

Contemplative Space May to November 2025

Session One

Friday 16 May

John 16:16- 22

¹⁶‘A little while, and you will no longer see me, and again a little while, and you will see me.’ ¹⁷Then some of his disciples said to one another, ‘What does he mean by saying to us, “A little while, and you will no longer see me, and again a little while, and you will see me”; and “Because I am going to the Father”?’ ¹⁸They said, ‘What does he mean by this “a little while”? We do not know what he is talking about.’ ¹⁹Jesus knew that they wanted to ask him, so he said to them, ‘Are you discussing among yourselves what I meant when I said, ‘A little while, and you will no longer see me, and again a little while, and you will see me’?’ ²⁰Very truly, I tell you, you will weep and mourn, but the world will rejoice; you will have pain, but your pain will turn into joy.

Two short Readings:

What is real is almost always, to begin with, hidden, and does not want to be understood by the part of our mind that mistakenly thinks it knows what is happening. What is precious inside us does not care to be known by the mind in ways that diminish its presence.

From ‘Hiding’ in Consolations: the Solace, Nourishment and Underlying Meaning of Everyday Words by David Whyte

Metanoia – often translated as ‘repent’ – actually means ‘relook’! Take a step back and look. Prophetic seeing is seeing what is THERE not what hope is there, or we assume is there. It’s about seeing and invoking ACTION.

Prophets call attention so that people’s behaviour changes.

Sharon Moughtin, Vicar of St Mary’s Eco Church (church without walls), Lambeth

Prayers

Psalm 51. 11-12

Do not cast me away from your presence:

Do not take your holy spirit from me.

Give me the joy of your help again:

And strengthen me with a willing spirit.

Prayer found in the Ukrainian Roman Catholic Church of The Holy Family in Exile, Binney St. London

We pray for all those who would fear for tomorrow,
that your Spirit of comfort would draw near to them.

Session 2

Wednesday 20 June

The Holy Spirit Comes at Pentecost

2 When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. ² Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. ³ They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. ⁴ All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues^[a] as the Spirit enabled them. ⁵ Now there were staying in Jerusalem God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven. ⁶ When they heard this sound, a crowd came together in bewilderment, because each one heard their own language being spoken. ⁷ Utterly amazed, they asked: “Aren’t all these who are speaking Galileans?” ⁸ Then how is it that each of us hears them in our native language? ⁹ Parthians, Medes and Elamites; residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia,^[b] ¹⁰ Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya near Cyrene; visitors from Rome ¹¹ (both Jews and converts to Judaism); Cretans and Arabs—we hear them declaring the wonders of God in our own tongues!” ¹² Amazed and perplexed, they asked one another, “What does this mean?”

¹³ Some, however, made fun of them and said, “They have had too much wine.”

¹⁴ Then Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd: “Fellow Jews and all of you who live in Jerusalem, let me explain this to you; listen carefully to what I say. ¹⁵ These people are not drunk, as you suppose. It’s only nine in the morning! ¹⁶ No, this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel:

¹⁷ ‘In the last days, God says, “I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams.

¹⁸ Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy. ¹⁹ I will show wonders in the heavens above and signs on the earth below, blood and fire and billows of smoke. ²⁰ The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord.

²¹ And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.’

The Holy Spirit as Caritas by Hildegard of Bingen

“I am the Supreme and Fiery Force who kindles every living spark....As I circled the whirling sphere with my upper wings (that is, with Wisdom), rightly I ordained it. And I am the fiery life of the Divine essence: I flame above the beauty of the fields; I shine in the waters; I burn in the sun, the moon, and the stars. And, with the airy wind, I quicken all things vitally by an unseen, all-sustaining life. For the air is alive in the verdure and the flowers; the waters flow

as if they lived; the sun too lives in its light; and when the moon wanes it is rekindled by the light of the sun, as if it lived anew. Even the stars glisten in their light as if alive.”

Prayer

God of wind and fire.
May we recognise your Holy Spirit
In the wildness of nature
As much as in the still small voice within us.
Amen.

Session 3

Friday 18 July 2025

Isaiah 2.4

And he shall judge between the nations and will settle disputes for many peoples. They shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning hooks. Nations shall not take up sword against nations, neither shall they learn war anymore.

Song by Pete Seeger (to be played on YouTube)

Last night I had the strangest dream I ever dreamed before I dreamed the world had all agreed To put an end to war. I dreamed I saw a mighty room The room was filled with men And the paper they were signing said They'd never fight again. And when the papers all were signed And a million copies made, They all joined hands and bowed their heads And grateful prayers were prayed. And the people in the streets below Were dancing 'round and 'round And guns, and swords, and uniforms Were scattered on the ground. Last night I had the strangest dream I ever dreamed before I dreamed the world had all agreed To put an end to war.

Prayer

Dear God, We pray for peace and healing in the world. As we unite with love and compassion may conflict dissolve and wounds mend. In harmony may we stand hand in hand with our brothers and sisters always remembering that all of humanity is loved by you unconditionally and with no exception.

Session Four

Friday 15 August

Jeremiah 23: 23-24

Am I a God nearby, says the Lord, and not a God far off? Who can hide in secret places so that I cannot see them? says the Lord. Do I not fill heaven and earth? says the Lord.

