

Taizé Worship
A quiet reflective service of singing, prayer and silence.

INTRODUCTION and WELCOME Revd Canon Graham Hedger

Today, during our continued period of Corona virus in our midst, we gather together from our homes through the internet, to worship God, our Father. With holy words, Taizé chants, silence and prayer, we explore the goodness of God, as we look towards the heart of life in all Creation.

OPENING SCRIPTURE: Genesis 1:1, 26, 31

In the beginning, when God created the heavens and the earth . . . God said, 'Let us make humankind in our own image, according to our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the wild animals of the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth' . . . God saw everything that he had made, and indeed, it was very good.

OPENING PRAYER Led by Revd Wendy Gourlay

Creator, Father of all, you give us life, you give us love, you give us yourself.

Help us to give our lives, our love, ourselves, to you.

Whatever befalls the earth befalls the children of the earth.

Every part of the earth is sacred.

The air is precious, for all of us share the same breath.

Every part of the earth is sacred.

This we know, the earth does not belong to us; we belong to the earth.

Every part of the earth is sacred.

This we know, all things are connected; like the blood that unites one family

Every part of the earth is sacred.

Our God is the same God, whose compassion is equal for all;

Every part of the earth is sacred.

We did not weave the web of life; we are merely a strand in it.

Every part of the earth is sacred.

Whatever we do to the web we do to ourselves;

Every part of the earth is sacred.

For all belongs to our Creator.

THANKSGIVING

Father of all creation, we thank you that you have given us a world rich in resources, and made us stewards of your mysteries; help us to act responsibly, not wasting or destroying what we do not need, not polluting the earth, or sea or sky, that we may act with love towards all things, and so reflect the great love that you have for the world.

CHANT 1: Lord Jesus Christ, your light shines within us

Lord Je - sus Christ, your light shines with - in us.
Jé - sus le Christ, lu - mière in - té - rieu - re,

Let not my doubts nor my dark-ness speak to me. Lord Je - sus Christ, your
ne lais - se pas mes té - nè - bres me par - ler. Jé - sus le Christ, lu -

light shines with - in us. Let my heart al - ways wel - come your love.
mière in - té - rieu - re, don - ne - moi d'ac - cueil - lir ton a - mour.

SCRIPTURE: 1 Chronicles 29:11-13 Read by Carol Cooke

Yours, O Lord, are the greatness, the power, the glory, the victory, and the majesty; for all that is in the heavens and on the earth is yours; yours is the kingdom, O Lord, and you are exalted as head above all. Riches and honour come from you, and you rule over all. In your hand are power and might; and it is in your hand to make great and to give strength to all. And now, Our God, we give thanks to you and praise your glorious name.

For the Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

DECLARATION

This we know, the earth does not belong to us; **The earth is God's and we will serve it.**
This we know; we did not weave the web of life; **The earth is God's and we will serve it.**
Whatever befalls the earth befalls the sons and daughters of the earth;
The earth is God's and we will serve it.

FORGIVENESS

Creator and Saviour

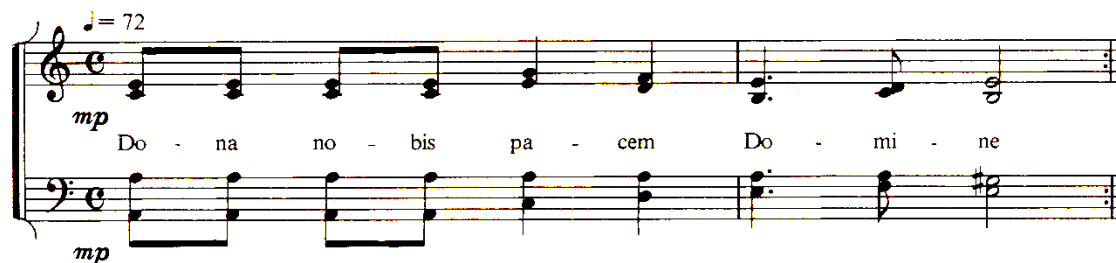
**We have often exploited earth for our selfish ends,
turned our backs on the cycles of life and forgotten we are your stewards.
New soils become barren, air and water become unclean,
species disappear, and humans are diminished.
In penitence we come to you.**

God, have mercy. **Christ, have mercy.** God, have mercy.

BIDDING PRAYER

O Son of God, change our hearts. Your Spirit composes the songs of the birds,
your creation is a million wondrous miracles. Your creation is beautiful to look upon.
We ask of you just one more miracle: beautify our souls.

