

Day One: Morning

The Practice of Hearing the Call and Responding

OPENING PRAYER

We arise this morning with a listening heart ready to hear how we are being called into this next season of our lives. Wellspring of Wisdom, we ask you to show us the way forward, to illumine our gifts, and give us the courage to say yes.

OPENING SONG

Song of Brigid

Refrain:

Darkness to light, night into day.
Wellspring of wisdom,
show me the way.

FIRST READING: Mark Nepo

To journey without being changed is to be a nomad. To change without journeying is to be a chameleon. To journey and be transformed by the journey is to be a pilgrim.

SUNG PSALM OPENING

O Love, open my lips, and my mouth will declare your praise. (Repeat)

PSALM 78:1-5

Give ear, my people, to my teaching;
incline your ear to the utterance of my mouth.
I will open my mouth in a proverb;
I will utter riddles from of old
which we have heard and known,
and which our mothers and fathers have told us.
We will not hide them from their daughters and sons;
we will recount to generations to come
the praise worthy deeds of SHE WHO SPEAKS LIFE,
and her might and the wonderful works she has done.

SUNG DOXOLOGY

Glory to the Maker, Lover, and Keeper; as ago, in this breath, and will be ever. Amen, Amen.

SECOND READING: Genesis 3:23-24

So God expelled them from the Garden of Eden and sent them to work the ground, the same dirt out of which they'd been made. He threw them out of the garden and stationed angel-cherubim and a revolving sword of fire east of it, guarding the path to the Tree-of-Life.

SILENT CONTEMPLATION

PRAYERS OF CONCERN

God of the Garden, you created us from rich earth, and gave us the beauty and bounty of Eden to flourish in, yet we chose our own wisdom and found ourselves exiled. Now we are pilgrims. Call us back to our soul's home, to each other, and to right relationship with the planet you entrusted us with from the beginning. Help us to clearly hear your voice and follow you with faith.

Sung Response O Pilgrim God, you call our hearts to follow.

We ask you to prepare us for the journey, no matter where our travels will take us. We are tempted to pack too much, afraid we won't have all that we'll need, but you call us to take little. Though we want to trust you in all things, we often don't. Our possessions give us a false sense of safety. We believe our homes are our security, yet the only thing we can truly count on is you. Help us to follow wherever you may lead us.

Sung Response O Pilgrim God, you call our hearts to follow.

Spirit of Sojourners, as you call us to follow you, help us to remember that we are never alone, and though our steps will flounder at times, you will not forget us. You will uphold us, strengthen us, and guide us. Stay with us, Kind God, leading us on our way, giving us to each other again and again, for help, for healing, and for love.

Sung Response O Pilgrim God, you call our hearts to follow.

CLOSING SONG

Illumine Me

Illumine me, O Spirit Divine;
Open my eyes and my life wide.
Illumine me, O Spirit Divine;
Cast over me your light,
Illumine me.

CLOSING BLESSING

Holy Traveller,
bless our sacred yes to the call you have whispered to us,
whether a call to new adventure or the call that arises out of loss,
we know you journey with us, guiding us on the way of imagination to new paths.

May we travel with intention, being conscious of encountering you in each step,
in each stranger, in each moment of disorientation.
We ask you to bless our feet, that they carry us forward in this season to new possibilities.
Bless our hands, that they might help us give form to our creative visions.
Bless our hearts, that we stay open to wonder and numinous moments
Bless our throats, that we gain courage to speak truth.
Bless our lips, that we take in what is most nourishing.
Bless our third eyes, that our intuition and the wisdom of dreams
be close companions on the way, guiding us through the darkness.

SUNG AMEN



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Opening Prayer: Written by [Christine Valters Paintner](#)

Opening Song: [Song of Brigid](#) by [Laura Ash](#) from the album [Singing with Monks and Mystics](#)

First Reading: Mark Nepo, *The Exquisite Risk*, Harmony Books, 2006, New York, NY. page 12.

Sung Psalm Opening and Doxology: [Richard Bruxvoort Colligan](#) from the album [Monk in the World: Songs for Contemplative Living](#)

Psalm Translation: [Wilda C. Gafney](#), *A Women's Lectionary for the Whole Church* © 2021 Church Publishing Incorporated, New York, NY 10016, used by permission. (Year W) page 5

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Prayers of Concern: Written by Claudia Love Mair

Sung Response: Tune by [Betsey Beckman](#), lyrics by [Christine Valters Paintner](#) and [Simon de Voil](#), sung by [Simon de Voil](#) and [Alexa Sunshine Rose](#)

Closing Song: [Illumine Me](#) by [Trish Bruxvoort Colligan](#) from the album [Earth, Our Original Monastery: Singing Our Way to the Sacred](#)

Closing Blessing: Written by [Christine Valters Paintner](#) to companion her book [The Soul of a Pilgrim](#) (Ave Maria Press)

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Day One: Evening

The Practice of Hearing the Call and Responding

OPENING PRAYER

Journeying God, be with us at the end of this day of deep listening. Like Mary, we too have been summoned by you to offer our holy yes and co-create a more beautiful and just world. Let us continue to keep our hearts open and attuned to your sacred presence.

OPENING SONG

Hail Mary

Her heart beat in time with my wings.
Her heart beat in time with my wings.
Hail Mary, full of grace!
The Lord is with you.

SUNG PSALM OPENING

O Love, open my lips, and my mouth will declare your praise. (Repeat)

PSALM 144:3-4, 12-15

WOMB OF LIFE, what is humanity that you even know them,
or the woman-born that you think of them?

Humanity is like a breath;
whose days are like a passing shadow.

Our sons in their youth
are like plants full grown,
our daughters are like cornerstones,
cut for the building of a place.

Our barns are full,
from produce of every kind;
our sheep have increased by thousands,
many thousands in our surroundings.

Our cattle are heavy,
there is no breach in the walls, no exile,
and no cry of distress in our surroundings.

Happy are the people to whom such blessings fall;
happy are the people whose God is the WOMB OF LIFE.

SUNG DOXOLOGY

Glory to the Maker, Lover, and Keeper; as ago, in this breath, and will be ever. Amen, Amen.

READING OF THE NIGHT: Alan Jones

Isn't it time that your drifting was consecrated into pilgrimage? You have a mission. You are needed. The road that leads to nowhere has to be abandoned. . . It is a road for joyful pilgrims intent on the recovery of passion.

CLOSING POEM

Following an Ancient Call

What if we could listen
like the great salmon
who goes about its ordinary life
when suddenly something shifts.

It does not come as a thunderous
revelation, but a quiet knowing
you have been preparing all
your life to trust.

The path lived until now no longer
satisfies but the path ahead
seems thousands of miles
long, and your womb is heavy.

There is no refusing this ancient call,
and to know ourselves as not alone,
but part of generations before us who,
like the salmon, share in this inheritance.

You now hear only the rush of energy
that comes with starting the long
return home and the pull in the
blood which cannot be ignored.

