

Reading: *How the Light Comes* – Jan Richardson

I cannot tell you
how the light comes.

What I know
is that it is more ancient
than imagining.

That it travels
across an astounding expanse
to reach us.

That it loves
searching out
what is hidden,
what is lost,
what is forgotten
or in peril
or in pain.

That it has a fondness
for the body,
for finding its way
toward flesh,
for tracing the edges
of form,
for shining forth
through the eye,
the hand,
the heart.

I cannot tell you
how the light comes,
but that it does.
That it will.
That it works its way
into the deepest dark
that enfolds you,

though it may seem
long ages in coming
or arrive in a shape
you did not foresee.

And so
may we this day
turn ourselves toward it.
May we lift our faces
to let it find us.
May we bend our bodies
to follow the arc it makes.
May we open
and open more
and open still
to the blessed light
that comes.

Silence (2 minutes)

Song: "THE LORD IS MY LIGHT"

w/m Jacques Berthier, c1998 Ateliers et Presses de Taizé, Taizé Community



The Lord is my light, my light and sal-va-tion: in



God I trust, in God I trust. The Lord is my light, my



light and sal-va-tion: in God I trust, in God I trust. The

Scripture: Isaiah 40: 3-5

A voice cries out: "In the wilderness, prepare the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain. Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken."

Reading: *Prepare Your Way in Me* – by Stephen Garnaas-Holmes

Holy One, prepare your way in me.
Give me faith, like the stable,
to know your presence within me.
Give me courage, like Mary,
to let your life overwhelm mine.
Give me strength, like Joseph,
to protect what is holy, tender and growing.
Give me patience, like the shepherds,
to be still and listen.

Give me humility, like the magi,
to kneel before your presence.
Give me trust, like the child,
to let myself be borne into a new world.
Give me joy, like the angels,
to bring good news to the poor.
Give me love, like the manger,
to hold Christ within.
Holy One, prepare your way in me.

Song: "PREPARE THE WAY OF THE LORD"

Wm by Jacques Berthier, c1984 Ateliers et Presses de Taizé, Taizé Community

During the singing of this song, you are invited forward to light a candle and place it in the sand.

The image shows two staves of musical notation in G major (one sharp) and 6/8 time. The first staff begins with a circled '1' above the first measure, which contains a double bar line and repeat dots. The melody continues with quarter and eighth notes. The second staff begins with a circled '3' above the first measure, followed by a circled '4' above the fourth measure. The melody concludes with a fermata over the final note. Below the staves, the lyrics are written in a simple, sans-serif font, aligned with the notes.

Pre - pare the way of the Lord. Pre - pare the way of the Lord,
and all peo-ple will see the sal - va-tion of our God. Pre -

Time of Prayer – Pastor Amy Terhune

Silence (10 minutes)

Song: "EMMANUEL"

w/m by Bod McGee, c 1976 C.A. Music (div. of Christian Artists Corp.)

Em-man - u - el, Em - man - u - el, his name is called Em-man - u - el. God with us, re - vealed in us, his name is called Em - man - u - el.

Benediction — by Mary Lou Kownacki

The incarnation is no mystery, Jesus.
You make it easy to understand.
Because you walked our earth
we are to see the face of the Divine
in every person we meet:
the friend who betrayed
the family gathered for a meal
the welfare mother
the man on death row

the clerk in the store
the teenager on the corner
the person near me now.

Every time I love,
the mystery of the incarnation happens.
Every time I love,
I birth you on earth, Jesus.
I fall on my knees and beg you, Jesus
to deepen my living of the incarnation.

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

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JOIN US for the next contemplative service on January 4, 2023
JOIN US for worship on Sundays at 10am!
Find us on Facebook @firstumcofsaginaw

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