

## DAY 1: MORNING

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# 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*

### 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: Gospel of Mark (Mark 6:31-33)**

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 in 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

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

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

Please add the prayers you are longing to express.

**Sung Response** - O God of Love, nourish us in silence

### **CLOSING SONG**

**Deep Peace**

## **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**



## CREDITS

*All songs and texts used with permission*

**Opening Prayer** written by [Christine Valters Paintner](#)

**Opening Song: [Breathe In](#)** by [Peter Mayer](#)

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

**Sung Psalm Opening and Doxology** by [Richard Bruxvoort Colligan](#)

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

**Second Reading** from Mark 6:31-33 (NRSV)

**Prayers of Concern** written by Valerie Allen

**Sung Response** written by [Betsey Beckman](#), sung by Simon de Voil and Alexa Sunshine Rose

**Closing Song: [Deep Peace](#)** by [Sara Thomsen](#)

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

**Please note:** All of the Opening and Closing Songs are published on CDs in the Abbey of the Arts collection. In addition, these songs have accompanying gesture prayers and/or dances created by Betsey Beckman that can be found on the corresponding [DVD \(each album has a DVD companion\)](#). The Psalm Opening, Doxology, and the Response to the Prayers of Concern also have accompanying congregational gestures. The audio and video recordings of these are available at [AbbeyoftheArts.com](#).

## DAY 1: EVENING

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# 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**

### 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 by Christine Valters Paintner*

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



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**Opening Song: *In the Silence*** by [John Coleman](#)

**Psalm Opening and Doxology** by [Richard Bruxvoort Colligan](#)

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

**Reading of the Night** Thomas Merton, *A Year with Thomas Merton: Daily Meditations from His Journals*.

New York: HarperCollins (2004).

**Closing Poem** by [Christine Valters Paintner](#), *Dreaming of Stones*. Paraclete Press (2020).

**Closing Song: *Be Still (Psalm 46)*** by [Simon de Voil](#)

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## DAY 2: MORNING

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# 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

### 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**

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 in 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.

*(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.

*(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.

Please add the prayers you are longing to express.

**Sung Response** - O God of Love, extend through us your welcome.

### **CLOSING SONG**

Welcome in the Stranger

### **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



## CREDITS

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**Opening Prayer** written by [Christine Valters Paintner](#)

**Opening Song:** [Blessing the Breath of God](#) by [Denise Pyles](#)

**First Reading** from John Chryssavgis, *In the Heart of the Desert*.

Bloomington, IN: World Wisdom, Inc. (2008),

**Sung Psalm Opening and Doxology** by [Richard Bruxvoort Colligan](#)

**Interpretation of Psalm 56** by [Rev. Christine Robinson](#)

**Second Reading** from Genesis 18:1-8 (NRSV)

**Prayers of Concern** written by Valerie Allen

**Sung Response** by [Betsey Beckman](#)

**Closing Song:** [Welcome in the Stranger](#) by [Richard Bruxvoort Colligan](#)

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

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## DAY 2: EVENING

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# 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**

### **SUNG PSALM OPENING**

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

### **PSALM 122 -The Temple**

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



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**Opening Song:** [Listen to My Sighing](#) by [Richard Bruxvoort Colligan](#)

**Psalm Opening and Doxology** by [Richard Bruxvoort Colligan](#)

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

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

**Closing Poem** by [Christine Valters Paintner](#), *The Wisdom of Wild Grace*. Paraclete Press (2020).

**Closing Song:** ***Open Hand*** by [Richard Bruxvoort Colligan](#)

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## DAY 3: MORNING

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# 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**

### **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 1:1-8**

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.**

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.**

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.**



Please add the prayers you are longing to express.

**Sung Response - O God of Love, reveal your face in friendship.**

**CLOSING SONG**

**Divine**

**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**



## CREDITS

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**Opening Prayer** written by [Christine Valters Paintner](#)

**Opening Song: [Archangel Invocation](#)** by [Simon de Voil](#)

**First Reading** from Edward Sellner, *Finding the Monk Within: Great Monastic Values for Today*.

Ambassador Books, Inc (2008).

**Sung Psalm Opening and Doxology** by [Richard Bruxvoort Colligan](#)

**Interpretation of Psalm 103** by [Rev. Christine Robinson](#)

**Second Reading** from Nehemiah 1:1-8 (NRSV)

**Prayers of Concern** written by Valerie Allen

**Sung Response** by [Betsey Beckman](#)

**Closing Song: [Divine](#)** by [Soyinka Rahim](#)

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

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## DAY 3: EVENING

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# 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

### 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 intestacies 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**



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**Opening Song:** [Canticle of Creation](#) by [Simon de Voil](#)

**Psalm Opening and Doxology** by [Richard Bruxvoort Colligan](#)

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

**Reading of the Night** from Henri Nouwen, *Out of Solitude: Three Meditations on the Christian Life*.

Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press (2008).

**Closing Poem** by [Christine Valters Paintner](#), [Dreaming of Stones](#). Paraclete Press (2019).

**Closing Song:** [Now I Walk in Beauty](#) by Lorraine Bayes

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## DAY 4: MORNING

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# 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

#### 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: Matthew 20:1-16**

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 other 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**

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**

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**

Please add the prayers you are longing to express.