I like to imagine the salmon
swimming across the ocean
(as if that weren't daunting enough)
and after that endless voyage

it must face the mouth of the mighty river.
Does she hesitate, even for a moment?
Does he want to turn back to less turbulent waters?
But there is something ripening in their bellies.

Perhaps your list of pressing tasks is still long.
Leave it there fluttering in the breeze,
uncrossed, undone, unfinished,
to do the only thing you can do

which is to swim,
to be carried by the waves and tide
and to know when to let the current carry you
and when to fight it with all your strength,

and to know even this yes will
demand more than you were willing
to give: your life for the new birth,
what you think you know for

the ancient call home.

CLOSING SONG

Oscail Mo Chroí

Oscail mo chroí

Oscail mo chroí

(Open my heart)



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Opening Song: [Hail Mary](#) by [Alana Levandoski](#) from the album [Birthing the Holy: Singing with Mary and the Sacred Feminine](#)

Sung Psalm Opening and Doxology: [Richard Bruxvoort Colligan](#) from the album [Monk in the World: Songs for Contemplative Living](#)

Psalm Translation: [Wilda C. Gafney](#), *A Woman's Lectionary for the Whole Church* © 2021 Church Publishing Incorporated, New York, NY 10016, (Year W) page 232.

Reading of the Night: Alan Jones, *Passion for Pilgrimage: Notes for the Journey Home*, Moorehouse Publishing, 2000. page 39.

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Day Two: Morning

The Practice of Packing Lightly

OPENING PRAYER

God of simplicity, we awaken to a new day and ask that you help us to hold things lightly with palms open to receive the gifts that come. We know we must release that which no longer serves us to make room for the new that awaits us. We lay open our whole lives to you, trusting you, O Holy One.

OPENING SONG

I Lay Open (Psalm 25)

I lay open my whole life to you, trusting you, O Holy One.

FIRST READING: Howard Thurman

The central element in communion with God is the act of self-surrender. The symbol of my prayer this day is the open heart.

SUNG PSALM OPENING

O Peace open my lips, and my mouth will declare your praise. (Repeat)

PSALM 104:1-4

Bless the FOUNT OF LIFE, O my soul.

MOTHER OF ALL, my God, you are very great.

You don honor and majesty,

Wrapped in lights as a garment,

you stretch out the heavens like a tent-curtain.

She who lays on the waters the beams of her upper chambers,

she who makes the clouds her chariot,

she is the one who rides on the wings of the wind.

She is the one who makes the winds her celestial messengers,

fire and flame her ministers.

SUNG DOXOLOGY

Glory to the Maker, Lover, and Keeper; as ago, in this breath, and will be ever. Amen, Amen.

SCRIPTURE READING: GENESIS 12:1-2

God said to Abram: Go forth from your land, your relatives, and from your father's house to a land that I will show you. I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, so that you will be a blessing.

SILENT CONTEMPLATION

PRAYERS OF CONCERN

God of the abundant enough, you are the fullness our souls long for. When we fill the space around us with the clutter of possessions or a busy calendar, when we seek isolating comfort or frenetic distraction, calm our hearts. Hold our wounded places tenderly. Release us from the fear of scarcity. Ground us in the certainty of the goodness and beauty that flow from you in abundance.

Sung Response - O Pilgrim God, you ask us to live simply.

Compassionate God, we remember those who pack lightly not by choice but by necessity: refugees, the desperate poor, orphans, the abandoned, and victims of natural disasters. Move us to compassion, draw us to wisdom, and compel us to act. We seek to embody your hands, providing for the needs of others, as well as your heart, opening to strangers in hospitality.

Sung Response - O Pilgrim God, you ask us to live simply.

Our Liberator, you call us into freedom. Where we are captive to patterns, ideas, or systems that constrict the flourishing you have created for us, free us. Where we are burdened by messages and images that diminish our love of neighbor and of self, free us. Turn our whole beings to you. Gently open our hands to let go of all that weighs us down so that we may receive your joyful simplicity.

Sung Response - O Pilgrim God, you ask us to live simply.

CLOSING SONG

Open Hand

Open hand, open hand ready for blessing beyond our choosing.
Open hand, open hand prepared for goodness out of the blue.
Should a free blackbird come to nest here laying her gifts in my life
Or a breeze borne seed come to rest here growing its gifts in my life. . .

CLOSING BLESSING

Winnowing God,
you ask us to release, let go, surrender, and yield all that we can
in service of making space for what is most essential.
The more we set aside that which burdens us and takes up too much space

the more room opens within us for wonder and gratitude to flourish,
the more we find the freedom to see the world as enchanted.
Sustain us on the path of simplifying our lives
and traveling on this Earth more lightly
so that we no longer live beyond what can be sustained.
As we continue on the pilgrim's path, unencumbered by so many things,
may you open our hearts to delight in the simple beauty of the world.

SUNG AMEN



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Opening Prayer: Written by [Christine Valters Paintner](#)

Opening Song: [I Lay Open \(Psalm 25\)](#) by [Richard Bruxvoort Colligan](#) from the album [Trust](#)

First Reading: Howard Thurman, *Meditations from the Heart*, Beacon Press, 1999. page 174.

Sung Psalm Opening and Doxology: [Richard Bruxvoort Colligan](#) from the album [Monk in the World: Songs for Contemplative Living](#)

Psalm Translation: [Wilda C. Gafney](#), *A Women's Lectionary for the Whole Church* © 2021 Church Publishing Incorporated, New York, NY 10016, used by permission. (Year W) page 75.

Second Reading: Genesis 12: 1-2. Scripture quotation is from the New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition. Copyright © 2021 National Council of Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.

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Sung Response: Tune by [Betsey Beckman](#), lyrics by [Christine Valters Paintner](#) and [Simon de Voil](#), sung by [Simon de Voil](#) and [Alexa Sunshine Rose](#)

Closing Song: [Open Hand](#) by [Richard Bruxvoort Colligan](#) from the album [The Soul's Slow Ripening: Songs for Celtic Seekers](#)

Closing Blessing: Written by [Christine Valters Paintner](#) to companion her book [The Soul of a Pilgrim](#) (Ave Maria Press)

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Day Two: Evening

The Practice of Packing Lightly

OPENING PRAYER

As the day grows darker and evening draws around us, we consider the places today where we felt tangled up and knotted over things, plans, and achievements. We call upon Mary as the Untier of Knots to support us in gently loosening all that binds us so we might live with greater truth and ease. We can then surrender more fully to the loving embrace of the God who holds us.

OPENING SONG

Undo Me

Undo me, Untier of Knots, I am ready.
Undo me, Untier of Knots, I am ready.
I am ready.

Because I am tangled, longing to be free
Free from these patterns, undo me.

Because I am wounded, aching to be healed
Healed to be joyful, undo me.

