

ST. MARK'S EPISCOPAL CHAPEL

NEW YEAR ORGAN MEDITATION MUSIC, SILENCE, AND LIGHT

“There Will Be Rest” Sara Teasdale

There will be rest, and sure stars shining
 Over the roof-tops crowned with snow,
A reign of rest, serene forgetting,
 The music of stillness holy and low.



I will make this world of my devising
 Out of a dream in my lonely mind.
I shall find the crystal of peace, -above me
 Stars I shall find.

Charles Houmard, *Organist*
January 10, 2021, 4:00 PM
St. Mark's Chapel

Opening Prayer

Ner Tamid (Eternal Flame)

Hayim Nahman Bialik and Linda Pastan, loosely adapted

Think of one who has a harp
and a lithe, quivering soul:
the poet in him or her will speak
the heart's sequestered archive.
Yet as the hand strikes every chord,
one secret remains hidden.
However much the fingers dance,
one string is mute, keeping silent.

The sun has dropped.
The line of light at the horizon,
the hinge between earth
and heaven, is only there
a moment, and then
a seemingly lesser light
quivers into being.

Tonight, you are invited to dwell silently in the music of hymns selected to resonate with our deep desires for connection to the divinity of God, the Son, the Holy Spirit; to each other; and to ourselves—our fears, desires, sorrows, and joys. Rumi has written that a candle is “nothing but a tongue of light/describing a refuge.” In the candlelight of this refuge here at St. Marks, take time to see one another, beyond the masks we wear, and listen for the sound of God’s grace. May you walk peacefully and joyously in and of God’s great creation. - Anne Flammang

*A hymn tune is a melody that is often paired with one or more texts. This pairing of texts to one melody facilitates the ease of congregational singing. Naming hymn tunes dates back centuries and is derived from a variety of sources. Some hymn tunes are closely linked with one text, such as New Britain and “Amazing Grace.” Other hymn tunes have several related texts, such as Slane, most often sung to “Be Thou My Vision.” Carl Daw, a prior rector at St. Mark’s Chapel, was highly regarded for writing hymn texts that he paired with well-known hymn tunes. - Charles Houmard

***Salzburg (Musings for the New Year)**

“The Darkling Thrush” by Thomas Hardy
December 1900

I leant upon a coppice gate
 When Frost was spectre-grey,
And Winter's dregs made desolate
 The weakening eye of day.
The tangled bine-stems scored the sky
 Like strings of broken lyres,
And all mankind that haunted nigh
 Had sought their household fires.

The land's sharp features seemed to be
 The Century's corpse outlent,
His crypt the cloudy canopy,
 The wind his death-lament.
The ancient pulse of germ and birth
 Was shrunken hard and dry,
And every spirit upon earth
 Seemed fervourless as I.

At once a voice arose among
 The bleak twigs overhead
In a full-hearted evensong
 Of joy illimited;
An aged thrush, frail, gaunt, and small,
 In blast-beruffled plume,
Had chosen thus to fling his soul
 Upon the growing gloom.

So little cause for carolings
 Of such ecstatic sound
Was written on terrestrial things
 Afar or nigh around,
That I could think there trembled through
 His happy good-night air
Some blessed Hope, whereof he knew
 And I was unaware.

“The Best” by Lao Tzu
Translated by Stephen H. Ruppenthal

The best, like water,
Benefit all and do not compete.
They dwell in lowly spots that everyone else scorns.
Putting others before themselves,
They find themselves in the foremost place
And come very near to the Tao.
In their dwelling, they love the earth;
In their heart, they love what is deep;
In personal relationships, they love kindness;
In their words, they love truth.
In the world, they love peace.
In personal affairs, they love what is right.
In action, they love choosing the right time.
It is because they do not compete with others
That they are beyond reproach of the world.

Come, Let Us All Praise Him BWV 613

Come, let us all with fervour,
On whom heaven's mercies shine,
To our supreme Preserver
In tuneful praises join.
Another year is gone,
Of which the tender mercies
Each pious heart rehearses
Demand a grateful song

The Old Year Now Hath Passed Away BWV 614

The old year now hath passed away.
We thank Thee, O our God, today
That Thou hast kept us through the year,
When danger and distress were near.

