



DAY 1: MORNING

Silence and Solitude

OPENING PRAYER

We gather this morning to create a space at this threshold moment to listen for another voice to be heard. May inner silence and solitude be our companions as we move into a world of noise and stimulation.

OPENING SONG: Breathe In

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

FIRST READING: Howard Thurman

I abandon all that I think I am,
All that I hope to be,
All that I believe I possess.
I let go of the past,
I withdraw my grasping hand from the future,
And in the great silence of this moment,
I alertly rest my soul.

SUNG PSALM OPENING

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

PSALM 34

How exactly do I do this?
By opening my heart in gratitude and praise
for all the gifts of life.
By focusing on the astounding intricacy of the world.
By attending to the still small voices of healing and renewal

which save me in times of trouble.
And by loving life and honoring that gift,
speaking truth, doing good, seeking peace.
When I serve the highest I know
I serve whatever God there is.
The joy of this, no matter what my troubles, will keep me whole.

SUNG DOXOLOGY

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

SECOND READING: The Gospel According to Mark 6:31–33 (NRSV)

He said to them, “Come away to a deserted place all by yourselves and rest a while.” For many were coming and going, and they had no leisure even to eat. And they went away in the boat to a deserted place by themselves. Now many saw them going and recognized them, and they hurried there on foot from all the towns and arrived ahead of them.

SILENT CONTEMPLATION

PRAYERS OF CONCERN

We offer prayers now for all that is on our hearts.

Nurturing God, amid the busyness of our lives, we long for spaciousness. Gift us with moments to stop, still and open to that which is before us. Draw our attention to simple things, an ant scurrying on the ground, a leaf blowing in the wind. In our gazing, may we discover wonder and the joy of profound and life-giving inner peace.

Sung Response - O God of Love, nourish us in silence. (Repeat)

Whispering God, amid the background noise of our lives, we struggle to hear your still, small voice. In frustration, we cry out, pleading with you to catch our attention. But the more we plead, the quieter you seem. Release us from our efforts. Give us patience to rest in silence. Then we will incline our hearts towards you and trust the whispers of our souls as your self-revelation.

Sung Response - O God of Love, nourish us in silence. (Repeat)

Loving God, amid the many demands of our lives, we yearn to quiet our restless minds. Our thoughts wander distractedly, flitting from one thing to another, exhausting us with their constant chatter. Yet, you call us to come away to a solitary place and rest in you. May we follow your call and open to the gift of silence that holds and heals, soothes and sustains.

Sung Response - O God of Love, nourish us in silence. (Repeat)

Please add the prayers you are longing to express.

Sung Response - O God of Love, nourish us in silence. (Repeat)

CLOSING SONG: Deep Peace

Deep peace of the rolling waves to you.

Deep peace of the quiet earth.

Deep peace of the blowing air to you.

Deep peace of the silent stars.

Let peace, let peace, let peace fill your soul.

May peace, may peace, may peace keep you whole.

CLOSING BLESSING

Holy Source of Silence,

beneath the clatter and din of the everyday
you offer your mysteries to our hearts.

You call us to pause,

to slow down and listen to the true longing
planted in each of us by you, a seed of holy desire.

Support us in letting go of the inner and outer noise.

Open wide in us a sacred cave for stillness
where we can attune to your presence.

Enliven us with the gift of your sweet music
and allow us to encounter your holy presence
flaming in each of our hearts.

Help us to catch a note of your song
in the wind or in the voice of another,
in times of sadness, and in the rush of our lives.

In a world so filled with distraction,
we listen for your whispers
which call us to another way of being.

and ask for the courage to respond to all
we discover in this tabernacle of silence.

SUNG AMEN



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

Opening Song: [Breathe In](#) by [Peter Mayer](#) from the album [Monk in the World: Songs for Contemplative Living](#)

First Reading: Howard Thurman, *Deep is the Hunger*. (Richmond, IN: Friends United Press, 1978), pg. 202

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

Psalm 34: Interpretation by [Rev. Christine Robinson](#)

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Prayers of Concern: Written by Valerie Allen

Sung Response: By [Betsey Beckman](#). Arranged and performed by [Alexa Sunshine Rose](#) and [Simon de Voil](#)

Closing Song: [Deep Peace](#) by [Sara Thomsen](#) from the album [The Soul's Slow Ripening: Songs for Celtic Seekers](#)

Closing Blessing: Written by [Christine Valters Paintner](#)

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DAY 1: EVENING

Silence and Solitude

OPENING PRAYER

Let us reflect on how we embraced silence today. When were the moments we sought out stillness and let it bathe us with its beauty? How can I commit again to deep peace?

OPENING 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.

SUNG PSALM OPENING

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

PSALM 46

God is our refuge and our strength
a haven in times of trouble.
Therefore we can be calm though the earth shakes,
though the nations change, and though the sea rises.
Our trust is in the Holy One
who is making the heavens in the earth
Who is with us in the midst of the city
and in our own hearts.

See the miracles that are a part of our lives!
and the longings for peace and justice in our hearts
and the way we can make our lives abundant
in nearly any circumstance.
God whispers to us, *"Be still and know that I am God.
I am with you to the ends of the universe,
and through all time"*

SUNG DOXOLOGY

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

READING OF THE NIGHT: Thomas Merton

When your tongue is silent, you can rest in the silence of the forest. When your imagination is silent, the forest speaks to you, tells you of its unreality and of the Reality of God. But when your mind is silent, then the forest becomes magnificently real and blazes transparently with the Reality of God.

SILENT CONTEMPLATION

CLOSING POEM: Listen

I wake to a rising of robin voices,
their tiny chests puffed like ripe persimmons.
Acres of clouds strum across the day-blue sky,
wind breathes its endless score over heathered hills
and the sea beyond my window churns.

Somewhere a hazelnut drops rustling to the ground.
Peony peels herself open in a slow yawn
to reveal a multitude of pleasures.
Fox darts between hedgerows, breaking her silent reverie,
orange fur brushing against golden gorse profusion.