Reading:

Noel Davis - from 'The Joy of Living Our Heart's Knowing and Imagining'

Be with Me

Look around with your eyes
and your heart.

You will see and feel Me
everywhere.

Be with Me. Enjoy Me.

Foster all that is good
and share Me.

Prayer

Angela Ashwin - from her 'The Book of a Thousand Prayers'

Lord,

I cannot fathom or hold you;

I can only ask you to take hold of me.

I cannot grasp or contain you in a formula or tradition;

I can only ask you to fill me with yourself,

and make me part of the mystery of your presence

in the world.

Session 5

Friday September 19th



The pale blue dot, our common home, as photographed by Voyager 1 on 14 Feb 1990, 4 billion miles from earth.

Welcome

In this worldwide Season of Creation we are taking time to contemplate our belonging, and our love and care for this good Earth. Today we are invited to locate ourselves in both the vastness of the universe, and the depth of prayer.

Reading 1

Pale Blue Dot – Carl Sagan, 1994

Look again at that dot. That's here. That's home. That's us. On it everyone you love, everyone you know, everyone you ever heard of, every human being who ever was, lived out their lives. The aggregate of our joy and suffering, thousands of confident religions, ideologies, and economic doctrines, every hunter and forager, every hero and coward, every creator and destroyer of civilization, every king and peasant, every young couple in love, every mother and father, hopeful child, inventor and explorer, every teacher of morals, every corrupt politician, every "superstar," every "supreme leader," every saint and sinner in the history of our species lived there - on a mote of dust suspended in a sunbeam.

The Earth is a very small stage in a vast cosmic arena. Think of the rivers of blood spilled by all those generals and emperors so that, in glory and triumph, they could become the momentary masters of a fraction of a dot. Think of the endless cruelties visited by the inhabitants of one corner of this pixel on the scarcely distinguishable inhabitants of some other corner, how frequent their misunderstandings, how eager they are to kill one another, how fervent their hatreds.

Our posturings, our imagined self-importance, the delusion that we have some privileged position in the Universe, are challenged by this point of pale light. Our planet is a lonely speck in the great enveloping cosmic dark. In our obscurity, in all this vastness, there is no hint that help will come from elsewhere to save us from ourselves.

The Earth is the only world known so far to harbour life. There is nowhere else, at least in the near future, to which our species could migrate. Visit, yes. Settle, not yet. Like it or not, for the moment the Earth is where we make our stand.

It has been said that astronomy is a humbling and character-building experience. There is perhaps no better demonstration of the folly of human conceits than this distant image of our tiny world. To me, it underscores our responsibility to deal more kindly with one another, and to preserve and cherish the pale blue dot, the only home we've ever known.

Reading 2

Meister Eckhart

The most powerful prayer, one well-nigh omnipotent, and the worthiest work of all is the outcome of a quiet mind. The quieter it is the more powerful, the worthier, the deeper, the more telling and more perfect the prayer is. To the quiet mind all things are possible. What is a quiet mind? A quiet mind is one which nothing weighs on, nothing worries, which, free from ties and from all self-seeking, is wholly merged into the will of God and dead to its own.

Prayer

We use Alice Walker's invocation and say together the words of William Blake to affirm our mystical participation in the life of the world.

Dear God. Dear stars, dear trees, dear sky, dear peoples. Dear Everything. Dear God.

Pause for silence

To see a world in a grain of sand
And a heaven in a wildflower,
Hold infinity in the palm of your hand
And eternity in an hour.

Amen

Session Six

Friday 17 October

Jeremiah 31: 33

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.

Reading:

Jon Sweeney & Mark Burrows - from 'Meister Eckhart's Book of the Heart - Meditations for the Restless Soul'

The Rest

Don't try to find God.

Simplify your scattered life

and become one

in yourself.

Then God will find you.

The rest

will

follow.

Prayer

Thomas Merton (as quoted on the [Friends of Silence](#) website)

May we all grow in grace and peace,

and not neglect the silence that is printed

in the centre of our being.

It will not fail us.

Session Seven

Friday 21st November

On the lament as the route to hope:

Psalm 23

A Psalm of David.

¹The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not want.

²He makes me lie down in green pastures;

he leads me beside still waters;

³he restores my soul.

He leads me in right paths

for his name's sake.

⁴Even though I walk through the darkest valley,

I fear no evil;

for you are with me;

your rod and your staff—

they comfort me.

⁵You prepare a table before me

in the presence of my enemies;

you anoint my head with oil;

my cup overflows.

⁶Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me

all the days of my life,

and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD

my whole life long.

Reading:

Robert Desnos

The Last Poem (displayed at the Memorial for the Martyrs of the Deportation, Paris)

I have so dreamed of you,

I have so walked, so talked with you,

So greatly loved your shadow,

That there is nothing left to me of you.

And what is left to me

Is to be a shadow among shades,

A hundred times more shadow than the shade,

To be the shadow that will come and come

Into your sunlit life.

Prayer

"O Father of all, we pray to thee for those whom we love, but see no longer. Grant them thy peace; let light perpetual shine upon them..."