First United Methodist Church of Saginaw CONTEMPLATIVE SERVICE IN THE STYLE OF TAIZÉ October 2, 2024 7:00 p.m.

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



Scripture: Mark 4:37-39

A great windstorm arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that the boat was already being swamped. But Jesus was in the stern, asleep on the cushion, and his disciples woke him up saying, "Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?" Jesus arose and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, "Peace! Be still!" Then the wind ceased, and all was calm.

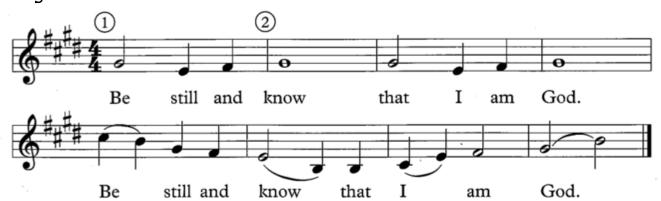
Reading: For Who We May Become - by Kate Bowler and Jessica Richie in "The Lives We Actually Have"

God, I'm haunted by the shadows of the old me The one who's tried every promised elixir, every five-step plan every quru's solution to what ails me, but nothing seems to stick. I'm the same me with the same problems and the same quiet hopes. Is it my lack of discipline, or I am just a lost cause? What new beginnings are possible? Blessed are we, the incomplete, standing at the edge of what could be in this perpetual season of waiting and looking and longing for the fulfillment of hope Blessed are we, the restless, grieving what's over, but isn't done, what is gone, but isn't finished.

Blessed are we in the midnight struggle with the past and future while the present has already arrived just outside our door. Blessed are we in this place where desire and will are beginning a conversation about what this day, this moment is for, and for whose glory. Blessed are we who suddenly find that while we weren't looking, the Lord appeared saying, "Peace; be still." This is the clearing where the light shines thru Where the new can begin. Never doubt it. God is writing you into the story of the world's healing.

Silence (2 minutes)

Song: "Be Still and Know" w/m by Dan Bell (c)1989 The Iona Community / GIA Publications



And your own.

Scripture: Luke 17: 20-21

Once, Jesus was asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God was coming. He answered, "The Kingdom is not coming with things that can be observed, nor will anyone be able to say 'Here it is!' or 'There it is!' For, in fact, the Kingdom of God is in your midst."

Reading: Apple Meditation - Thich Nhat Hanh

(Please hold the apple that you have been given.)

Look deeply at the apple in your hand and you see the farmer who tended the apple tree; the blossom that became the fruit; the fertile earth, the organic material from decayed remains of prehistoric marine animals and algae, and the hydrocarbons themselves; the sunshine, the clouds, and the rain. Without the combination of these far-reaching elements and without the help of many people, the apple would simply not exist. At its most essential, the apple you hold is a manifestation of the wonderful presence of life. It is interconnected with all that is. It contains the whole universe. It is an ambassador of the cosmos coming to nourish our existence. It feeds our body, and if we eat it mindfully, it also feeds our soul and recharges our spirit.

When you eat the apple, just concentrate on eating the apple. Don't think of anything else. And most important, be still. Don't eat the apple while you are driving. Don't eat it while you are walking. Don't eat it while you are reading. Just be still. Being focused and slowing down will allow you to truly savor all the qualities the apple offers: its sweetness, aroma, freshness, juiciness, and crispness. There is nothing else filling your mind as you chew- no projects, no deadlines, no worries, no "to do" list, no fears, no sorrow, no anger, no past, and no future. There is just the apple.

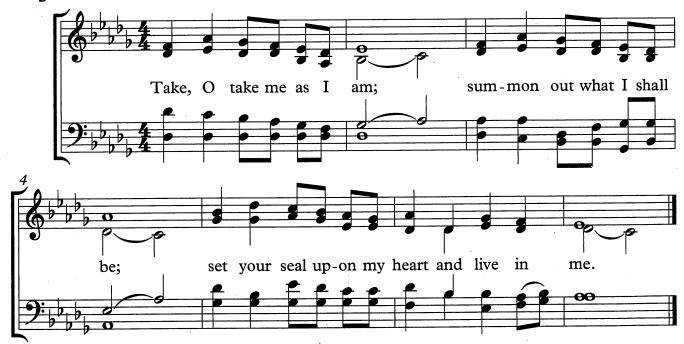
Song: "Spirit of Life" - w/m by Carolyn McDade



Time of Prayer -Pastor Amy Terhune

Silence (10 minutes)

Song: "Take, O Take Me As I Am" - w w/m by Dan Bell (c)1995 The Iona Community / GIA Publications



Benediction - Celtic benediction from www.friendsofsilence.net

In the busyness of this day, grant me a stillness of seeing, O God.

In the conflicting voices of my heart, grant me a calmness of hearing.

Let my seeing and hearing; my words and my actions;

be rooted in a silent certainty of your presence.

Let my passions for life, and the longings for justice that stir within me,

be grounded in the experience of your stillness.

Let my life be rooted in the ground of your peace, O God,

let me be rooted in the depths of your peace.

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