



## **TAIZÉ PRAYER**

**Bible Introduction following the Service**

*Thursday, December 2, 7 pm*

*First Week of Advent*

Since its founding in the 1940s, the monastic community of Taizé in France has become a place of pilgrimage for people the world over, seeking spiritual refreshment. Pilgrims are drawn by the spirit of joy, simplicity, and fellowship which permeates the community, as lived out through its unique style of worship: meditative communal prayer rich in complementary silence and song. The music of Taizé, with its distinctive, repetitive chants setting a simple prayer phrase or word of scripture, encourages a contemplative disposition that allows one to go deeper, beyond the mere surface level, into a profound encounter with God in the inner room of the heart.

## Prelude

Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming (arr. Distler)

## Welcome

### Opening Prayer:

Jesus, joy of our hearts, your Gospel assures us that the Kingdom of God is in our midst, and the gates of simplicity, and those of innocence, open within us.

### Song:

Wait for the Lord

The image shows a musical score for the song 'Wait for the Lord'. It consists of two systems of music, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment line. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is common time (C). The lyrics are: 'Wait for the Lord, whose day is near. Wait for the Lord: be strong, take heart!' The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and bar lines.

Text: Isaiah 40, Philippians 4, Matthew 6-7; Taizé Community, 1984  
Tune: Jacques Berthier, 1923-1994  
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## Psalm

*Psalm 85*

O Lord, you once favored your land  
and revived the fortunes of Jacob,  
you forgave the guilt of your people  
and covered all their sins.

Will you not restore again our life  
that your people may rejoice in you?  
Let us see, O Lord, your mercy  
and give us your saving help.

I will hear what the Lord has to say  
a voice that speaks of peace,  
peace for his people and friends

and those who turn to God in their hearts.  
Salvation is near for the God-fearing,  
and Glory will dwell in our land.

Mercy and faithfulness have met;  
justice and peace have embraced.  
Faithfulness shall spring from the earth  
and justice look down from heaven.

The Lord will make us prosper  
and our earth shall yield its fruit.  
Justice shall march in the forefront  
and peace shall follow the way.

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le -

The first system of the musical score is for the vocal line. It is written in treble clef with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#) and a 4/4 time signature. The melody consists of quarter and eighth notes, with lyrics underneath: "Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le -". The accompaniment is in bass clef, featuring chords and moving lines in the left hand.

lu - ia!

The second system of the musical score continues the vocal line. It is written in treble clef with a key signature of two sharps and a 4/4 time signature. The melody features a long note with a fermata over the word "lu" and another long note with a fermata over "ia!". The accompaniment in bass clef provides harmonic support with sustained chords and moving lines.

Music: Jacques Berthier  
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**Reading:** *Luke 2:4-16*

Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.

And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger." Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favour rests."

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about." So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger.

## Song:

Canon—4 voices

1. Gló - ri - a, gló - ri - a, in ex - cé - l - sis De - o!

2. Gló - ri - a, gló - ri - a, al - le - lú - ia, al - le - lú - ia!

Tune: Jacques Berthier, 1923–1994, © 1979, 1988, Les Presses de Taizé, GIA Publications, Inc., agent

## Silence

*The prayer will now continue with several minutes of silence.*

## Intercessions

Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son. Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son.

Music: Jacques Berthier  
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O Wisdom, coming from the mouth of the Most High! You reign over all things from one end of the earth to the other; come and teach us the way of wisdom.

—**Lord Jesus, come soon!**

O Lord and Head of the house of Israel, you appeared to Moses in the fire of the burning bush and gave him the Law on Sinai; come with outstretched arm and ransom us.

—**Lord Jesus, come soon!**

O Morning Star, Splendor of Light eternal and bright Sun of justice; come and shine on all who live in darkness and in the shadow of death.

—**Lord Jesus, come soon!**

O King of the nations, you alone can fulfill their desires; Cornerstone, you make opposing nations one; come and save us. You formed us all from clay.

—**Lord Jesus, come soon!**

O Emmanuel, Hope of the nations and their Savior; come and save us, Lord our God.

—**Lord Jesus, come soon!**

The Spirit and the Bride say, Come!