SUNG PSALM OPENING

O Peace open my lips, and my mouth will declare your praise. (Repeat)

PSALM 69:10-13, 30

Now I humbled my soul with fasting,
and they reviled me.
And I wore sackcloth as my clothing,
and I became to them a byword.
They speak against me, they who sit in the city gates,
while the drunkards make songs [about me].
Yet I make my prayer to you, the WISDOM OF THE AGES.
At a favorable time,
God, in the wealth of your faithful love, answer me,
with your certain salvation.
I will praise the name of God with song;
I will magnify her with thanksgiving.

SUNG DOXOLOGY

Glory to the Maker, Lover, and Keeper; as ago, in this breath, and will be ever. Amen, Amen.

READING OF THE NIGHT: Kerry Walters

When we feel more secure, powerful, confident, and self-sufficient, we are nothing. We are most abjectly *not*. But when we're stripped naked by desert despair, helplessly and hopelessly decreed by all of our facades and deceptions, we are most real, most substantial. We *are*. Our being is proportionate to the destitution forced on us by the wilderness.

CLOSING POEM

Invite Wonder

What if you bowed
before every dandelion you met
and wrote love letters to
squirrels and pigeons
who crossed your path?

What if scrubbing the dishes became
an act of single reverence for the gift
of being washed clean, and what if the
rhythmic percussion of chopping carrots
became the drumbeat of your dance?

What if you stepped into the shower
each morning only to be baptized anew
and sent forth to serve the grocery bagger,
the bank teller, and the bus driver
through simple kindness?

And what if the things that make
your heart dizzy with delight were
no longer stuffed into the basement
of your being and allowed out to play
in the lush and green fields?

There are two ways to live in this world:

As if everything were enchanted
or nothing at all.

There is no in between, although you
keep trying to live this divided life knowing
deep down something is awry.

You have lived long enough
with this tearing apart.

Come out into the wide world
and discover there, companions and guides
at every turn, and even those who summon
curses from your heart have
a divine spark within them bright enough

to invite wonder.

CLOSING SONG

Surrender

Fág faoi mu chúramé.

Gráim thú, a stór.

Surrender to the holding
and the loving you, *a stór*.

("A stór" is an Irish term of endearment.)



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Sung Psalm Opening and Doxology: [Richard Bruxvoort Colligan](#) from the album [Monk in the World: Songs for Contemplative Living](#)

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Reading of the Night: Kerry Walters, *Soul Wilderness: A Desert Spirituality*, Paulist Press, 2001. page 80.

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Day Three: Morning

The Practice of Crossing the Threshold

OPENING PRAYER

As we prepare to cross the threshold onto the journey of pilgrimage, we ask for guidance the way the oystercatchers guided the way for St. Brigid as she crossed the sea. We know that the doorways will be many and each one is an invitation from you, God of the dance, to cross with joy and anticipation of what is on the other side. We trust in the current of your Love.

OPENING SONG

Brigid's Birds

Refrain:

And the stars shine bright as the fire burns low.
How can we ever go back to what we used to know.

And the stars shine bright as the fire burns low.
We'll never come this way again, that much I know.

FIRST READING: Barbara Holmes

Portals open as the quickening steps of seekers engage a dancing God in a dancing universe. If there is any way to dialogue with the God who created a universe of vibrating and dancing "strings," perhaps it is through dance.

SUNG PSALM OPENING

O Hope open my lips, and my mouth will declare your praise. (Repeat)

PSALM 118:19-29

Open for me the gates of righteousness,
that I may enter them
and give thanks to the LIVING GOD.
This is the gate to the HOLY PRESENCE;
the righteous shall enter through it.
I thank you that you have answered me
and you have become my salvation.
The stone that the builders rejected
has become the chief cornerstone.
This is OUR GOD'S doing;

it is marvelous in our eyes.
This is the day that the FONT OF CREATION has made;
let us rejoice and be glad in it.
Ah! HOLY ONE, help, save us!
Ah! HOLY ONE, haste, deliver us!
Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the MOST HIGH GOD.
We bless you from the house of the HOLY ONE.
The FAITHFUL ONE is God,
and she has given us light.
Bind the festal offering with ropes of branches,
up to the horns of the altar.
You are my God, and I will give thanks to you;
you are my God; I will exalt you.
Give thanks to the HOLY ONE, for she is God,
for her faithful love endures forever.

SUNG DOXOLOGY

Glory to the Maker, Lover, and Keeper; as ago, in this breath, and will be ever. Amen, Amen.

SCRIPTURE READING: Exodus 15:19-21

When Pharaoh's horses and chariots and horsemen entered the sea, God made the waters of the sea flow back upon them, though the Israelites walked on dry land through the midst of the sea. Then the prophet Miriam, Aaron's sister, took a tambourine in her hand, while all the women went out after her with tambourines, dancing; and she responded to them: Sing to God, for God is gloriously triumphant.

SILENT CONTEMPLATION

PRAYERS OF CONCERN

Holy One, it's so easy to be distressed by current events broadcast on repeat. Who wants to go on pilgrimage amid war and rumors of war, deadly weather caused by climate change, and the continued devastation of a global pandemic? But you, Pilgrim God, are the shadow lifting light at the threshold to the next leg of our journey. Your illuminating word reminds us that you lead those who follow you to wholeness. You are our God and our guide, teach us to go with you in joy.

Sung Response – O Pilgrim God, you shimmer at the threshold.

We praise you and we thank you. Beholding your beauty at the threshold of our travels fills our hearts with gladness, and our mouths with laughter. Sing into our souls' the map of the way ahead. Take us by the hand and dance us into the direction you would have us to go.

Sung Response – O Pilgrim God, you shimmer at the threshold.

Let our eagerness to go and the soft sounds of our footfalls as we embark be an acceptable commencement song. Stay with us, Pilgrim God. May our eyes continue to see your glory. May our ears continue to welcome your guiding voice. May we follow you with courage, grace, and gratitude. Lead us along the way.

Sung Response – O Pilgrim God, you shimmer at the threshold.

CLOSING SONG

Peregrine

Setting out, no rudder, sails nor oars.
Trusting the current, trusting the course.
Peregrine Our hearts are ready, fully ripe.
Peregrine Our hearts are ready for new life.

CLOSING BLESSING

Godde of the Threshold,
you forever reveal to us new doorways in our lives,
powerful crossing-over places filled with possibilities.
Give us courage to stay awake and alert
to all the moments when these portals appear.
Inspire us to dance and sing as we wander
into liminal spaces, where the old is stripped away
and the new is waiting to be born.
Holy midwife, sit with us in the waiting,
bring us guidance in the form of signs and symbols:
a stone, a leaf, the song of the river, a night dream,
and infuse us with the wisdom to pay attention.

SUNG AMEN



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Opening Song: [Brigid's Birds](#) by Margaret McLarty from the album [The Soul's Slow Ripening: Songs for Celtic Seekers](#)

First Reading: Barbara Holmes, *Joy Unspeakable: Contemplative Practice of the Black Church*, Augsburg Fortress Publishers, 2004. page 41.