Beneath sirens and the perpetual groan of cars,
the march of trains and planes propelled by timetables,
beneath the endless clatter of your own mind, you can,
for a moment, hear the asparagus heaving headlong into spring.
My labor is to love this secret symphony.

You curl yourself around me at night,
song of your breath stuns me into the sweetest sleep.
And the blue glass vase sits on the table beside me,
holding roses you bought because they smelled like an aria.
When this is over, all I want to say is that I heard the music
of the very last petal

drop.

CLOSING SONG: Be Still (Psalm 46)

Be still and know that I am God
Be still and know that I am
Be still and know that
Be still and know
Be still and
Be still
Be



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

Psalm 46: Interpretation by [Rev. Christine Robinson](#)

Reading of the Night: Thomas Merton, *The Sign of Jonas*. (Orlando, FL: Harcourt, 1981), pg. 343

Closing Poem: "Listen" by [Christine Valters Paintner](#). Excerpted from [Dreaming of Stones](#). (Paraclete Press, 2019), pg. 90

Closing Song: [Be Still \(Psalm 46\)](#) by [Simon de Voil](#) from the album [The Soul's Slow Ripening: Songs for Celtic Seekers](#)

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DAY 2: MORNING

Hospitality

OPENING PRAYER

Let us begin this day by committing to radical acts of hospitality and welcoming the stranger both without and within. As St. Benedict writes in his Rule: "All guests who present themselves are to be welcomed as Christ, for him himself will say: I was a stranger and you welcomed me." (*Rule of St. Benedict 53:1*)

OPENING SONG: Blessing the Breath of God

May the breath of God blow through your being.
May her Spirit breathe the promise of dawn.
May the breath of God stir a new story!
Hope in the Spirit, O breath of God.

FIRST READING: John Chryssavgis

If God is right there in the midst of our struggle, then our aim is to stay there. We are to remain in the cell, to stay on the road, not to forego the journey or forget the darkness. It is all too easy for us to overlook the importance of struggle, preferring instead to secure peace and rest, or presuming to reach the stage of love prematurely. It is always easier to allow things to pass by, to go on without examination and effort. Yet, struggling means living. It is a way of fully living life and not merely observing it. It takes much time and a great effort to unite the disparate, disjointed, and divided parts of the self into an integrated whole.

SUNG PSALM OPENING

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

PSALM 56

Have mercy on me, O God,
I am hounded by inner voices—
Anger, shame, anxiety, disappointment, untoward pride.
All day long, they assault and oppress me.

When they scatter me, I will put my trust in you.
Your Oneness brings me back to oneness.
In God I trust and will not be afraid,
for what can mere voices do to me?

All day long, they work against me.
They band together and lie in wait.
“My people”, some call them.
I am persecuted by my people.

You have noted my misery,
put my tears in your bottle.
Are they not recorded in your book?
Whenever I call on you, you will scatter “my people”.
Bring me to centeredness in myself and in You
I am bound by the vow I made to You, O God,
I am grateful and will live my life in gratitude.
For you have rescued my soul from dissipation
and my feet from stumbling.
Thank you.

SUNG DOXOLOGY

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

SECOND READING: Genesis 18:1–8 (NRSV)

God appeared to Abraham by the oaks of Mamre, as he sat at the entrance of his tent in the heat of the day. He looked up and saw three men standing near him. When he saw them, he ran from the tent entrance to meet them, and bowed down to the ground. He said, “My lord, if I find favour with you, do not pass by your servant. Let a little water be brought, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree. Let me bring a little bread, that you may refresh yourselves, and after that you may pass on—since you have come to your servant.” So they said, “Do as you have said.” And Abraham hastened into the tent to Sarah, and said, “Make ready quickly three measures of choice flour, knead it, and make cakes.” Abraham ran to the herd, and took a calf, tender and good, and gave it to the servant, who hastened to prepare it. Then he took curds and milk and the calf that he had prepared, and set it before them; and he stood by them under the tree while they ate.

SILENT CONTEMPLATION

PRAYERS OF CONCERN

We offer prayers now for all that is on our hearts.

(We place our hands on our hearts) Holy One, you planted your image deep in our hearts. You gaze upon our divine beauty with eyes of love. But despite this holding, voices rise up within us causing us to question our worth and doubt our desirability. Open our hearts to practice inner hospitality and to welcome the wonder of who we are, your beloved.

Sung Response - O God of Love, extend through us your welcome. (Repeat)

(We reach our hands out in front of us) Welcoming One, you set a place at your table for the outcast and stranger. Create a space within us and fill it with compassion for those in our communities who are marginalised or excluded. Open our ears to listen to their experiences and guide our actions as together we set a table at which everyone may feast.

Sung Response - O God of Love, extend through us your welcome. (Repeat)

(We reach our hands out to the side) Encircling One, you envelop all peoples in love and desire for us peace and wholeness. Hear our cries for the men, women and children whose reality is different, for those fleeing their countries and homes in search of safety. Yet even in our powerlessness, we turn to you and trust your call to do justice and love kindness. Open our imaginations as we seek ways to welcome with love the refugee, asylum seeker, and those who have experienced violence. May our hospitality be grounded in a mutual sharing of gifts and wisdom.

Sung Response - O God of Love, extend through us your welcome. (Repeat)

Please add the prayers you are longing to express.

Sung Response - O God of Love, extend through us your welcome. (Repeat)

CLOSING SONG: Welcome in the Stranger (Words inspired by St. Benedict)

Welcome in the stranger through the door of your heart.

CLOSING BLESSING

Holy Presence of God,
you shimmer in every stranger I encounter
whether in the world or in my heart.
When you came in human form
you sat at table with all those who walked the edges
of life and knew their presence as sacred.
Create in me a space to welcome in
all that is hard and disorienting,
those moments when I feel lost, angry,
heartbroken, overwhelmed, ashamed,
joyful, grieving, or in love with life.
Help me to honor the guests who arrive at the door,
to usher in the grace that newness offers
and find Christ's compassionate presence there.
May your infinite compassion grow in me
the way sunlight spills across a field,
and include everyone in that loving embrace.