—**Amen! Lord Jesus, come soon!**

### The Lord's Prayer

Song:

1. Ma - gní - fi - cat, ma - gní - fi - cat, 2. Ma - gní - fi - cat á - ni - ma

3. me - a Dó - mi - num. Ma - gní - fi - cat, ma - gní - fi - cat,

4. Ma - gní - fi - cat á - ni - ma me - a!

Text: Luke 1:46, *My soul magnifies the Lord*; Taizé Community, 1978  
Tune: Jacques Berthier, 1923–1994  
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### Closing Prayer:

Christ Jesus, be our peace; you tell us: Don't be afraid; I am here.

**Song:**

Pre - pare the way of the Lord. Pre -  
pare the way of the Lord, and all peo - ple will  
see the sal - va - tion of our God. (Fine) Pre -

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Musicians: Sonya Harper Nyby, Julia Barber, Ryan Downey, Peter Warren, Christina Labriola



**Bible Introduction following the Service**

Rev. Michael Perry

*Luke 2:4-16: God comes to dwell with us*

*Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.*

*And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news*

*that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.” Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, “Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favour rests.”*

*When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let’s go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about.” So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger.*

For people in the Northern hemisphere, Christmas is the time of year when it is cold, where we find ourselves with our families and eat a lot. A moment where we want to be comfortably reunited with those we love.

But Luke’s narrative of the birth of Jesus, of the first Christmas, doesn’t seem to be remotely close to this. It is about how Joseph and Marie, two young people, were forced by a distant power to leave their home and their family, and to go and be registered in another city. They arrived after a long and probably not easy journey. They did not receive a welcome, and Mary had to give birth where the animals normally live.

The Christmas story is one of immense joy, of good news that will delight all the people: God comes to live among humans, the kingdom of God has never been so close, “glory in heaven and peace on earth”.

But is it possible to talk about joy in a world where there is so much suffering? Does the Christian faith, which has at its heart the suffering and death of Jesus, have something to say about joy? Is joy synonymous with happiness, reserved for those who are well, who have everything they need?

The joy of Christmas is one of contradictions. A joy at once ordinary and extraordinary. Joseph and Mary were just a rather poor young couple, like so many others. But it is in this difficult and ordinary situation that the enormous joy breaks out.

A king is born—but what kind of king? Not one of those who live in palaces, with soldiers to protect them, but a fragile baby, who needs to be cared for. Jesus will remain throughout his life different from what people—even his disciples—were expecting. Yes, he is king, but he is not a king who demands that others die for him; he is a king who gives his life for his people, for all human beings.

That the good news is first addressed to the shepherds is also contradictory. The shepherds were at the bottom of the social ladder of the time, living a hard life outside the cities. Sometimes they were even considered sinners, since their nomadic life kept them from following all the laws of the Torah. But at the same time, King David had been a shepherd, and of course Jesus called himself the good shepherd.

So we have a text about joy that seems to come from nowhere, a text about this ordinary couple, these ordinary shepherds, who experience a God so different from what they expected. Could we experience the same thing in our life?

*Questions:*

1. What resonated with me in this text?
2. What did I not understand? What do I want to go over again?
3. The reflection speaks of immense joy in a difficult moment. Is there a time in your life when you have been joyfully surprised?
4. I think the final paragraph works well as a 4th question. No need to add it into the bulletin as it is already printed in the text.

**Song:**

The image shows a musical score for a song. It consists of two systems of music. The first system has a treble clef and a bass clef, with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a common time signature (C). The lyrics are: "See, I am near, says the Lord. See, I make all things new." The second system continues the melody and accompaniment. The melody is written in the treble clef, and the accompaniment is in the bass clef. There are some notes in the second system that are circled, possibly indicating a specific musical feature or a correction.

1. The grass withers and the flower fades, but the word of our God remains forever.
2. Go up on a high mountain, herald of good news; lift up your voice, do not fear.
3. Here is our God! He comes like a shepherd, he gathers and carries his flock.
4. To whom will we liken God? Who can compare to him? Lift up your eyes and look.
5. Heavens, shout for joy, exult, O earth. The Lord comforts his people.
6. Those who hope in God renew their strength. They shall mount up with wings like eagles.
7. Do not consider the past. God does a new thing, already it emerges, do you not see it?