Sung Psalm Opening and Doxology: [Richard Bruxvoort Colligan](#) from the album [Monk in the World: Songs for Contemplative Living](#)

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Day Three: Evening

The Practice of Crossing the Threshold

OPENING PRAYER

As we approach the end of the day, we gather seeking shelter and sanctuary. We long to know the presence of the divine before us, behind us, above and below, beside and within each of our hearts. We cross through the narrow gate into a deeper journey, allowing life's storms to build our endurance for the road ahead, and we know the sacred shimmering in every moment.

OPENING SONG

Christ Within

Refrain:

Christ within, before and behind, Christ above, below, beside.
Christ every hour, every day, every night.

SUNG PSALM OPENING

O Hope open my lips, and my mouth will declare your praise. (Repeat)

PSALM 68: 4-11

Sing to God, sing praises to her Name;
exalt her who rides upon the clouds;
HOLY is her Name, rejoice before her!
Mother of orphans and defender of widows,
is God in her holy habitation!
God settles the solitary in a home bringing prisoners into prosperity;
while the rebellious shall live in a wasteland.
God, when you marched before your people,
when you moved out through the wilderness,
the earth shook, even the heavens poured down,
at the presence of God, the One of Sinai,
at the presence of God, the God of Israel.
Rain in abundance, God, you showered abroad;
when your heritage grew weary you prepared rest.
Your creatures found a dwelling in her;
God, you provided in your goodness for the oppressed.
The AUTHOR OF LIFE gave the word;
the women who proclaim the good news are a great army.

SUNG DOXOLOGY

Glory to the Maker, Lover, and Keeper; as ago, in this breath, and will be ever. Amen, Amen.

READING OF THE NIGHT: Desert Mothers

Amma Theodora said, "Let us strive to enter by the narrow gate. Just as the trees, if they have not stood before the winter's storms cannot bear fruit, so it is with us; this present age is a storm and it is only through many trials and temptations that we can obtain an inheritance in the kingdom of heaven."

CLOSING POEM

Remember

(after Theo Dorgan's poem "The Angel of Days")

And what did you do on earth?

I descended daily into the hush – if only for a moment,
but sometimes for blessed hours at a time.

I followed the shimmering threads which lured me
into the night, full of wonder at all that was unfolding.

I opened myself wide to gratitude,
to the delight that there was anything at all,
much less pink-petaled peonies
and generous handfuls of red berries,
the incredible sweetness of things,
or the way dawn and dusk could reveal
my own new thresholds,

how a walk by the sea can change
everything,

and that I could be so well loved, and love in return,
that I could dance on earth's forest floor
and say "yes" to life from the belly of sorrow.

And what was the best of it?

I was saved by beauty again and again,
the golden glimmer of sunlight
across wet pavement revealing a luminous world,
and the stone ruins of churches and monasteries,
with their arches of ancient longing holding
ten thousand prayers, ten thousand paths to hope.

And what would you have changed?

Only perhaps to have worried less about what might come,
which never did

in exactly the way I imagined.

And to spend less time in front of screens,

offering more of myself to the elements of wind and rain and mud,
to roll with playful abandon in the wet grass, the way dogs do.

And what will you do now?
I will reach across the veil and whisper the word
“remember” to anyone who will listen.

CLOSING SONG

Blessing of the Elements

May the sacred earth embrace you.
May the sky help you fly.
May the water bless and refresh you.
May the fire of love every guide you.



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Psalm Translation: [Wilda C. Gafney](#), *A Woman's Lectionary for the Whole Church* © 2021 Church Publishing Incorporated, New York, NY 10016, (Year W) page 15.

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2

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Day Four: Morning

The Practice of Making the Way by Walking

OPENING PRAYER

As the poet Antonio Machado wrote, “the way is made by walking.” This morning we continue to journey by putting ourselves on the ancient paths of rest, peace, love, life, and beauty. We ask ourselves searching questions so that we might continue to be true to our deepest desires and allow those to carry us forward.

OPENING SONG

Remember the Path

Put yourselves on the ways of long ago,
Remember the path of rest.
Put yourselves on the ways of long ago,
Remember the path of rest.
This ancient path of rest, my friends,
The ancient path of rest.
Put yourselves on the ways of long ago,
Remember the path of rest.
2. Peace
3. Love
4. Life

FIRST READING: Howard Thurman

What is the end of our doings? Where are we trying to go? Where do we put the emphasis and where are our values focused? For what end do we make sacrifices? Where is my treasure and what do I love most in life? What do I hate most in life and to what am I true?

SUNG PSALM OPENING

O Grace open my lips, and my mouth will declare your praise. (Repeat)

PSALM 139:7-14

Where can I go from your spirit?
Or where from your presence can I flee?
If I ascend to the heavens, there you are;
if I recline in Sheol, see, it is you!
If I take up dawn’s wings
if I settle at the farthest reaches of the sea,
even there your hand shall lead me,

and your hand shall hold me fast.
If I say, "Surely darkness shall cover me,
and night will become light behind me,"
even darkness is not dark to you'
night is as daylight,
for dark is the same as light.
For it was you who crafted my inward parts;
you wove me together in my mother's womb.
I praise you, for I am awesomely and marvelously made.
Wonderous are your works;
that my soul knows full well.

SUNG DOXOLOGY

Glory to the Maker, Lover, and Keeper; as ago, in this breath, and will be ever. Amen, Amen.

SCRIPTURE READING: Matthew 2:13-15

When they had departed, behold, the angel of God appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Rise, take the child and his mother, flee to Egypt, and stay there until I tell you. Herod is going to search for the child to destroy him." Joseph rose and took the child and his mother by night and departed for Egypt. He stayed there until the death of Herod, that what the Lord had said through the prophet might be fulfilled, "Out of Egypt I called my son."

SILENT CONTEMPLATION

PRAYERS OF CONCERN

God of fertile darkness, forgive us for the harmful paths we have walked and fill us with the courage to step out into the unknown. As we seek new ways of being together in the face of climate collapse and social unrest, give us the humility to let the marginalized lead the way, and grow in us creative, communal responses.

Sung Response – O Pilgrim God, we make the way by walking.

Spirit of God, you are untamable, shepherding us on journeys through wild, beautiful, and unexpected terrain. Give us eyes to recognize your presence in hidden places. Teach us to embrace the messiness of a path guided by love. Grow our capacity to laugh and to wonder. May all who long for direction receive the assurance that you are already walking among us.

Sung Response – O Pilgrim God, we make the way by walking.

Christ who is our Way, guide our steps in paths of peace, love, and life. Ground us in you, our source, and nourish us for the journey with glimpses of your commonwealth coming on

earth as it is in heaven. When we are weary of walking, encourage us to rest in your presence. May we follow you in discerning the rhythms that provide for the flourishing of all Creation.