SUNG AMEN



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Opening Song: [Blessing the Breath of God](#) by [Denise Pyles](#). Sung by Laura and David Ash from the album [Monk in the World: Song for Contemplative Living](#)

First Reading: John Chryssavgis, *In the Heart of the Desert*. (Bloomington, IN: World Wisdom, Inc., 2008), pg. 104

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

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Closing Song: [Welcome in the Stranger](#) (Words inspired by St. Benedict) by [Richard Bruxvoort Colligan](#) from the album [Singing with Monks and Mystics](#)

Closing Blessing: Written by [Christine Valters Paintner](#)

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DAY 2: EVENING

Hospitality

OPENING PRAYER

As we come to the end of this day, let us reflect on those moments when we encountered strangeness today. When did we feel most disoriented, most out of our element? Where did we meet the face of the Holy One in these moments? What longing is still knocking on the door of our hearts?

OPENING SONG: Listen to My Sighing

Listen to my sighing. Holy One, hear my cry.

In the morning hear my voice with the sunrise.

Wait and hope. . .

We wait and hope.

SUNG PSALM OPENING

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

PSALM 122

I was glad when they said to me,
Let us go to a sacred place
A place where the divine is
to give thanks.

Though I know
That God is everywhere, I go gladly.

I pray for peace, here and in all the places of earth.
Peace in Jerusalem, peace in Baghdad,
peace in Albuquerque.
Peace and Justice. Peace for my friends,

peace for my adversaries.
I seek what is good for all for the sake of Peace.

SUNG DOXOLOGY

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

READING OF THE NIGHT: Nicholas Black Elk

Then I was standing on the highest mountain of them all, and round about beneath me was the whole hoop of the world. And while I stood there I saw more than I can tell and I understood more than I saw; for I was seeing in a sacred manner the shapes of all things in the spirit, and the shape of all shapes as they must live together like one being. And I saw that the sacred hoop of my people was one of many hoops that made one circle, wide as daylight and as starlight, and in the center grew one mighty flowering tree to shelter all the children of one mother and one father. And I saw that it was holy.

SILENT CONTEMPLATION

CLOSING POEM: St. Kevin Holds Open His Hand

Imagine being like Kevin.
Your grasping fist softens,
fingers uncurl and
palms open, rest upward,
and the blackbird
weaves twigs and straw and bits of string
in the bowl of your hand,
you feel the delicate weight of
speckled blue orbs descend,
and her feathered warmth
settling in.

How many days can you stay,
open,
waiting
for the shell
to fissure and crack,
awaiting the slow emergence
of tiny gaping mouths

and slick wings
that need time to strengthen?

Are you willing to wait and watch?

Not to withdraw your
affections too soon?

Can you fall in love with the
exquisite ache in your arms
knowing the hatching it holds?

Can you stay not knowing
how broad those wings will
become, or how they will fly
awkwardly at first,
then soar above you

until you have become the sky
and all that remains is
your tiny shadow
swooping across the earth.

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. . .



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Opening Song: [Listen to My Sighing](#) by [Richard Bruxvoort Colligan](#) from the album [Monk in the World: Songs for Contemplative Living](#)

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

Psalm 122: Interpretation by [Rev. Christine Robinson](#)

Reading of the Night: Nicholas Black Elk, *Black Elk Speaks*. (University of Nebraska Press, 2014), pg. 26

Closing Poem: “St. Kevin Holds Open His Hand” by [Christine Valters Paintner](#). Excerpted from [*The Wisdom of Wild Grace*](#). (Paraclete Press, 2020), pg. 68

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

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DAY 3: MORNING

Community

OPENING PRAYER

We gather this morning to commit ourselves to cultivating community by finding kindred spirits along the path and welcoming in the cloud of witnesses as sources of support and wisdom. As Sister Thea Bowman reminds us, "Remember who you are and whose you are."
We belong to one another.

OPENING SONG: Archangel Invocation

Refrain:

Come Michael.
Come Gabriel.
Come Raphael.
Come Uriel.

1. Be by my side, there's a place for you here.
Be by my side, there's a place for you here.

Refrain:

2. Help me to heal and share light in my world.
Help me to heal and share light in my world.

Refrain:

3. Rest in my eyes and my ears and my touch.
Rest in my eyes and my ears and my touch.

Refrain:

4. Compassion and wonder and healing and grace.
Compassion and wonder and healing and grace.
(Repeat)

Refrain:

FIRST READING: Edward Sellner

To be a monk today or someone seeking to incorporate monastic values into his or her own life presumes being a part of a community of friends, people with whom a person can share the counsels of the heart and speak a language of the heart to one another.

SUNG PSALM OPENING

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

PSALM 103

God forgives our sins and failings
heals our fears and anxieties
gives meaning to life and death
is our love.

In God we are satisfied with good things
renewed in vigor
reminded of righteous ways.

God hates all oppression
God is compassion

slow to anger and swift to forgive

Loving us like a good parent—remembering that we are
like flowers in the field, that bloom in their time,
and fade away.

God's goodness lives in us, and in our children
From once-upon-a-time to forever and ever.

Bless God, you holy angels

Bless God, you wise ones

Bless God, all you who do God's work,

Bless God, O my soul.

SUNG DOXOLOGY

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

SECOND READING: Nehemiah 1:8–9 (NRSV)

Remember the word that you commanded your servant Moses, 'If you are unfaithful, I will scatter you among the peoples; but if you return to me and keep my commandments and do them, though your outcasts are under the farthest skies, I will gather them from there and bring them to the place at which I have chosen to establish my name.'

SILENT CONTEMPLATION

PRAYERS OF CONCERN

We offer prayers now for all that is on our hearts.

God of the ancient ones, we thank you for the witness of those down the centuries who have lived together in monasteries and communities sharing a rule of life. May we discover a rhythm for our lives that nourishes and sustains. Bless us with others to support us in our living. Gift us with relationships in which trust deepens and reveal to us the joy of deep speaking to deep.

