Worship for Spiritual Renewal: September Meditative Labyrinth Prayer



Enter into the worship space in silent contemplation. Be aware of your senses, what do you hear, see, smell?

Opening Breath Prayer

Breath prayer is an ancient practice. Focus on your heart and inhalations on short phrases from scripture which allow you to center yourself and be at peace.

Inhale: I find rest

Exhale: in Your shelter.

(Psalm 91.1)

Opening Song

Sanctuary (acapella)

sung 3x

Lord, prepare me, to be a sanctuary.

Pure and holy, tried and true.

With thanksgiving, I'll be a living, sanctuary...for you.

Reflection

"She said, 'How do you know when you are hearing from God?" ~Amena Brown.

Scripture

The text will be read twice, with an extended period of silence after the first reading. Use this time to reflect and contemplate. Were there words or phrases that stuck out to you? What is calling to your heart in this text?

Matthew 11.28-30

"Come to me, all you who are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

Time of Meditative Prayer

You have multiple options for meditative prayer this evening, each focused on a different kind of labyrinth.

What is a labyrinth?

"A labyrinth is not a maze. A maze is a symbol of life without meaning, it is an agent of confusion, deception with dead ends that lead you nowhere. But a labyrinth is a symbol of a life of deeper meaning, an ongoing sacred journey leading us inward, outward and to greater wholeness." -Carrie Newcomer

Because there is only one path inward, the mind can let go of how one while arrive at the center. It is a certainty that I will get there eventually. I practice trusting that wherever God takes me, I will be led both inward to the center and back out. I can settle into a knowing that God is with me, that God accompanies.

This walk, or journey inward, is a metaphor for life—really all situations, relationships, and decisions are a journey. So often we don't know where we are headed, even with the best of plans or intentions. With a labyrinth walk, one has the experience of letting go of their own plan—surrendering and trusting that the center will be reached. It is nearly impossible to rush through a labyrinth. Just imagine what that might look like at the turning points. It is actually dizzying to make the

turns, circling around from one quadrant to another, if moving too fast. The best option for the labyrinth (and perhaps for all of life) is to move in a rhythmic, slow, meditative walk.

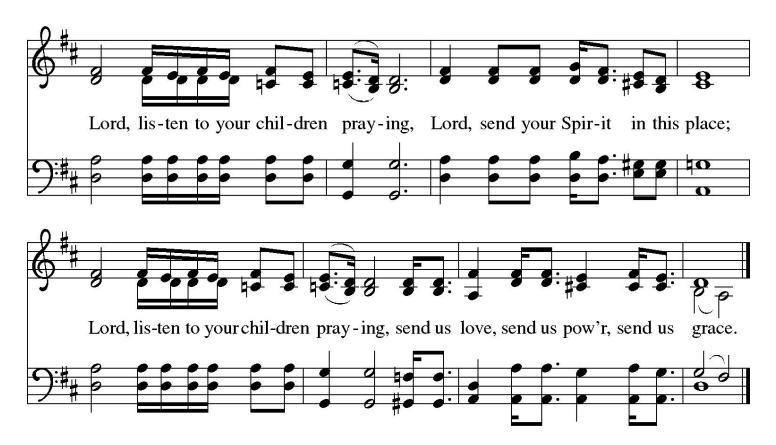
When you reach the center of the labyrinth, you may let go of your intention and pray. Surrender to God what you need to surrender.

What options are available?

- 1. Finger Labyrinths
- 2. Coloring Labyrinths
- 3. Walking Labyrinth (parlor)
- 4. Sanctuary Labyrinth

Reflection Hymn

Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying



Text: Ken Medema, b. 1943

Music: CHILDREN PRAYING, Ken Medema

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Prayers of Intercession

Servant God,

be with those who are not seen and heard in the world, because of their gender or age; their caste or race; their sexuality or lifestyle; their poverty or history. Open our ears and eyes, to hear and see all people as yours.

God of little children,

be with all children, wherever they live, whoever their parents are, whatever their needs, that they would all be welcomed and nourished, enabled to be all you want them to be.

Open our hearts and arms, to welcome all your children.

God of love,

be with all who live with fear, fear of saying the wrong thing, fear of being labelled, fear of themselves or others, fear of you.

Open us all to your endless love, that it might drive out fear.

Teacher God,

be with us all, as we struggle to make sense of your world and your word, as your church, in our communities, as your disciples.

Open our minds and hearts, to learn from you.

God of all,

Creator, Son and Spírít, hear our prayers, spoken and unspoken, offered from the darkness and hope of our hearts, Amen.

Lord's Prayer

Blessing

Blessed are you who make room at your table for in that way even tax-collectors shall be redeemed

Blessed are you who seek out lost sheep for your seeking you find more than a lamb

Blessed are you who touch the leper for you make a home for the excluded

Blessed are you who welcome the prodigal for you express the fullness of the love that is God

Blessed are the silenced for you hear the cry of God

Blessed are you who make friends with your enemy for you know the way to lasting peace

Blessed are you who turn the other cheek for you show more strength than the oppressor

Blessed are you who break bread with the stranger you will have a foretaste of the kingdom

Blessed are you who heal on the Sabbath you will reveal what is important to God

Blessed are you who seek company with the outcast and unclean for you shall be accompanying Jesus

Blessed are you who overturn the tables you are the freedom fighters of love

Blessed are you who love your neighbor for you already live in the realm of God

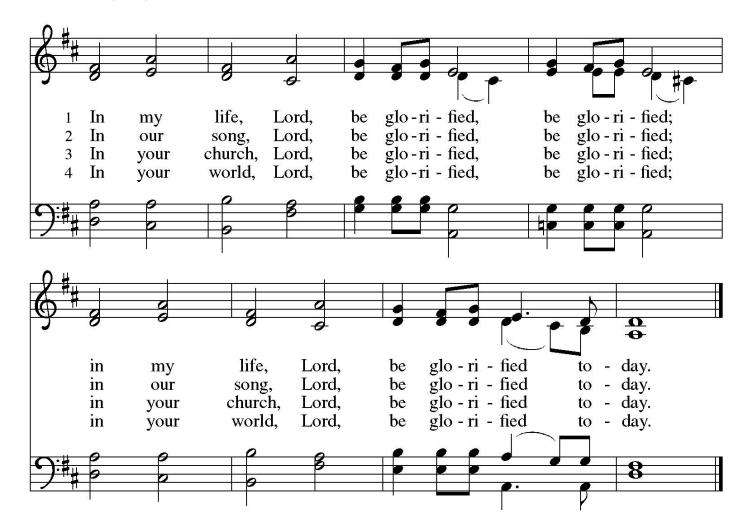
Blessed are you who walk the way for you shall move within the company of heaven

Blessed are you who carry a cross for you shall see God's wisdom

Blessed are you who wait for the morning for you shall see the renewal of life

Closing Hymn

Lord, Be Glorified



Text: Bob Kilpatrick, b. 1952

Music: BE GLORIFIED, Bob Kilpatrick
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Closing Breath Prayer

Inhale: Peace of Christ,

Exhale: guard my heart and mind.

(Philippians 4.7)

We depart in peace and gentleness