Sung Response – O Pilgrim God, we make the way by walking.

CLOSING SONG

Now I Walk in Beauty

Now I walk in beauty.
Beauty is before me,
beauty is behind me,
above and below me.
Above, below, within me.

CLOSING BLESSING

Journeying One,
you help us to navigate the path,
placing one foot in front of the other,
even when the way ahead is not visible.
We set aside our desire for maps, GPS, and guidebooks
and surrender to an inner knowing and direction
sparked by the deepest longings of our hearts.
We know the desire for new life we feel has been kindled by you.
May we surrender our need to steer the course
and let every step we take carry us into
greater intimacy with you.
Help us to see others as fellow pilgrims on the way
with their own fears and struggles.
Compel us to reach out a hand
in loving compassion and support
and may we recognize all those holy guides
who disrupt our intended paths
as sparking a new direction on our way.

SUNG AMEN



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Day Four: Evening

The Practice of Making the Way by Walking

OPENING PRAYER

As we journey into evening, we call upon St. Gobnait who was directed in a dream to leave her home and travel to the place of the nine white deer and establish a new community. We too hear calls that feel challenging and lean into Spirit's compass to guide our footsteps until we reach the place of our own resurrection.

OPENING SONG

Saint Gobnait

Refrain:

Is there a place for us,
where we no longer yearn to be always elsewhere?
Always elsewhere?
Where our work is simply to soften and wait,
attend to what's at hand.

SUNG PSALM OPENING

O Grace open my lips, and my mouth will declare your praise. (Repeat)

PSALM 80:1-7

Shepherd of Israel, pray, hearken,
you who lead the line of Rebekah like flock.
You, enthroned upon the cherubim, pray, shine forth.
Before Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasseh,
stir up your might and come to save us!
God restore us and let your face shine,
that we may be saved.
SOVEREIGN of heaven's vanguard,
how long will you fume at the prayers of your people?
You have fed them tears for bread,
and you have given them tears to drink thrice over.
You make us the scorn of our neighbors;
our enemies laugh among themselves.
God of heaven's vanguard, restore us and let your face shine,
that we may be saved.

SUNG DOXOLOGY

Glory to the Maker, Lover, and Keeper; as ago, in this breath, and will be ever. Amen, Amen.

READING OF THE NIGHT: Richard R. Niebuhr

Pilgrims are persons in motion – passing through territories not their own – seeking something we might call completion or perhaps the word clarity will do as well, a goal to which only the spirit's compass points the way.

CLOSING POEM

This is what it is like to yield:

to finally feel that place of tightness – your left shoulder,
the crick that has been in your neck for as long as you can remember,
the hard point between your eyes – soften, and all that is left is the
overwhelming desire to dance,

to stop resisting the endless and aching grief over a thousand
small losses, and the one great loss of your own deepest dreams,
to fall into that ocean of tears and
find yourself carried gently to shore,

to feel the soft and trembling belly of your aliveness
turn upward toward the wide sky
as a prayer of supplication
and an act of revelation,

to tumble down on a mossy meadow
blanketed with dandelions and clovers
and the golden evening sunlight
and know yourself at home,

to surrender the striving,
the grasping at what seems so important
in favor of what is
essential and true.

What would it mean to walk away from
all the "to do" lists
and commit to only one thing:
to *be*.

What would it feel like to yield your
own stubborn willfulness
which has brought you so far in
this world of achievement
and allow the things you could never have
planned for, to unfold?

I must end this poem now,
not with wise words for you to carry away
and ponder, but only this:
a reminder of that fierce and endless longing
for what is soft and supple beating in your own
beautiful heart.

CLOSING SONG

In the Silence

In the silence we hear music.
In the stillness we dance your prayer.
And our prayer comes alive
As we lose ourselves in the dance.



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Reading of the Night: Richard R. Niebuhr, "Pilgrims and Pioneers: Themes of Spiritual Pilgrimage," *Parabola Magazine*, August 1984, page 7.

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Day Five: Morning

The Practice of Being Uncomfortable and Embracing the Unknown

OPENING PRAYER

We gather this morning to remember how the pilgrimage we are on is not on behalf of upholding the status quo, but of disrupting our old patterns and habits in service of something new breaking through. We will inevitably encounter discomfort and unknowing along the way and ask the God of radical hospitality to support us in welcoming in the stranger, as St. Benedict wisely counselled.

OPENING SONG

Welcome in the Stranger

Welcome in the stranger through the door of your heart.

FIRST READING: Barbara Holmes

The human task is threefold. First, the human spirit must connect to the Eternal by turning toward God's immanence and ineffability with yearning. Second, each person must explore the inner reality of his or her humanity, facing unmet potential and catastrophic failure with unmitigated honesty and grace. Finally, each one of us must face the unlovable neighbor, the enemy outside of our embrace, and the shadow skulking in the recesses of our own hearts.

SUNG PSALM OPENING

O Justice open my lips, and my mouth will declare your praise. (Repeat)

PSALM 71:4-11

My God, rescue me, from the hand of the wicked,
from the clutch of the cruel and the ruthless.

For you are my hope, Sovereign, WORTHY ONE,
my trust, from my youth.

Upon you I have leaned from birth;
from my mother's belly, you cut me.

You will I praise for all time.

As a portent have I served to many,
yet you are my strong refuge.

My mouth is filled with your praise,
all the day, with your glory.

Do not cast me off in the time of old age;
when my strength is spent, do not forsake me.

For my enemies speak about me,
and those who watch my life take counsel together.
They say, "Pursue and seize them,
God has forsaken them,
for there is none to deliver."

SUNG DOXOLOGY

Glory to the Maker, Lover, and Keeper; as ago, in this breath, and will be ever. Amen, Amen.

SCRIPTURE READING: John 4:7-9a, 10

A woman of Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give me a drink." His disciples had gone into the town to buy food. The Samaritan woman said to him, "How can you, a Jew, ask me, a Samaritan woman, for a drink?" Jesus answered and said to her, "If you knew the gift of God and who is saying to you, 'Give me a drink,' you would have asked him and he would have given you living water."

SILENT CONTEMPLATION

PRAYERS OF CONCERN

God of Mystery, sometimes we can't see where we are or where we're going. It's as if we're driving at night in the pouring rain. Strengthen our faith at times when the road before us is barely visible, and we don't know the curves on the winding roads, the unexpected hills, or the dangerous side ditches ahead of us. Make the way clear, or simply give the courage and will to keep going, knowing that in all of this we are following you, who has never left us alone.

Sung Response – O Pilgrim God, you rest with us in mystery.

We are not meant to travel by ourselves, lone and lonely souls. Thank you for other pilgrims along the way, warm, strong hands to hold on our way to destinations unknown. It is you that we trust in, though you are cloaked in mystery. You walk beside us to catch us when we stumble, and when we fall down, you are there with gentle hands to pick us up and place us back on our paths.

Sung Response – O Pilgrim God, you rest with us in mystery.

