

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

INTRODUCTION and WELCOME Revd Canon Graham Hedger

Welcome. As we gather together in our homes to worship God, our Father we hope you will enjoy this final online Taizé service for 2020. If you have appreciated this year's series of services and would like to revisit any, they are available online via the Cretingham page of the Mid Loes benefice website. So today, with holy words, Taize chants, silence and prayer, we explore how loneliness and solitude can be a God-given invitation to become new again.

In the following verse from Matthew's Gospel (6:6) we hear that solitude can provide an opportunity for communion with God. "Whenever you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you."

**A GATHERING PRAYER**

Creating and Sustaining God, as this cold, dark season encroaches, give to us the stability of the deep earth and the hope of heaven.

**OPENING PRAYER: Led by Revd Wendy Gourlay**

In the chill of wintry wind, in the depths of uncertain thoughts,  
sing to us the story of the universe, visit us as Saviour of our being.

We bind to ourselves this day, **the strength of rock, the silence of earth, the sharpness of cold.**  
We bind to ourselves this day, **the longevity of stars, the integrity of sky, the sobering of dark.**

**CANDLE-LIGHTING**

Christ, Light of the world I light this candle.

May it be fire from you to burn up our selfishness and our pride,  
our wrong feelings and unhelpful attitudes, our dishonouring passions and thoughtless words.  
I light this candle.

May it be Light from you to lighten our way through difficulties and decisions.

May it be Flame from you to teach us love.

Until we shine with your presence and warm a thousand hearts.

**CHANT 1: Seek first the Kingdom of God**

**Mixed Voices**  
♩ = 84

Seek first the king-dom of God, seek and you shall find. find.

**SCRIPTURE: Genesis 2:18 read by Heather Whiting**

In our scripture today, we learn that it is not part of God's plan for human beings to be lonely.

'Then the Lord God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper as his partner."

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

A prayer entitled: LIFE'S JOURNEY read by Jackie Clark  
 God of many names, my name is known to you.  
 I am held in the hand of your life,  
 and I do not know what you will make of me.  
 All I know is that I cannot make myself  
 any more than I could in my mother's womb.  
 But this I can do, this I choose,  
 to give myself into the hand of your continuing creativity.  
 My past, with its joys and triumphs, its failures and regrets.  
 My present, with its struggles and accomplishments,  
 its failures and regrets.  
 My future, with its fears and freedom, its pain and promise.  
 To loose and to bind, to stretch and to shape,  
 to become what I will,  
 trusting the hand that made the world  
 trusting the Spirit that breathes life  
 trusting the love that will not let me go  
 trusting the promise of the Word made flesh.

Kathy Galloway, Scotland.

PRAYER of FORGIVENESS

**To others I am always honest; myself I sometimes deceive.**  
**To others I say what I believe to be true; myself I can make believe a lie.**  
**To others my smile is intended to be sincere; myself I can fool into hiding my anger.**  
**To others I always wish to do good; myself I can blind to my evil motives.**  
**Lord, let me be as honest with myself as I am with others.**  
**Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen**

Early Irish

CHANT 2: Wait for the Lord

Wait for the Lord, his day is near.

Wait for the Lord: be strong, take heart!

MEDITATION : Loneliness – an invitation to become new again.

An extract from 'Between the dark and the daylight: embracing the contradictions of Life by Joan Chittister ©2015

Every life deals with loneliness at some point or other: our partner dies; sickness sets in that makes the old social calendar impossible; we find ourselves in a new job, a new town, a new country, a new world. More than one person who was once naturally outgoing and apparently self-confident has succumbed to all of those things. The problem is that the more we withdraw, the more withdrawn we become. People stop calling. No one stops by. I never meet anyone new. I never do meaningful new things. But then is not the time to hide from the world; then is the time to strike out in totally new ways to find the rest of the self in the rest of the world.

It is the opportunity we do not seek, to do things we never thought of doing, and in the end it is an invitation to become new again.

This is the moment the old frame creaks, the old certainties fail, the old patterns and habits and social clubs disappear. The tried-and-true are not only useless now, they are simply gone. The only possibility for emotional survival lies at a time like this in going out into a totally strange place, trusting oneself to new people. Not to burden them but to learn from them. It means that we must do something we have never done before – join a book club or a quilting group or deliver trays for Meals on Wheels – anything that provides structure and regularity until, suddenly, we have a new circle of friends to help us plan our own time differently.