Sung Response - O God of Love, reveal your face in friendship. (Repeat)

God of the yearning ones, we pray for those who long to belong but who struggle to build meaningful and nurturing friendships. Soothe their loneliness and pain with the healing caress of your love. Increase our sensitivity to others and create a space in our hearts for those we find hard to love. As you embrace us in all our diversity, may our relationships mirror your compassion and acceptance.

Sung Response - O God of Love, reveal your face in friendship. (Repeat)

God of the vulnerable ones, we share a common home with species and creatures of every imaginable size, shape and colour. Yet so many are endangered by our human greed and exploitation. We cry out in anguish to you. When will we learn that all of life is an interdependent community? Show us again how to live well together. Then we will sing your praise and delight in life's flourishing.

Sung Response - O God of Love, reveal your face in friendship. (Repeat)

Please add the prayers you are longing to express.

Sung Response - O God of Love, reveal your face in friendship. (Repeat)

CLOSING SONG: Divine

Refrain:

My body and your body are one in divine.
My body and your body are one in divine.
My body and your body are one in divine.
So when we come together let us tap in to love.

CLOSING BLESSING

God of friendship

I come to know your love and care
through the embodied presence of others.
Weave me together with kindred spirits,
knit me more closely with friends of the soul,
cultivate in me a kinship with humanity
so that I recognize my struggles and joys in others.
In my loneliness reveal to me this communion
and may I be a solace to others who ache for connection.
Transform me through conversation and loving presence.
Help me to see how I am part of a great circle
of pilgrims, witnesses, ancestors, and mystics
who guide me to true connection with You.
Gather me into your great wide heart,
so I might discover I am never separate
but always held in love.

SUNG AMEN



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Opening Song: [Archangel Invocation](#) by [Simon de Voil](#) from the album [Monk in the World: Songs for Contemplative Living](#)

First Reading: Edward Sellner, *Finding the Monk Within: Great Monastic Values for Today*. (Ambassador Books, Inc., 2008), Kindle Edition

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

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DAY 3: EVENING

Community

OPENING PRAYER

Let us reflect on how we found companionship this day. Whether through the kindness of strangers, reaching out of friends, the circle of creation, or the communion of the saints, let us celebrate all the ways we felt our connection to one another.

OPENING SONG: Canticle of Creation (Words inspired by St. Francis of Assisi)

Refrain:

Praise be to you, my Lord you are, there you are.

SUNG PSALM OPENING

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

PSALM 113

Hallelujah!

Open your hearts, you servants of God

Open your hearts to God

Strive to be a fertile field for God's love

All day, all night, all ways.

God's work encompasses the nations,
the world, the distances between the stars.

God's work is in the atom, the
core, the interstices of matter.

God's work is in the deeds of love, the
justice of society, the care of friends.

God's life is in every life, making us one family.

God's justice lifts the poor
setting them with nobility in the human community.

God's love fills our hearts
with everything we need.

SUNG DOXOLOGY

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

READING OF THE NIGHT: Henri Nouwen

When we honestly ask ourselves which person in our lives mean the most to us, we often find that it is those who, instead of giving advice, solutions, or cures, have chosen rather to share our pain and touch our wounds with a warm and tender hand. The friend who can be silent with us in a moment of despair or confusion, who can stay with us in an hour of grief and bereavement, who can tolerate not knowing, not curing, not healing and face with us the reality of our powerlessness, that is a friend who cares.

SILENT CONTEMPLATION

CLOSING POEM: God Among the Pots and Pans (*After St. Teresa of Avila*)

Sifting flour for daily bread
white mist rises
dough multiplies before my eyes

Chopped carrots
form a broken string
of orange prayer beads

The sharp knife cuts through
any confusion
bone gleaming exposed

Sizzle of steak
onions and mushrooms
alchemy of steel and flame

My cup of coffee
is of course
always a revelation

And the glasses of wine
waiting on the table
a wonder of earth and time

Magpie caws outside
an apparition in black and white
among russet leaves

The sun descends slowly
in violet reverie recalling
the beauty of endings

The timer bell rings
calling me back again
to this prayer

To the miracles
of dinner and dishwater
and our long slow sighs.

CLOSING SONG: Now I Walk in Beauty (Diné Navajo Prayer)

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



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

Psalm 113: Interpretation by [Rev. Christine Robinson](#)

Reading of the Night: Henri Nouwen, *Out of Solitude: Three Meditations on the Christian Life*. (Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 2008), pg. 38

Closing Poem: “God Among the Pots and Pans” by [Christine Valters Paintner](#). Excerpted from [Dreaming of Stones](#). (Paraclete Press, 2019), pg. 119

Closing Song: [Now I Walk in Beauty](#) (Diné Navajo Prayer) sung by Lorraine Bayes from the album [Earth, Our Original Monastery: Singing Our Way to the Sacred](#)

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DAY 4: MORNING

Work

OPENING PRAYER

We gather this morning to remember the value of our labors. We commit to bringing ourselves fully present to the work we do, whether paid or unpaid, and holding a heart of gratitude for the ability to express our gifts in the world in meaningful ways.

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: Joan Chittister

In Benedictine spirituality, work is what we do to continue what God wanted done. Work is co-creative. Keeping a home that is beautiful and ordered and nourishing and artistic is co-creative. Working in a machine shop that makes gears for tractors is co-creative. Working in an office that processes loan applications for people who are trying to make life more humane is co-creative. . . We work because the world is unfinished and it is ours to develop. We work with a vision in mind. . . Work is a commitment to God's service.

SUNG PSALM OPENING

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

PSALM 40

I have trusted You, Holy One
and waited for You.
When I was mired in misery
you touched me with your spirit.
You pulled me out
and set me on solid ground.
You put a song in my heart and work in my hands.
I praise you.
I know what you want from me,
and where the meaning of my life lies—
Not in rituals, offerings, sacrifices, or creeds,
just my heart; open to others, and open to You.
I try and live that way.
I fail often but you nudge and beckon and I follow.
I pray that my words, my song, my life
show forth your light and light others' way.
May all who seek you find you.
Touch us with your spirit, that we may be glad.