Holy God, you *are* the way. We live and move and have our being in you. Help us remember this moving forward. Give us peace for our journey. When we meet the stranger, fallen and battered on the road, be the Source of Love in us, so like good Samaritans, we tend to the wounded, taking them to safety.

Sung Response – O Pilgrim God, you rest with us in mystery.

CLOSING SONG

Promise to the Saints

Follow the wind. Follow the wind.
Let go your oars.
Sail to the land promised to the saints. (4x)
It is the voyage that makes us strong
so from this port follow the wind.
Follow the wind.

CLOSING BLESSING

God of wild edges and new horizons,
we seek your presence in those moments
when we feel out of place and miss the comforts of home.
Sustain our journey in the ache of strangeness,
the quiver of anxiety, the fear of doubt,
and help us discover a deeper knowing in the midst of it all
that doesn't rely on us desperately clinging to our plans
but calls us to open to the discoveries
arriving on the doorstep within.
Help us hear the beating of our hearts
as a clarion call to hold the paradoxes of life:
communion and loss, beauty and suffering,
love and violence, as invitations into
a song of both lament and praise.
Let us be undone by the mystery
of it all, and then refashion us
into a wiser, humbler, and more compassionate wholeness.

SUNG AMEN



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First Reading: Barbara Holmes, *Joy Unspeakable: Contemplative Practice of the Black Church*, Augsburg Fortress Publishers, 2004, page 4.

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Day Five: Evening

The Practice of Being Uncomfortable and Embracing the Unknown

OPENING PRAYER

God of Holy Mystery, rest with us in the growing darkness of the sky as we learn to embrace what we do not know. Sometimes we feel like we are travelling through a thicket of thorns, longing for the beauty of the rose to bloom. Steady us in the midst of the rigor of the journey.

OPENING SONG

Maria Wanders through the Thorns

Maria wanders through the thorns

Kyrie Eleison

Maria wanders through the thorns
that for seven years no bloom has borne.

Jesus and Maria.

As with the Child she passes near

Kyrie Eleison

As with the Child she passes near
a red rose on the thorn appears.

Jesus and Maria.

SUNG PSALM OPENING

O Justice open my lips, and my mouth will declare your praise. (Repeat)

PSALM 130:5-8

I wait for the WOMB OF CREATION, my soul waits,
and in her word I hope.

My soul keeps watch for the Creator,
more than those who watch for the morning,
more than those who watch for the morning.

Israel, hope in the MOTHER OF CREATION!

For with the CREATOR OF ALL there is faithful love,
and with her is abundant redemption.

It is she who will redeem Israel
From all their iniquities.

SUNG DOXOLOGY

Glory to the Maker, Lover, and Keeper; as ago, in this breath, and will be ever. Amen, Amen.

READING OF THE NIGHT: Phil Cousineau

If your journey is indeed a pilgrimage, a soulful journey, it will be rigorous. Ancient wisdom suggests if you aren't trembling as you approach the sacred, it isn't the real thing. The sacred, in its various guises as holy ground, art, or knowledge, evokes emotion *and* commotion.

CLOSING POEM

Please can I have a God
(after Selima Hill)

not fossilized, hardened, stiff, unshaken,
not contained in creeds and testimonies,
judgments and stone tablets,
but in the wound breaking open.

Please can I have a God
who asks me to worship at the altar of mystery,
to lay aside certainty, and curl up
in the hollow of a great stone down by the river,
to hear the force of it rushing past.

Please can I have a God
with questions rather than answers,
who is not Rock or Fortress or Father,
but sashays, swerves, ripens, rages
at the rape of the earth.

Please can I have a God
whose voice is the sound of a girl, long silent from abuse,
now speaking her first word,
who is not sweetness or light, but the fierce utterance of
“no” in all the places where love has been extinguished.

Please can I have a God
the color of doubt, the shape of uncertainty,
who sees that within me dwells a multitude,
grief and joy, envy and generosity, rage and raucousness,
and anoints every last part.

Please can I have a God
who rolls her eyes with me at platitudes and pronouncements
and walks by my side in the early morning
across the wet field, together bare-footed and broken-hearted,
who is both mud and dew.

Please can I have a God
who is the vast indifference of forest and night sky,
who is both eclipse and radiance, silence and scream,
who is everything slow and dark and moist,
who is not measured, controlled, but ecstatic and dancing.

Please can I have a God
who is not the flame, but the flickering,
not bread, but the chewing and swallowing,
not Lover and Beloved, but the making love,
not the dog, but the joyful exuberance when I come home.

CLOSING SONG

I Am Here

I am here waiting for you.
I am here listening for you.
I am here praying for you.
I am here hoping for you.
I am here singing for you.



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Day Six: Morning

The Practice of Beginning Again

OPENING PRAYER

We awaken to a new day ready to begin again. If we have lost focus or presence on the journey, we embrace the invitation to recommit. The God of Newness calls us to remember every moment is an opportunity to meet the sacred.

OPENING SONG

Behold I Make All Things New

Refrain:

Behold, I make all things new.

Behold, I make all things new.

Behold, I make all things new.

Let there be light, let there be light.

FIRST READING: Howard Thurman

Every moment is a divine encounter, every facet is an exposure to the boundless energies by which life is sustained and our spirits made whole. Thus we live joyfully into life and its restraints.

SUNG PSALM OPENING

O Wisdom open my lips, and my mouth will declare your praise. (Repeat)

PSALM 103:1-8, 13-16

Bless the FOUNT OF WISDOM, O my soul,
and all that is within me, bless her Name.

Bless the FOUNT OF WISDOM, O my soul,
and forget not all her benefits.

She forgives all your sins

and heals all your infirmities;

She redeems your life from the grave
and crowns you with mercy and lovingkindness;

She satisfies you with good things,
and your youth is renewed like an eagle's.

SHE WHO IS WISDOM executes righteousness
and judgment for all who are oppressed.

She made her ways known to Miriam and Moses

and her works to the children of Israel.
WISDOM'S womb is full of love and faithfulness,
slow to anger and overflowing with faithful love.
As a mother's love for her children flows from her womb,
so too does WISDOM'S love for those who revere her flow from her womb.
For she herself knows whereof we are made;
She remembers that we are but dust.
Our days are like the grass;
we flourish like a flower of the field;
When the wind goes over it, it is gone,
and its place shall know it no more.

SUNG DOXOLOGY

Glory to the Maker, Lover, and Keeper; as ago, in this breath, and will be ever. Amen, Amen.

SCRIPTURE READING: Luke 15:23-24

(The father) was calling to the servants, 'Quick. Bring a clean set of clothes and dress him. Put the family ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Then get a prize-winning heifer and roast it. We're going to feast! We're going to have a wonderful time! My son is here—given up for dead and now alive! Given up for lost and now found!' And they began to have a wonderful time.

