

**Third Sunday in Lent**  
**Spiritual Practice to cultivate Acceptance, one of the eight pillars of joy.**  
5:30 p.m., Sunday, March 20, 2022  
Jonesborough Presbyterian Church

(As you enter, please light a candle and place it by the Christ Candle.)

**Gathering music**

**Welcome**

**Chant**

"Nothing Can Trouble"

Text based on saying attributed to Teresa of Avila, 16<sup>th</sup> century  
"Let nothing trouble you; let nothing frighten you. All things are passing;  
God never changes. Patience obtains all things. Whoever possesses God  
lacks nothing: God alone suffices."

Music by Jacques Berthier

***Nothing can trouble; nothing can frighten.***  
***Those who seek God shall never go wanting.***  
***Nothing can trouble; nothing can frighten.***  
***God alone fills us.***

**Scripture**

Ecclesiastes 3:1-8

- <sup>1</sup> For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven:  
<sup>2</sup> a time to be born, and a time to die;  
a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted;  
<sup>3</sup> a time to kill, and a time to heal;  
a time to break down, and a time to build up;  
<sup>4</sup> a time to weep, and a time to laugh;  
a time to mourn, and a time to dance;  
<sup>5</sup> a time to throw away stones, and a time to gather stones together;  
a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing;  
<sup>6</sup> a time to seek, and a time to lose;  
a time to keep, and a time to throw away;  
<sup>7</sup> a time to tear, and a time to sew;  
a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;  
<sup>8</sup> a time to love, and a time to hate;  
a time for war, and a time for peace.

**Silent Reflection.**

**Meditation** Acceptance Meditation from *The Book of Joy* (pages 332-334)

Any possibility of joy requires an acceptance of reality. As the Archbishop and the Dalai Lama both explained, this is the only place from which one can start to work for change, personal or global. The Archbishop said that when one grows in the spiritual life, "You are able to accept anything that happens to you." You accept the inevitable frustrations and hardships as part of life. The question is not: How do we escape it? The question is: How can we use this as something positive? (224)

Meditation is a practice that allows us to quiet the distracting thoughts and feelings so that we can perceive reality and respond to it more skillfully. It helps us to accept our life moment by moment without judgment. (225, 332)

**Centering:** Sit comfortably, resting your hands on your legs or in your lap. Close your eyes and take several long breaths. Pay attention to your breath staying in the present moment.

- 1. Release your focus on your breath and, while staying in the present moment, notice as any thoughts or feelings arise.**
- 2. As the thoughts come up, let them float away without judging them or getting caught up in them.** Begin to start seeing thoughts as thoughts without identifying with them. Just observe each moment without judgment.
- 3. Think of a situation that you are having a hard time accepting.** Perhaps it is a personal difficulty, or it may be a friend's illness or a collective reality such as war.
- 4. Remind yourself that this is the nature of reality.** These painful realities do happen to us, to those we love, and in our world.
- 5. Acknowledge the fact that you cannot know all the actions that have led to this event.**
- 6. Accept that what has happened has already happened.** There is nothing you can do to change the past.
- 7. Remind yourself: "in order to make the most positive contribution to this situation, I must accept the reality of its existence."**
- 8. Reflect on the following passage.**

If something can be done about it, what need is there for dejection?  
And if nothing can be done about it, what use is there for being dejected?

**Prayer** The Serenity Prayer by Reinhold Niebuhr

God, give us the grace to accept with serenity the things that cannot be changed,  
courage to change the things which should be changed,  
and the wisdom to distinguish the one from the other. Amen.

**Chant** "Nothing Can Trouble"

(Please leave in silence.)

## Resources used in preparing tonight's spiritual practice

### Chants

Robert Gass with Kathleen Brehony, *Chanting: Discovering Spirit in Sound* (New York: Broadway Books, 1999), ix.

LNS Choir, "Nothing Can Trouble." YouTube, May 2, 2020,  
[www.youtube.com/watch?v=UuQXTTjx3U8](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UuQXTTjx3U8)

Attr. Teresa of Avila. "Nothing Can Trouble." *Glory to God*, The Presbyterian Hymnal, 2013, #820.

### Acceptance Meditation and Prayer

Dalai Lama, Desmond Tutu, and Douglas Abrams, *The Book of Joy: Lasting Happiness in a Changing World* (New York: Avery, 2016), 223-228, 332-334.