SUNG DOXOLOGY

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

SECOND READING: The Gospel According to Matthew 20:1–16 (NRSV)

“For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. After agreeing with the laborers for the usual daily wage, he sent them into his vineyard. When he went out about nine o’clock, he saw others standing idle in the market-place; and he said to them, ‘You also go into the vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right.’ So they went. When he went out again about noon and about three o’clock, he did the same. And about five o’clock he went out and found others standing around; and he said to them, ‘Why are you standing here idle all day?’ They said to him, ‘Because no one has hired us.’ He said to them, ‘You also go into the vineyard.’ When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his manager, ‘Call the laborers and give them their pay, beginning with the last and then going to the first.’ When those hired about five o’clock came, each of them received the usual daily wage. Now when the first came, they thought they would receive more; but each of them also received the usual daily wage. And when they received it, they grumbled against the landowner, saying, ‘These last worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat.’ But he replied to one of them, ‘Friend, I am doing you no wrong;

did you not agree with me for the usual daily wage? Take what belongs to you and go; I choose to give to this last the same as I give to you.’”

SILENT CONTEMPLATION

PRAYERS OF CONCERN

We offer prayers now for all that is on our hearts.

Holy One, our world is one so full of injustice where some have work that is meaningful and satisfying whilst others toil simply to survive. Forgive us when we ignore the human cost of our luxuries and conveniences.

Sung Response - O God of Love, bless us in our labor. (Repeat)

Have mercy on those who work and yet see no reward, on those who are without work and without hope and for those caught up in modern day slavery. Help us find the compassion we need to work for a more just society.

Sung Response - O God of Love, bless us in our labor. (Repeat)

Help us speak up for those who have no voice so that all may find joy in the work of their hands. May we find you in the common task and see your face in those we encounter along the way. May we know that the work of our hands is Holy.

Sung Response - O God of Love, bless us in our labor. (Repeat)

Please add the prayers you are longing to express.

Sung Response - O God of Love, bless us in our labor. (Repeat)

CLOSING SONG: Prayer of St. Francis

Refrain:

Lord, make me a channel of your peace.

1. Grant that I can see through my human pain and still feel loved.
In the darkness, let light be found in there.

Refrain:

2. We all need to learn to forgive a few more hundred times.
Melt our hatred, let love take root in our hearts.

Refrain:

3. Through my own pain and need, let me learn to understand.
Reach through our sadness, let it be joy.

Refrain:

CLOSING BLESSING

God who labors within and through us,
help bring our full attention to our work in the world
as we enter into an act of co-creation with you.
Show us how all the ways we work have dignity and purpose
whether paid or unpaid, whether our heart's true calling
or just to be able to support ourselves.
Guide us in challenging systems that exploit and enslave people
through their labor and help us to build communities
where everyone can thrive by the work of their hands.
Support us in the endeavor to do everything with love,
remembering that each small act of compassion
is woven together into a great tapestry of kindness.
Bless our hands as we offer our gifts
in service to your unfolding grace.

SUNG AMEN



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First Reading: Joan Chittister, *Wisdom Distilled in the Daily*. (Harper & Row, San Francisco, 1990), pg. 86

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

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Closing Song: [Prayer of St. Francis](#) by [Simon de Voil](#) from the album [Monk in the World: Songs for Contemplative Living](#)

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DAY 4: EVENING

Work

OPENING PRAYER

We reflect now on how we brought our gifts into the world in concrete ways. What were the things we made, the relationships we strengthened, the art we created, the ideas we welcomed? Let us give thanks for all the ways our work has been sanctified this day and help us to release it so we can enter into the peace of night and renew ourselves for tomorrow.

OPENING SONG: *Viriditas* (Words inspired by St. Hildegard of Bingen)

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.

SUNG PSALM OPENING

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

PSALM 45

My heart overflows! I have done work
of which I am proud. I have followed
my calling, and it is good!
I have been anointed with the oil of gladness
and turn to share it with others.
Thank you!
God says, *Gladly! And now,
Let go of the past.
Embrace what is to come.
Joys and trials await you in the future—
triumphs, service and reward.
Be not afraid...
Open your heart.*

SUNG DOXOLOGY

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

READING OF THE NIGHT: Rule of St. Benedict

When they live by the labor of their hands, as our ancestors and the apostles did, then they
are really monastics.

SILENT CONTEMPLATION

CLOSING POEM: Crossing the Divide

She walks, as if from a dream, into your life,
ribboned hair unraveling, brown eyes
like cups of tea, come to whisper
a secret into your trembling ear.

You try hard not to listen, clinging
to your calendar, your achievements,
your loneliness, until the silver ache
of it all spreads through your limbs

and she holds out her hand across
the ravine, and you see how the chasm
is not empty, but filled with a rushing
river, and you can swim until

you become fish and flow, until
you are the ancient stream
emerging from stone,
until her face becomes yours.

CLOSING SONG: May What I Do (Words inspired by Rainer Maria Rilke)

May what I do flow from me like a river.
May what I do flow from me like a river.



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Psalm 45: Interpretation by [Rev. Christine Robinson](#)

Reading of the Night: *The Rule of St. Benedict*, RB 48:8.

Closing Poem: "Crossing the Divine" by [Christine Valters Paintner](#). Excerpted from [The Wisdom of Wild Grace](#). (Paraclete Press, 2020), pg. 110

Closing Song: [May What I Do](#) (Words inspired by Rainer Maria Rilke) by [Richard Bruxvoort Colligan](#) from the album [Singing with Monks and Mystics](#)

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DAY 5: MORNING

Sabbath

OPENING PRAYER

We gather this morning to remember the gift of Sabbath. Let us commit to rhythms of rest and renewal that resist a culture of busyness where my worth is measured by what I do. Let us give thanks for the gift of being, of pleasure, of restoration's sweetness.