SILENT CONTEMPLATION

PRAYERS OF CONCERN

Persistent Mother, release us from the shame, fear, and disappointment that so often accompany the task of beginning again. Tune our hearts to the joy you experience welcoming us in each moment. When we feel heavy with the grief and tenderness of starting fresh, hold us in your embrace and dance us into a community of curious beginners.

Sung Response – O Pilgrim God, renew us on our journey.

God who makes all things new, turn our faces to the light of your freedom, justice, and rebirth breaking through and taking form in us. Plant in us seeds of trust in your presence that grow into the fruit of radical courage. Inhabit our imaginations. Teach us to delight in inventive possibility. Open our ears to listen to your voice of creativity speaking in each person we encounter.

Sung Response – O Pilgrim God, renew us on our journey.

Ever-Creating God, surround us with your renewing love. Gather us into the story of your persistent grace. Guide us with cloud and flame; sustain us with manna and living water.

Midwife us through our fears, birthing us into new relationship. Sit with us in our questions, and strengthen our next steps with the assurance that you begin again with us.

Sung Response – O Pilgrim God, renew us on our journey.

CLOSING SONG

Breathe In

Refrain:

Hands open to the day.
Breathe in. Breathe out.
Hands joined as if to pray.
Breathe in. Breathe out.

CLOSING BLESSING

Spirit of the fresh morning air,
allow us to see all the places where newness
is being born into the world,
the bud of a flower just breaking open its petals,
the turning of the sea's tides,
a gaze into the eyes of another and seeing their beauty,
the river stone being rubbed smooth.
Help us to remember that we are always being called
to begin again, like the Prodigal One returning home
to a loving parent's embrace, hold our shame or heartache
at wandering so far from you, reveal to us the feast
you prepare where tables are piled high with the sweetest of fruits.

SUNG AMEN



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Opening Song: [Behold I Make All Things New](#) by [Alana Levandoski](#) from the album [Monk in the World: Songs for Contemplative Living](#)

First Reading: Howard Thurman, *Meditations from the Heart*, Beacon Press, 1999. page 106.

Sung Psalm Opening and Doxology: [Richard Bruxvoort Colligan](#) from the album [Monk in the World: Songs for Contemplative Living](#)

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Day Six: Evening

The Practice of Beginning Again

OPENING PRAYER

This evening we gather before the Spirit of Wonder and Revelation, opening the eyes and ears of our hearts to see and hear what new voice is emerging. We hear the reminder of the prophet Isaiah that Godde is always making something new and we had no idea it was happening. We pray to leave our cynicism behind and step into dreamtime with renewed hope.

OPENING SONG

Now I Am Revealing

Now I am revealing new things to you, revealing new things to you.
Now I am revealing new things to you, revealing new things to you.

Things hidden and unknown to you, created just now, this very moment.
Things hidden and unknown to you, created just now, this very moment.

SUNG PSALM OPENING

O Wisdom open my lips, and my mouth will declare your praise. (Repeat)

PSALM 67:1-7

May God be merciful to us and bless us,
show us the light of her countenance and come to us.
Let your ways be known upon earth,
your saving health among all nations.
Let the peoples praise you, O God;
let the peoples praise you.
Let the nations be glad and sing for joy,
for you judge the peoples with equity
and guide all the nations upon earth.
Let the peoples praise you, O God;
let all the people praise you.
The earth has brought forth her increase;
may God, our own God, give us her blessing.
May God give us her blessing,
and may all the ends of the earth stand in awe of her.

SUNG DOXOLOGY

Glory to the Maker, Lover, and Keeper; as ago, in this breath, and will be ever. Amen, Amen.

READING OF THE NIGHT: Desert Fathers

Abba Moses asked Abba Silvanus, "Can a man lay a new foundation every day?" The old man said, "If he works hard he can lay a new foundation at every moment."

Abba Poemen said about Abba Pior that every single day he made a fresh beginning.

CLOSING POEM

How to Feel the Sap Rising

Walk as slowly as possible,
all the while imagining
yourself moving through
pools of honey and dancing with
snails, turtles, and caterpillars.

Turn your body in a clockwise direction
to inspire your dreams to flow upward.

Imagine the trees are your own
wise ancestors offering their emerald
leaves to you as a sacred text.

Lay yourself down across earth
and stones. Feel the vibration of
dirt and moss, sparking a tiny
(or tremendous)
revolution in your heart
with their own great longing.

Close your eyes and forget this
border of skin. Imagine the
breeze blowing through your hair
is the breath of the forest and
your own breath joined, rising and
falling in ancient rhythms.

Open your eyes again and see it
is true, that there is no "me" and "tree"
but only One great pulsing of life,
one sap which nourishes and
enlivens all, one great nectar
bestowing trust and wonder.

Open your eyes and see that there
are no more words like beautiful,
and ugly, good and bad,
but only the shimmering presence of your
own attention to life.

Only one great miracle unfolding and
only one sacred word which is
yes.

CLOSING SONG

Viriditas

Let my soul be greening with the living light.
Let my heart awaken morning from the night.
Let the Spirit guide me to presence true and whole.
Viriditas, viriditas, the greening of my soul.



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Reading of the Night: *Saying of the Desert Fathers*, edited by Benedicta Ward, Liturgical Press, 1984. *Silvanus* 11.

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Day Seven: Morning

The Practice of Coming Home

OPENING PRAYER

The Indian poet Tagore wrote that it is now time to sit in silence alone with the Holy One and “Sing / a re-dedication of my life.” As this part of our pilgrimage journey comes to a close we pause to honor the gifts received to share with our community as we return home again. We dedicate ourselves again to being a blessing for others.

OPENING SONG

Blessing to the World

You are the heart. You are the hands.
You are the voice of Spirit on Earth.
And who you are and all you do
Is a blessing to the world.

We are the heart, we are the hands.
We are the voice of Spirit on Earth.
And who we are, and all we do
Is a blessing to the world.
We’re a blessing to the world.
We’re a blessing to the world.

We are the heart, we are the hands.

FIRST READING: Kaitlin Curtice

I did not know that I have both a physical and a spiritual place to return to, a place that was created for me inside the breath of Mystery, just as who you are was created uniquely inside the breath of Mystery. Returning home, whether it’s a physical home or spiritual home, is holy work.

SUNG PSALM OPENING

O Beauty open my lips, and my mouth will declare your praise. (Repeat)

PSALM 36:5-10

HOLY ONE, throughout the very heavens is your faithful love,
Your faithfulness beyond the clouds.
Your righteousness is like the eternal mountains,
your judgements are like the mighty deep;
you save humankind and animalkind alike, FAITHFUL ONE.

How precious is your faithful love, O God!
All the woman-born take shelter in the shadow of your wings.
They feast on the abundance of your house,
and you give them drink from the river of your delights.
For with you is the fountain of life;
in your light we see light.
Extend your faithful love to those who know you,
and your justice to the upright of heart!

SUNG DOXOLOGY

Glory to the Maker, Lover, and Keeper; as ago, in this breath, and will be ever. Amen, Amen.