But loneliness is about more than simply figuring out how to use time while we try to forget the pain that comes when we're at loose ends. It is also a call to make other people's needs our own. What we learn in loneliness is that everybody needs someone. The question at a time like this, then, is, Who needs something I can do for them? It's time to get involved with someone else's emotional support in addition to my own. Which is why, perhaps, so many people who lose a loved one begin groups to support people in similar situations.

Loneliness is not the end of anything. It is the starting point at which we're able, this time, to choose fresh ways of being alive. It's like being dropped down on the Planet Nowhere and told that you can do anything you'd like to do. And for the first time in your life, you must and you do.

Most of all, loneliness is not a call for other people to take care of us. Loneliness is the call to ourselves, now that we have acquired a better understanding of it so well, to do something to alleviate the loneliness and needs of others.

"I (Wendy) would like to add a postscript. During this acute and challenging time of the Covid-19 pandemic, not everyone is physically, mentally or financially able to alleviate the loneliness and needs of others. For those who do have the strength and capability though, perhaps Jesus Christ's command called The Golden Rule can guide our actions: 'Do unto others as you would have them do to you' (Luke 6:31). Or to use contemporary language, The Message writes: 'Ask what you want people to do for you, then grab the initiative and do it for them' (Matthew 7:12).

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

INTERCESSIONS led by Carol Cooke

“Let us pray together”

That the church may show its unity in Christ,

Lord hear us, **Lord, graciously hear us.**

That all churches may work together for the benefit of all peoples,

Lord hear us, **Lord, graciously hear us.**

That all movements towards unity may prosper,

Lord hear us, **Lord, graciously hear us.**

That a sense of loneliness may be overcome

Lord hear us, **Lord, graciously hear us.**

That divisions and conflicts may cease

Lord hear us, **Lord, graciously hear us.**

That the world may find a lasting peace

Lord hear us, **Lord, graciously hear us.**

That none may hunger or thirst

Lord hear us, **Lord, graciously hear us.**

Almighty God, give us wisdom to perceive you, intelligence to understand you, diligence to seek you, vision to behold you, a heart to meditate upon you, a life to proclaim you; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives with you and the Holy Spirit, one God now and for ever, Amen.

*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 Be not afraid

Be not a-fraid, sing out for joy! Christ is ris-en, al-le-lu-ia!  
Ne-boj - te se, ra-duj - te se! Kris - tus slav-ný ví-téz z hro - bu vstal.

WE AFFIRM: WHAT SHALL I GIVE YOU, LORD? (Ephrem the Syrian)

What shall I give you, Lord, in return for your kindness? Glory to you for your love.

Glory to you for your patience. Glory to you for forgiving us all our sins.

Glory to you for coming to save our souls.

Glory to you for your incarnation in the virgin's womb.