OPENING SONG: In My Heart is the Road

In my heart is the road,
and I will not be hurried.
In my heart is the road,
bless my feet on the journey
to Jerusalem, to Jerusalem.

FIRST READING: Abraham Joshua Heschel

The meaning of the Sabbath is to celebrate time rather than space. Six days a week we live under the tyranny of things of space; on the Sabbath we try to become attuned to holiness in time. It is a day on which we are called upon to share in what is eternal in time, to turn from the results of creation to the mystery of creation; from the world of creation to the creation of the world.

SUNG PSALM OPENING

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

PSALM 126

When we found ourselves free,
we couldn't believe it. We wandered around,
dazed with joy.
People shook their heads and said,
"God has done great things for them!"
God has done great things for us

and we are glad.
Help us adjust to this turn of events.
Make the most of us.
Help us to never forget.
We sowed these seeds with tears. We reap with joy.

SUNG DOXOLOGY

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

SECOND READING: Exodus 20:1–11 (NRSV)

Remember the sabbath day, and keep it holy. For six days you shall labour and do all your work. But the seventh day is a sabbath to the LORD your God; you shall not do any work—you, your son or your daughter, your male or female slave, your livestock, or the alien resident in your towns. For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but rested the seventh day; therefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day and consecrated it.

SILENT CONTEMPLATION

PRAYERS OF CONCERN

We offer prayers now for all that is on our hearts.

O Creator God, how we need Sabbath rest in our frantic world. We have allowed technology to blind us to the wisdom held in the rhythms and seasons of Creation. Remind us that we are your creatures, and we too need rest and fallow time.

Sung Response - O God of Love, show the way of Sabbath. (Repeat)

Loving God, help us to see that living in a constantly lit world, bombarded by unending information, always available and needing to react is not healthy and leads to depletion and sickness. Help us rediscover the joy of sacred time.

Sung Response - O God of Love, show the way of Sabbath. (Repeat)

Merciful One, help us to turn off our screens, to step aside and find You and each other in times of deep rest and true connection. May we rediscover rituals of connection and celebration. Help us to come home.

Sung Response - O God of Love, show the way of Sabbath. (Repeat)

Please add the prayers you are longing to express.

Sung Response - O God of Love, show the way of Sabbath. (Repeat)

CLOSING SONG: You Can Rest Now

You can rest now. You can rest now.

Open your feet to the earth.

You can rest now.

Let your fears go.

Let your thoughts fade.

Let your mind ease.

Let your breath rise.

You can rest now. You can rest now.

CLOSING BLESSING

God of holy rest,

on the seventh day you paused,

laying down the work of creation

and entered into sacred stillness.

Let us remember we were freed from slavery
in Egypt and you called us to be people of liberation.

Kindle in us the strength to say no
to a world of perpetual busyness.

Inspire us to set aside all of our plans
and goals to receive the lavish gift
of rest for ourselves.

Let the Sabbath be a time of profound renewal,
of intimate connection with You,
and a rekindling of our holy desires to be of service.

Sustain in us the desire to simply *be*
and not succumb to the demands
of productivity and an endless string of achievements.

Let our lives be a loving witness to a world
of restoration and refreshment,

of the profound goodness of joy and delight,
taking pleasure in the generous gift of pausing.

SUNG AMEN



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Opening Song: [In My Heart is the Road](#) by [Richard Bruxvoort Colligan](#) from the album [The Soul's Slow Ripening: Songs for Celtic Seekers](#)

First Reading: Abraham Joshua Heschel, *The Sabbath*. (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2005), pg. 10

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

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Closing Song: [You Can Rest Now](#) by [Trish Bruxvoort Colligan](#) from the album [Monk in the World: Songs for Contemplative Living](#)

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DAY 5: EVENING

Sabbath

OPENING PRAYER

As we end this day, let us give thanks for our Sabbath moments. When were we able to release our worries and be present? What did we discover in those moments of being rather than doing? We sanctify this time of deep surrender, knowing the Source of Rest has blessed us with new perspective that only comes when we let go of our striving.

OPENING 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.)

SUNG PSALM OPENING

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

PSALM 81

Sing, Shout, be Joyful!

Play music, blow horns

At the new moon, the full moon, the holy days, the Sabbath.

Let this rejoicing be your practice.

Hear the still, small voice—

You called on me in trouble and I helped you.

Keep listening!

Open your heart and it will fill up.

My longing is for you, as yours is for me.

I want to whisper in your ear

And satisfy your hunger
with honey from the rock.

SUNG DOXOLOGY

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

READING OF THE NIGHT: Thomas Merton

The rush and pressure of modern life are a form, perhaps the most common form, of its innate violence. To allow oneself to be carried away by a multitude of conflicting concerns, to surrender to too many demands, to commit oneself to too many projects, to want to help everyone in everything is to succumb to violence.

SILENT CONTEMPLATION

CLOSING POEM: Sabbath

Even as the subway car hurtles
into the tunnel and calendars heave
under growing weight of entries,
even under the familiar lament
for more hours to do

a bell rings somewhere
and a man lays down
his hammer, as if to say
the world can build without me,
a woman sets down
her pen as if to say,
the world will carry on
without my words.

The project left undone,
dust on the shelves,
dishes crusted with morning
egg, the vase of drooping
flowers, and so much work
still to complete,

I journey across the long field
where trees cling to the edges
free to not do anything but
stand their ground,
where buttercups
and bluebells sway

and in this taste of paradise
where rest becomes luminous
and play a prayer of gratitude,
even the stones sing
of a different time,
where burden is lifted
and eternity endures.

CLOSING SONG: Lullaby

Watch the stars as they climb to the sky
They have crawled from their beds where they lie.
And now it's time for sleep.

Go to bed,
wrap the dark round your chest.
Close your eyes,
think of how you are blessed.