**Sung Response - O God of Love, bless us in our labor**

**CLOSING SONG**

**Prayer of St Francis**

**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**





## CREDITS

*All songs and texts used with permission*

**Opening Prayer** written by [Christine Valters Paintner](#)

**Opening Song:** [Blessing to the World](#) by [Karen Drucker](#)

**First Reading** from Joan Chittister, *Wisdom Distilled in the Daily*. HarperSanFrancisco (1990).

**Sung Psalm Opening and Doxology** by [Richard Bruxvoort Colligan](#)

**Interpretation of Psalm 40** by [Rev. Christine Robinson](#)

**Second Reading** from Matthew 20:1–16 (NRSV)

**Prayers of Concern** written by Polly Burns

**Sung Response** by [Betsey Beckman](#)

**Closing Song:** [Prayer of St. Francis](#) by [Simon de Voil](#)

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

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## DAY 4: EVENING

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# Work

### OPENING PRAYER

We reflect now on how we brought out 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*

### 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 Benedict**

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

**SILENT CONTEMPLATION**

**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**

**SUNG AMEN**



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**Opening Song: *Viriditas*** by [Betsey Beckman](#)

**Psalm Opening and Doxology** by [Richard Bruxvoort Colligan](#)

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

**Reading of the Night** from *The Rule of St. Benedict*. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press (1980).

**Closing Poem** by [Christine Valters Paintner](#), [The Wisdom of Wild Grace](#). Paraclete Press (2020).

**Closing Song: *May What I Do*** by [Richard Bruxvoort Colligan](#)

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## DAY 5: MORNING

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# 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

#### 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**

*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.

Oh Creator God, how we need Sabbath rest in our frenetic 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.

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.

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.

Please add the prayers you are longing to express.

**Sung Response** - O God of Love, show the way of Sabbath.

### **CLOSING SONG: 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 Prayer** written by [Christine Valters Paintner](#)

**Opening Song:** [In My Heart is the Road](#) by [Richard Bruxvoort Colligan](#)

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

**Sung Psalm Opening and Doxology** by [Richard Bruxvoort Colligan](#)

**Interpretation of Psalm 126** by [Rev. Christine Robinson](#)

**Second Reading** from Exodus 20:1-11 (NRSV).

**Prayers of Concern** written by Polly Burns

**Sung Response** by [Betsey Beckman](#)

**Closing Song:** [You Can Rest Now](#) by [Trish Bruxvoort Colligan](#)

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

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## DAY 5: EVENING

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# 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**

### **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**



#### **Credits:**

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**Opening Song: Surrender** by [Deirdre Ni Chinneide](#)

**Psalm Opening and Doxology** by [Richard Bruxvoort Colligan](#)

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

**Reading of the Night** from Thomas Merton, *Conjectures of a Guilty Bystander*.

New York: Doubleday Religion (2009).

**Closing Poem** by [Christine Valters Paintner](#), *Dreaming of Stones*. Paraclete Press (2019).

**Closing Song: Lullaby** by [Margaret McLarty](#)

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## DAY 6: MORNING

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# 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**

#### **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**

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**

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**

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**

Please add the prayers you are longing to express.

#### **Sung Response - O God of Love, surprise us with your vision**

### **CLOSING SONG**

#### **Revolution of the Heart**

## 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



## CREDITS

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**Opening Prayer** written by [Christine Valters Paintner](#)

**Opening Song: [Remember the Path](#)** by [Richard Bruxvoort Colligan](#)

**First Reading** from 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.

**Sung Psalm Opening and Doxology** by [Richard Bruxvoort Colligan](#)

**Interpretation of Psalm 99** by [Rev. Christine Robinson](#)

**Second Reading** from Jeremiah 31:31-34 (NRSV).

**Prayers of Concern** written by Polly Burns

**Sung Response** by [Betsey Beckman](#)

**Closing Song: [Revolution of the Heart](#)** by David Ash

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

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## DAY 6: EVENING

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# 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**

### **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 unsparring 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**



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**Closing Song: *The World is My Monastery*** by [Richard Bruxvoort Colligan](#)

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## DAY 7: MORNING

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# 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**

#### **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**

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.**

Oh 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.**

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.**

Please add the prayers you are longing to express.

**Sung Response - O God of Love, lead us into dancing.**

### **CLOSING SONG**

**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**



### **CREDITS**

*All songs and texts used with permission*

**Opening Prayer** written by [Christine Valters Paintner](#)

**Opening Song:** [Let Our Hearts Overflow](#) by [Richard Bruxvoort Colligan](#)

**First Reading** from Thomas Merton, *New Seeds of Contemplation*. New York: New Directions Publishing (2007).

**Sung Psalm Opening and Doxology** by [Richard Bruxvoort Colligan](#)

**Interpretation of Psalm 149** by [Rev. Christine Robinson](#)

**Second Reading** from 2 Samuel 6:1-5 (NRSV).

**Prayers of Concern** written by Polly Burns

**Sung Response** by [Betsey Beckman](#)

**Closing Song:** [Miriam of the Dance](#) by [Betsey Beckman](#)

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

**Please note:** All of the Opening and Closing Songs are published on CDs in the Abbey of the Arts collection. In addition, these songs have accompanying gesture prayers and/or dances created by Betsey Beckman that can be found on the corresponding [DVD \(each album has a DVD companion\)](#). The Psalm Opening, Doxology, and the Response to the Prayers of Concern also have accompanying congregational gestures. The audio and video recordings of these are available at [AbbeyoftheArts.com](#).

## DAY 7: EVENING

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# 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 today.

### OPENING SONG

**Behold, I Make All Things New**

### 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

### CREDITS

*All songs and texts used with permission*

Opening Prayer written by [Christine Valters Paintner](#)

Opening Song: [Behold](#) by [Alana Levandoski](#)

Psalm Opening and Doxology by [Richard Bruxvoort Colligan](#)

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

Reading of the Night from Clarissa Pinkola Estés, *Women Who Run With the Wolves*.

New York: Ballantine Books (1996).

Closing Poem by [Christine Valters Paintner](#), *The Wisdom of Wild Grace*. Paraclete Press (2020).

Closing Song: [Beauty](#) by [Betsey Beckman](#)



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