CHANT 2: Dona nobis pacem Domine (Grant us peace, Lord)



MEDITATION :

An edited excerpt from *Listening for the Heartbeat of God. A Celtic Spirituality*. Philip Newell

Like most children, I had grown up with a sense of awe at creation. Our earliest memories are generally of wonder in relation to the elements. Do we not all carry within us, for instance, something of the memory of first listening to the waters of a river or to rainfall, or lying in the grass, feeling and smelling it and seeing its brilliant green, or watching sunlight dappling through leaves?

Connected to these moments will be recollections of experiencing at the deepest of levels a type of communion with God in nature, but there will usually have been very little in our religious traditions to encourage us to do much more than simply thank God for creation. The preconception behind this is that God is separate from creation.

How many of us were taught actually to look for God within creation and to recognise the world as a place of revelation and the whole of life as sacramental? Were we not for the most part led to think that the Church is distanced from the world and spirit is almost entirely divorced from the matter of our bodies, our lives and the world?

It was with a sense of liberation, therefore, that as a student I (Philip Newell) first read some of the old prayers from the Western Isles of Scotland. In these the lights of the skies, the sun and moon and stars, are referred to as graces, the spiritual coming through the physical, and God is seen as the Life within all life and not just as the Creator who set life in motion from afar.

Here, then within the treasury of Christianity itself, was a rich stream of prayer that gave expression to something like the creation awareness that is being awakened among all sorts of people throughout the world today. And so, I came to see that the prayers in the old Celtic tradition could aid our search for a spirituality that seeks God by looking towards the heart of life, not away from life.

Where was the original source of this spiritual tradition? When I explored the earliest manifestations of Celtic Christianity in the fourth-century writings of Pelagius, for example, I found a similar emphasis on the life of God within creation. This much-maligned early British Christian stressed not only the essential goodness of creation - and our capacity to glimpse what he called 'the shafts of divine light' - but, by specifically, the essential goodness of humanity. Pelagius maintained that the image of God can be seen in every new-born child - existing at the heart of every person, waiting to be released through the grace of God.

Although formally rejected by the Church at large, the stream of Celtic spirituality survived. In the following centuries, most especially in the art of the Celtic world! The same vision would be expressed in new and imaginative ways. The great high-standing crosses and the illuminated Gospel manuscripts incorporated designs that symbolised the interlacing of God and humanity, heaven and earth, spirit and matter. Similarly, in the ninth century the Celtic world produced one of its greatest theologians John Scotus Eriugena, who taught that we can look to creation just as we look to the Scriptures to receive the living Word of God.

It is a spirituality characterised by a listening with all things for the life of God.

*During the interlude please ponder the words of this meditation and offer to God
the people and concerns of your heart.*

INTERCESSIONS Led by Jackie Clark

Generosity of God, spilling over into creation,
we bless you for flowers and their wealth of beauty,
for creatures and their glorious variety,
for seas and seasons and scents.

May we too, reflect something of your glorious generosity.

We pray for the well-being of the creation,
the healthfulness of the air,
the richness of the earth and its provisions,
and the beauty of the whole world.

**Creator, make us co-workers with you that the earth
and all who live upon it may reap a full harvest.**

Show us how to reflect your rhythms in our life and work
and to conserve the world's rich resources.

**Help us to give all creatures their due respect,
to tend cattle and crops with care.**

Guide science along wise and considerate ways
that we may fashion agriculture that truly enhances
and that we may sustain a vibrant environment.

May we too, shine with the vibrancy of your love.

As our Saviour taught us so we pray

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come, thy will be done; on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen

CHANT 3 My peace I leave you, my peace I give you

♩ = 60

My peace I leave you, my peace I give you:

trou - ble not your hearts. My peace I leave you, my

peace I give you: Be not a - fraid. My

Fine

WE AFFIRM

How wonderful, O Lord, are the works of your hands!

The heavens declare your glory, the arch of the sky displays your handiwork.

In your love you have given us the power to behold the beauty of your world in all its splendour.

The sun and the stars, the valleys and the hills, the rivers and the lakes, all disclose your presence.

The roaring breakers of the sea tell of your awesome might; the beasts of the field and the birds of the air proclaim your wondrous will.

In your goodness you have made us able to hear the music of the world.

The voices of loved ones reveal to us that you are in our midst.

A divine song sings through all creation.

CHANT 4: Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia

Light and lively ♩ = 116

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!

CLOSING PRAYER and BLESSING

God bless the sky that is above us,
the earth that is beneath us,
your image deep within us,
the day that lies before us
And the blessing

Taizé service texts have been resourced from:

The Rhythm of Life: Celtic Daily Prayer
1996 David Adam

Liturgies from Lindisfarne,
©2010 Ray Simpson, Published by Kevin Mayhew.

Meditation: An edited excerpt from *Listening for the Heartbeat of God. A Celtic Spirituality*.
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