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Psalm 81: Interpretation by [Rev. Christine Robinson](#)

Reading of the Night: Thomas Merton, *Conjectures of a Guilty Bystander*. (New York: Doubleday Religion, 2009), pg. 81

Closing Poem: "Sabbath" by [Christine Valters Paintner](#). Excerpted from [Dreaming of Stones](#). (Paraclete Press, 2019), pg. 27

Closing Song: [Lullaby](#) by [Margaret McLarty](#) from the album [Monk in the World: Songs for Contemplative Living](#)

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DAY 6: MORNING

Conversion

OPENING PRAYER

As we begin a new day, we commit ourselves to the journey of ongoing conversion and holy surprise. Let our eyes be opened to see the divine face in fresh ways each day.

Let us begin again.

OPENING SONG: Remember the Path

1. 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. . . . path of Peace

3. . . . path of Love

4. . . . path Life

FIRST READING: Rainer Maria Rilke

If the Angel deigns to come it will because you have convinced her, not by tears but by your humble resolve to be always beginning; to be a beginner.

SUNG PSALM OPENING

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

PSALM 99

Awaken to the awesome mystery of God
Who cradles the earth and all her peoples,

Who planted the laws of justice and mercy in our hearts,
Who nurtured and nudged the saints of the ages
and the teachers of the people
Forgiving them their faults, mistakes,
addictions, and selfishness,
And invited them to grow and change.
Awaken to this awesome mystery
Follow it all your days.

SUNG DOXOLOGY

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

SECOND READING: Jeremiah 31:31–34 (NRSV)

The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. It will not be like the covenant that I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt—a covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, says the LORD. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. No longer shall they teach one another, or say to each other, “Know the LORD,” for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the LORD; for I will forgive their iniquity, and remember their sin no more.

SILENT CONTEMPLATION

PRAYERS OF CONCERN

We offer prayers now for all that is on our hearts.

Loving God, forgive us when we make conversion into a one-time event based around belief instead of an ongoing encounter. Help us release rigidity that keeps us set in our ways and teach us the truth of St. Benedict’s words, “Always we begin again.”

Sung Response - O God of Love, surprise us with your vision. (Repeat)

Holy One, you come to us in so many guises. Forgive us for making you in our own image, help us learn to be surprised by your appearing new every morning.

Sung Response - O God of Love, surprise us with your vision. (Repeat)

Compassionate One, so often we are entrenched in our way of seeing things, our way of expressing what we call faith. May we learn to let go of our formulas and habitual ways of seeing things and learn to embrace the challenge of change and find you in unfamiliar places.

Sung Response - O God of Love, surprise us with your vision. (Repeat)

Please add the prayers you are longing to express.

Sung Response - O God of Love, surprise us with your vision. (Repeat)

CLOSING SONG: Revolution of the Heart (Words inspired by Dorothy Day)

Refrain:

We must bring about a Revolution of the heart.
We must feed not just the body but the soul.
For the Gospel takes away our right to stand apart.
We must stand with all the poor and be made whole.

CLOSING BLESSING

God of holy surprises,
infuse us with your wild wonder,
attune our hearts to all the ways
you dance through the world
from the ordinary to the sublime.
Sustain us in the daily practice
of opening our eyes to grace.
Expand our imaginations to see
more deeply and more widely than before.
Align us with all the ways you are at work,
always extending a new vision
when all seems shut down.
Help us to experience the eruption of seeds
in springtime and that abundant growth,
as a sign of your generous love.
Inspire us to begin again and again.

SUNG AMEN



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First Reading: Rainer Maria Rilke, "Letter XI" in the published collection, first appearing in French under the title *Lettres Francaises a Merline*. 1919–1922, published in 1950.

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DAY 6: EVENING

Conversion

OPENING PRAYER

Open our hearts this evening to see the gifts you offered to us shimmering beneath the surface of our ordinary moments. Let us give thanks for all the ways we were opened to wonder, awe, and delight.

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 90

We have come out of the Earth

and to the Earth we return

Our lives are but a flash in the light of Eternity.

We are like beautiful flowers which live only a day.

We might live 70 years—more if our strength holds.

So much work and hardship!

How quickly the time passes.

Teach us then, to value our days
to treat each one as a sacred trust.

Fill our hearts with wisdom.

and a love for our lives.

In spite of all the grief and suffering

May we be always glad of this precious gift
And hallow the good in each day.

SUNG DOXOLOGY

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

READING OF THE NIGHT: Paul Wilkes

Translations vary, but in our modern day, *conversatio morum suorum* generally means conversion of manners, a continuing and unsparing assessment and reassessment of one's self and what is most important and valuable in life. In essence, the individual must continually ask: What is worth living for in this place at this time? And having asked, one must then seek to act in accordance with the answer discerned.

SILENT CONTEMPLATION

CLOSING POEM: A Glimpse of the Underglimmer

You can see it sometimes in October
when the sun's low angle slides
gold over the field,
effervescence of light,

or you stand in a forest of cedars
and March rain pads
hundreds of tiny feet across
the emerald canopy,

or the fireflies of July form
new constellations, then vanish
into summer's night leaving only
trails of light in your memory,

or you stand in a May meadow,
a fox crossing quietly, you hold
still as possible, the sliver of moon
above, holding its breath with you.

CLOSING SONG: The World is My Monastery (Words inspired by St. Francis of Assisi)

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



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

Opening Song: [Now I Am Revealing](#) by [Richard Bruxvoort Colligan](#) from the album [Monk in the World: Songs for Contemplative Living](#)

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

Psalm 90: Interpretation by [Rev. Christine Robinson](#)

Reading of the Night: Paul Wilkes, *Beyond the Walls: Monastic Wisdom for Everyday Life*.

(New York: Doubleday Religion, 1999), pg. 45

Closing Poem: "A Glimpse of the Underglimmer" by [Christine Valters Paintner](#). Excerpted from [The Wisdom of Wild Grace](#). (Paraclete Press, 2020), pg. 100

Closing Song: [The World is My Monastery](#) (Words inspired by St. Francis of Assisi) by [Richard Bruxvoort Colligan](#) from the album [Singing with Monks and Mystics](#)

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DAY 7: MORNING

Creative Joy

OPENING PRAYER

We rise this morning and commit ourselves to being a dancing monk and cultivating creative joy in our lives. We celebrate with St. Benedict who asked in his Rule “What is more delightful than this voice of the Holy One calling to us?” and invites us to let our hearts “overflow with the inexpressible delights of love.”