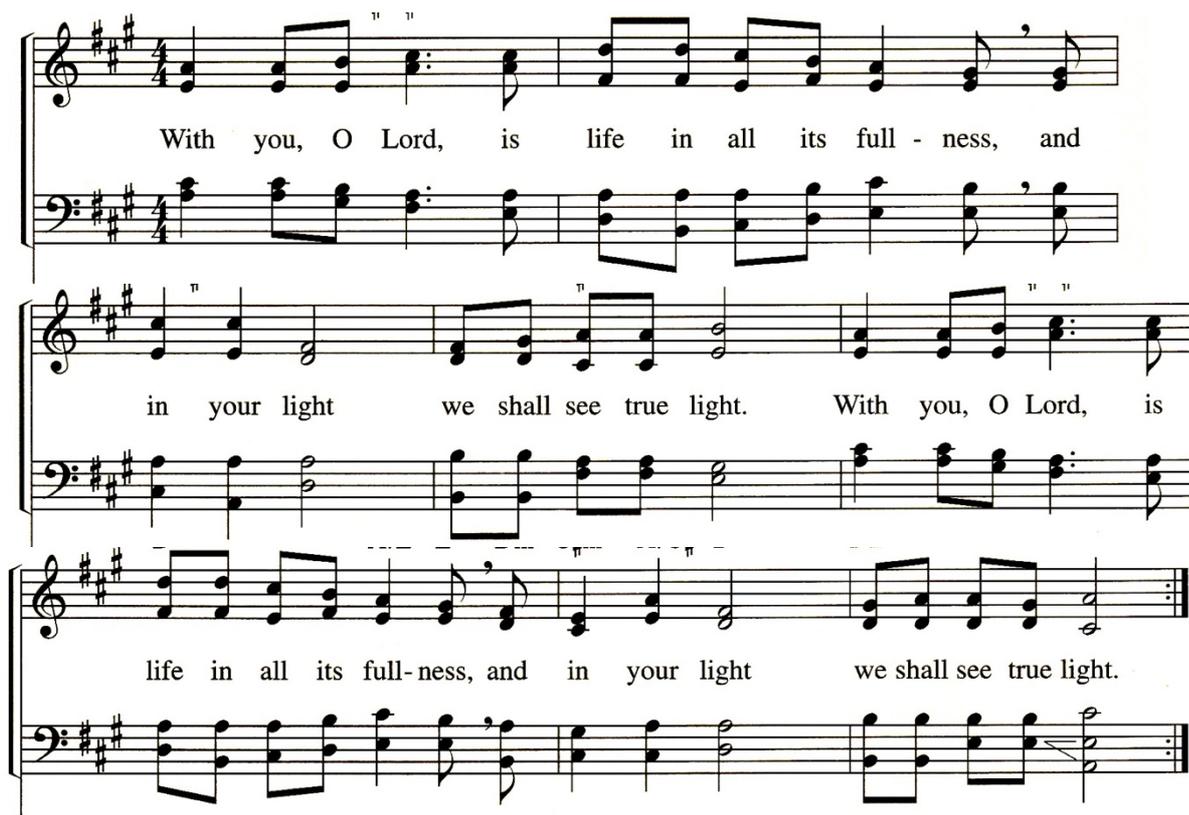
Glory to you for receiving your wounds. Glory to you for your crucifixion.

Glory to you for your resurrection.

Glory to you that you preached to all.

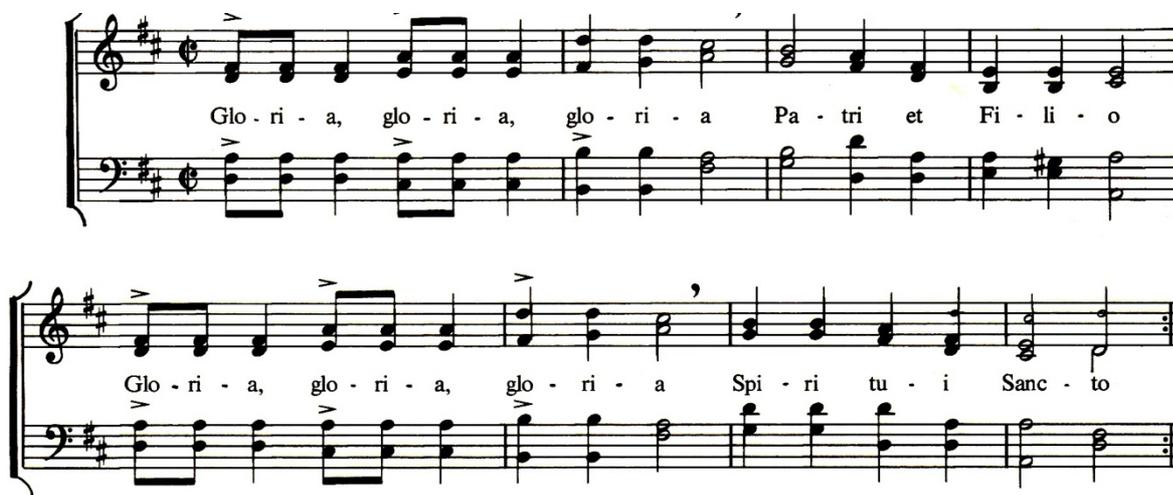
Glory to you in whom they believed.

CHANT 4: With you, O Lord is life in all its fullness



With you, O Lord, is life in all its fullness, and  
in your light we shall see true light. With you, O Lord, is  
life in all its fullness, and in your light we shall see true light.

CHANT 5: Gloria



Glo - ri - a, glo - ri - a, glo - ri - a Pa - tri et Fi - li - o  
Glo - ri - a, glo - ri - a, glo - ri - a Spi - ri tu - i Sanc - to

CLOSING PRAYER and BLESSING

In time of cold, may we find warmth in you. In time of trial, may we find strength divine.  
In time of dark, may we find light within.  
And the blessing . . . . .