. —

Silence (2 minutes)

Song: "Send Us Your Spirit, O Lord"

from #3185 in *Worship & Song*, c2011 Abingdon Press

1. Send us your Spir - it, O Lord. _____
 2. Hold us with mer - cy, O Lord. _____
 Eve - ning en - folds us and holds us too near.
 Sor - row has spo - ken, has bro - ken our hearts.
 Wake the morn - ing light. Make our liv - ing bright.
 Clothe us in your care. Be the life we bear.
 Shine on our dark - ness, O Lord.
 Send us your Spir - it, O Lord.

WORDS: Dan Schutte
 MUSIC: Dan Schutte

EVENING PRAYER
 7 10.10 7

Scripture: Psalm 40:1-3; 17

I waited patiently for the Lord; he inclined to me and heard my cry.

² He drew me up from the desolate pit, out of the miry bog,
and set my feet upon a rock, making my steps secure.

³ He put a new song in my mouth, a song of praise to our God.

Many will see and fear, and put their trust in the Lord...

¹⁷ As for me, I am poor and needy, but the Lord takes thought for me.

You are my help and my deliverer; do not delay, O my God.

Poem: "A Sense of Your Timing"

written by Ted Loder, in *Guerrillas of Grace*

http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B0014ENRR4/ref=dp_kindle-redirect?ie=UTF8&btkr=1

O God of all seasons and senses,
grant us a sense of your timing
to submit gracefully and rejoice quietly in the turn of the seasons.

In this season of short days and long nights,
of grey and white and cold,
teach us the lessons of endings;
children growing, friends leaving, loved ones dying,
grieving over, grudges over,
blaming over, excuses over.

O God, grant us a sense of your timing.
In this season of short days and long nights,
of grey and white and cold,
teach us the lessons of beginnings;
that such waitings and endings may be the starting place,
a planting of seeds which bring to birth what is ready to be born—
something right and just and different,
a new song, a deeper relationship, a fuller love—
in the fullness of your time.

O God, grant us a sense of your timing.

Song: "Stay With Us"

from #21 from *Songs and Prayers From Taizé*, c1991 Ateliers de Presses de Taizé

The image shows a musical score for the song "Stay With Us". It consists of two systems of music, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment line. The first system starts with a piano (*p*) dynamic and ends with a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic. The second system starts with a forte (*f*) dynamic and ends with a piano (*p*) dynamic, with a *p subito* marking. The lyrics are in English and German. The English lyrics are: "Stay with us, O Lord Jesus Christ, night will soon fall. Then stay with us, O Lord Jesus Christ, light in our dark-ness." The German lyrics are: "Bleib mit dei-ner Gna-de bei uns, Herr Je-su Christ. Ach, bleib mit dei-ner Gna-de bei uns, du treu-er Gott." The piano accompaniment features a steady bass line and chords in the right hand.

Stay with us, O Lord Jesus Christ, night will soon fall. Then
Bleib mit dei-ner Gna-de bei uns, Herr Je-su Christ. Ach,

stay with us, O Lord Jesus Christ, light in our dark-ness.
bleib mit dei-ner Gna-de bei uns, du treu-er Gott.

Prayer: "A Heart Aware"

by Steve Garnaas-Holmes, <https://www.unfoldinglight.net/reflections/d8c52pfp3nwzrs4dtljx345dw2x2h7>

God, wake me from the fog of my low expectations,
the cement of worry that clings to my feet.
Help me shake off the world's despair,
its pointless habits, desires and attachments,
the awful busyness, the downward spiral
of judging, consuming, and protecting myself.
Give me the courage to trust you are moving and acting;
give me the vision to embrace the unimaginable.
Help me stand with clarity and purpose.
Give me the urgency to act—for now is the time—
and the patience to wait for the fullness of time.
May I look upon the world with eyes of grace,
and act with a heart of love and hope.
Amen.

Silence (8 minutes)

Song: "Let Our Earth Be Peaceful"

from #3159 in *Worship & Song*, c2011 Abingdon Press

1. Let our earth be peace - ful, let our hearts be
2. Let our ways be mind - ful, mend - ing what is
3. Let our lives be fruit - ful, beau - ti - ful and

4
hope - ful, let our hands be gen - tle
hurt - ful, do - ing what is need - ful
play - ful, ev - ery day be thank - ful

7
1, 2 | 3
for the love of God.
for the love of God.
for the love of God.

The musical score is written on a treble clef staff in 3/4 time with a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat). It consists of three lines of music. The first line has three measures, the second line has four measures, and the third line has seven measures. The lyrics are aligned with the notes. The third line includes first, second, and third endings, indicated by brackets and numbers 1, 2, and 3 above the staff.

Benediction:

from <https://www.liturgylink.net/2015/11/23/benedictions-for-advent/>

Be people of hope.

Let hope live in your heart and share the hope of Christ with all you meet.

Share hope by noticing someone else's humanity.

Share hope by listening to someone's story.

Share hope by praying for our world.

In this Advent season, we need to see, feel, and share hope.

As you go out into the wonder of God's creations, share hope with those you meet.

Amen.

The conclusion of the service will be denoted by the ringing of a bell.

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JOIN US for each week in December of 2020 for a contemplative Service in the style of Taizé

Saginaw First United Methodist Church – 4790 Gratiot Rd, Saginaw, MI 48638 – (989) 799-0131

JOIN US for worship on Sundays at 10am! Livestreamed on Youtube at "Saginaw First UMC"

firstumcsaginaw@gmail.com – www.firstumcsaginaw.org – Find us on Facebook!