OPENING SONG: Let Our Hearts Overflow (Words inspired by St. Benedict)

Let our hearts overflow,
Let our hearts overflow
with the inexpressible delight of love,
with the inexpressible delight of love.

FIRST READING: Thomas Merton

The Lord plays and diverts Himself in the garden of His creation, and if we could let go of our own obsession with what we think is the meaning of it all, we might be able to hear His call and follow Him in His mysterious, cosmic dance.

For the world and time are the dance of the Lord in emptiness. The silence of the spheres is the music of a wedding feast. . . Indeed we are in the midst of it, and it is in the midst of us, for it beats in our very blood, whether we want it to or not.

Yet the fact remains that we are invited to forget ourselves on purpose, cast our awful solemnity to the winds and join in the general dance.

SUNG PSALM OPENING

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

PSALM 149

Hallelujah!

Praise God by yourself

Praise the One of many names in the congregation of the faithful.

Praise Him with song and movement
Praise Her with silence and stillness.
Praise the Unnamable in your work, in your rest,
in your love, in your anger.
Seek the Holy One in the midst of the city
and in the heart of the wilderness.
See the Beloved's imprint in the eyes of friend and foe,
the sick and the well,
the rich and the poor,
the citizen and the stranger.
Open your heart to the One heart of love and peace.

SUNG DOXOLOGY

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

SECOND READING: 2 Samuel 6:1–5 (NRSV)

David again gathered all the chosen people of Israel, thirty thousand. David and all the people with him set out and went from Baale-judah, to bring up from there the ark of God, which is called by the name of the LORD of hosts who is enthroned on the cherubim. They carried the ark of God on a new cart, and brought it out of the house of Abinadab, which was on the hill. Uzzah and Ahio, the sons of Abinadab, were driving the new cart with the ark of God; and Ahio went in front of the ark. David and all the house of Israel were dancing before the LORD with all their might, with songs and lyres and harps and tambourines and castanets and cymbals.

SILENT CONTEMPLATION

PRAYERS OF CONCERN

We offer prayers now for all that is on our hearts.

Thank you Creator for being made in your image. Forgive us when the gift of imagination has been used to destroy instead of to build, to bring suffering and death instead of healing and life.

Sung Response - O God of Love, lead us into dancing. (Repeat)

O Spirit of inspiration, forgive us for not believing that we are all artists and poets, capable of expressing beauty and truth through creativity. Give us courage to let go of the rules and paint outside the lines.

Sung Response - O God of Love, lead us into dancing. (Repeat)

Help us Divine Creator to embrace our creative natures, to be purveyors of beauty in the service of the Holy. May we experience joy in the small creative acts of the everyday and discover the glory in the grey.

Sung Response - O God of Love, lead us into dancing. (Repeat)

Please add the prayers you are longing to express.

Sung Response - O God of Love, lead us into dancing. (Repeat)

CLOSING SONG: Miriam of the Dance

I am Miriam.
I am Miriam.
I am Miriam,
Miriam of the Dance, Miriam of the Dance.

CLOSING BLESSING

Blessed Source of Joy
carve out room in us for the
inexpressible delights of love.
Let our hearts become fountains overflowing
into the world with your love and compassion.
Help us to pause each day and whisper “thank you”
for the most ordinary graces and gifts.
In the way that you looked upon your Creation
and called everything so good, kindle in us
that kind of generous vision.
Lift us beyond our narrow concerns and help us
to see how there is no separation, we are all connected.
Support us in honoring our bodies as sacred temples
and losing ourselves in the great cosmic dance.

SUNG AMEN



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Closing Song: [Miriam of the Dance](#) by [Betsey Beckman](#). Sung by [Laura Ash](#) from the album [Singing with Monks and Mystics](#)

Closing Blessing: Written by [Christine Valters Paintner](#)

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DAY 7: EVENING

Creative Joy

OPENING PRAYER

As evening comes, let us remember the moments when joy found us today. Let us celebrate the ways we danced freely and helped to create something beautiful.

OPENING SONG: Behold, I Make All Things New

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.

SUNG PSALM OPENING

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

PSALM 96

Sing a new song to the Holy One
with all the names and none.

Proclaim our joy and thanksgiving
for creation, for life, for growth, for love.

Turn your face to the light.
rejoice in God.

Worship God in the beauty of holiness
let the whole earth tremble in awe.

Call out—

There's this beautiful world
and all the life in it.
and there's the rule of law in our hearts
and Love at the heart of it All.

The heavens rejoice
The earth dances

The seas roil with life
The fields are glad
The trees of the wood shout for joy.

SUNG DOXOLOGY

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

READING OF THE NIGHT: Clarissa Pinkola Estés

I'll tell you right now, the doors to the world of the wild Self are few but precious. If you have a deep scar, that is a door, if you have an old, old story, that is a door. If you love the sky and the water so much you almost cannot bear it, that is a door. If you yearn for a deeper life, a full life, a sane life, that is a door.

SILENT CONTEMPLATION

CLOSING POEM: Aubade

The day opens its white page,
spreading herself like so much possibility,
you take your pen, pausing
before you begin so you can hear
the jackdaw caw high above
your tiny shadow and the snowdrop's
insistent blooming, somewhere
is the knowing glance of badger,
each unafraid to write their stories
on wind and soil and you see they
offer ink for your pen in
a hundred different colors.

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.



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Psalm 96: Interpretation by [Rev. Christine Robinson](#)

Reading of the Night: Clarissa Pinkola Estés, *Women Who Run With the Wolves*. (New York: Ballantine Books, 1996), pg. 19

Closing Poem: "Aubade" by [Christine Valters Paintner](#). Excerpted from [The Wisdom of Wild Grace](#). (Paraclete Press, 2020), pg. 22

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