SCRIPTURE READING: Luke 24:28-32

They came to the edge of the village where they were headed. He acted as if he were going on but they pressed him: “Stay and have supper with us. It’s nearly evening; the day is done.” So he went in with them. And here is what happened: He sat down at the table with them. Taking the bread, he blessed and broke and gave it to them. At that moment, open-eyed, wide-eyed, they recognized him. And then he disappeared. Back and forth they talked. “Didn’t we feel on fire as he conversed with us on the road, as he opened up the Scriptures for us?”

SILENT CONTEMPLATION

PRAYERS OF CONCERN

Generous God, we praise you. You have brought us to a meeting place full of your glory. Because we traveled lightly, our hands were open to carry the gifts we desire to share with others. You have given us bread and wine. May we enjoy communion with whosoever will join us at the table of plenty. May we give the fresh water you quenched our thirst with in the desert to those who crawl to us parched and weak. May we offer the milk and honey you gave us in abundance to those in need of sweetness in their lives. Thank you for all these gifts, and for open hearts to freely give them.

Sung Response – O Pilgrim God, pour out through us your blessing.

God of Pilgrims, we are so blessed, yet so often we believe “enough” is less than what we have. There are times that we count our blessings, but don't appreciate the math. Give us attitudes of gratitude, for without it, we may cling to what we have, imprisoning ourselves, chained to worldly things. Sometimes it’s tempting to squander even the spiritual gifts you have given us, treasures for the spirit we mistakenly believe we’ve earned. Selfishness is not your way. We have returned from our journey with much. Help us to pour into the lives of those who are needy.

Sung Response – O Pilgrim God, pour out through us your blessing.

Gracious One, there is so much trouble in the world. Soon you will lead us away from this tent of meeting filled with your grace, and we will travel to unknown places once more. For now, allow us to enjoy sharing all that you gave us and taught us along the way. Beyond giving earthly sustenance, make us examples of people who follow you, models of faith, hope, love, and justice. May people see your light shine brightly in us, and as they stumble in the dark, help us to find their flailing hands, and holding fast to them lead these new travelers to you.

Sung Response – O Pilgrim God, pour out through us your blessing.

CLOSING SONG

Beauty

Let the beauty you love be what you do.
Let the beauty you love be what you do.

Beauty, beauty. Beauty, beauty.
Beauty, beauty. Beauty, beauty.

CLOSING BLESSING

Godde of Homecomings,
our lives are a pilgrimage journey
seeking the discovery of home in the world.
We travel, not in straight lines,
but in circles and spirals, revisiting old patterns
and ways of being that need healing,
trusting in life's unfinished nature,
but also our deep desires of the heart calling us
to re-orient ourselves again and again.
Magnify our vision
so that each journey we make leads
to expanded growth and wisdom.
Help us to continue to dive into
the refreshing river of life,
allowing the current to carry us closer to you.
Carve out in us a space for both grief and joy,
so we may meet life with eyes and heart wide open.
Remind us of the ancient pilgrims we travel with,
seeking an experience of you beyond boundaries
drawing us closer to our own wild edges.
Those moments when we do arrive home,
give us the deep rest we desire,

where we remember your presence in all that we do.

SUNG AMEN



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First Reading: Kaitlin Curtice, *Native: Identity, Belonging, and Rediscovering God*, Brazos Press, 2020. page 15.

Sung Psalm Opening and Doxology: [Richard Bruxvoort Colligan](#) from the album [Monk in the World: Songs for Contemplative Living](#)

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Day Seven: Evening

The Practice of Coming Home

OPENING PRAYER

The poet R.S. Thomas wrote that the point of our journeys were not to arrive somewhere, but to “return home / laden with pollen you shall work up / into honey.” As we welcome the evening of our final day we rest into the sweetness of all that has come to us in this pilgrimage, knowing the gifts will continue to reveal themselves over time.

OPENING SONG

The World is My Monastery

Ooh ... The world is my home
Ooh ... The world is my heart
Ooh ... The world is my monastery
My monastery

SUNG PSALM OPENING

O Beauty open my lips, and my mouth will declare your praise. (Repeat)

PSALM 31:1-5

In you, WOMB OF LIFE, I take refuge;
let me not ever be put to shame;
in your righteousness rescue me.
Incline your ear to me;
quickly deliver me.
Be for me a rock of refuge,
a stronghold to save me.
For you are my rock and my stronghold;
for you are my refuge.
Into your hand I commit my spirit;
You have redeemed me, ARK OF SAFETY, God of truth.

SUNG DOXOLOGY

Glory to the Maker, Lover, and Keeper; as ago, in this breath, and will be ever. Amen, Amen.

READING OF THE NIGHT: Judith Smith

My final question, “How will I know when I have reached the destination?” brings me full circle, and I face the Mystery again. Perhaps the truth is that we never arrive, not because

the journey is too long and too difficult but because we have been there all along. I am coming to believe that there is no final destination except to continue to be on the journey and to know that every place along the way is a holy place because God is present. I believe that God is calling us to stand on our own ground and know that it is holy and let our roots grow deep. And yet at the same time, the journey goes on. It is a paradox, I know, but perhaps we are traveling most faithfully when we know ourselves to be most at home.

CLOSING POEM

How to Be a Pilgrim

Air travel is like
ancient pilgrims walking on their
knees, flight delays and narrow seats
offer their own kind of penance.

You jettison excess baggage,
leaving behind the heavy makeup case,
knowing the rain will
wash you free of artifice.

Books you wanted to carry left too,
no more outside words needed,
then go old beliefs which keep
you taut and twisted inside.

Blistered feet stumble over rocky
fields covered with wildflowers and you
realize this is your life,
full of sharp stones and color.

Red-breasted robins call forth
the song already inside,
a hundred griefs break open under
dark clouds and downpour.

Rise and fall of elation and exhaustion,
the tides a calendar of unfolding,
a bright star rises and you remember
a loved one waiting miles away.

A new hunger is kindled by the sight of
cows nursing calves in a field,
spying a spotted pony, you forget
the weight and seriousness of things.

Salmon swim across the Atlantic,
up the River Corrib's rapids to the
wide lake, and you wonder if you have
also been called here for death and birth.

This is why we journey:
to retrieve our lost intimacy with the world,
every creature a herald of poems
that sleep in streams and stones.

"Missing you" scrawled on a postcard sent home,
but you don't follow with
"wish you were here."
This is a voyage best made alone.

CLOSING SONG

Following the River Home

Refrain:

Following the river home, I'm following the river home.
Following the river home, we're following the river home.
Following the river home. Following the river home.



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Reading of the Night: Judith E. Smith, from "This Ground is Holy Ground" in *Weavings Journal*

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Closing Song: [Following the River Home](#) by [Lorraine Bayes](#) from the album [Earth, Our Original Monastery: Singing Our Way to the Sacred](#)

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