O help us o forsake all sin,
A new and holier course begin,
Mark not what once was done amiss;
A happier, better year be this.

Wherein as Christians we may live,
Or die in peace that Thou canst give,
To rise again when Thou shall come,
And enter Thine eternal home.

There shall we thank Thee, and adore,
With all the angels evermore;
Lord Jesus Christ, increase our faith
To praise Thy name through life and death.

***Es ist ein Ros (Praise of the Virgin)**

Gift from the Sea (excerpt) by Anne Morrow Lindbergh

The here, the now, and the individual, have always been the special concern of the saint, the artist, the poet, and—from time immemorial—the woman. In the small circle of the home she has never quite forgotten the particular uniqueness of each member of the family; the spontaneity of now; the vividness of here. This is the basic substance of life. These are the individual elements that form the bigger entities like mass, future, world. We may neglect these elements, but we cannot dispense with them. They are the drops that make up the stream. [...] When we start at the center of ourselves, we discover something worthwhile extending toward the periphery of the circle. We find again some of the joy in the now, some of the peace in the here, some of the love in me and thee which go to make up the kingdom of heaven on earth.

“The Cricket and the Rose” by Mary Oliver

In fall and nothing more.
the cricket For the cricket's song
beneath the rose bush is surely a prayer,
watches and a prayer, when it is given,

as the roses fall is given forever.
to the very ground This is a truth
that is his kingdom also. I'm sure of,
So they're neighbors for I'm older than I used to be,

one full of fragrance, and therefore I understand things
the other nobody would think of
the harper who's young and in a hurry.
of a single dry song. The snow is very beautiful.

We call this time of the year Under it are the lingering
the beginning of the end petals of fragrance
of another circle, and the timeless body
a convenience of prayer

***Forrest Green (God in nature)**

“Seeing” (excerpt from Pilgrim at Tinker Creek) by Annie Dillard

It was sunny one evening last summer at Tinker Creek; the sun was low in the sky, upstream. I was sitting on the sycamore log bridge with the sunset at my back, watching the shiners the size of minnows who were feeding over the muddy sand in skittery schools. Again and again, one fish, then another turned for a split second across the current and flash! The sun shot out from its silver side. I couldn't watch for it. It was always just happening somewhere else, and it drew my vision just as it disappeared: flash, like a sudden dazzle of the thinnest blade, a sparking over a dun and olive ground at chance intervals from every direction. Then I noticed white specks, some sort of pale petals, small, floating from under my feet on the creek's surface, very slow and steady. So I blurred my eyes and gazed towards the brim of my hat and saw a new world. I saw the pale white circles roll up, roll up, like the world's turning, mute and perfect, and I saw the linear flashes, gleaming silver, like stars being born at random down a rolling scroll of time. Something broke and something opened. I filled up like a new wineskin. I breathed an air like light; I saw a light like water. I was the lip of a fountain the creek filled forever; I was ether, the leaf in the zephyr; I was flesh-flake, feather, bone.

When I see this way, I see truly. [...]

But I can't go out and try to see this way. I'll fail, I'll go mad. All I can do is try to gag the commentator, to hush the noise of useless interior babble that keeps me from seeing just as surely as a newspaper dangled before the eyes. The effort is really a discipline requiring a lifetime of dedicated struggle; it marks the literature of saints and monks of every order of East and West, under every rule and no rule, disalced and shod. The world's spiritual geniuses seem to discover universally that the mind's muddy river, this ceaseless flow of trivia and trash, cannot be dammed, and that trying to dam it is a waste of effort that might lead to madness. Instead you must allow the muddy river to flow unheeded in the dim channels of consciousness; you raise your sights; you look along it, mildly, acknowledging its presence without interest and gazing beyond it into the realm of the real where

subjects and objects act and rest purely, without utterance. “Launch into the deep,” says Jacques Ellul, “and you shall see.” [...]

The literature of illumination reveals this above all: although it comes to those who wait for it, it is always, even to the most practiced and adept, a gift and a total surprise. I return from one walk knowing where the killdeer nests in the field by the creek and the hour the laurel blooms. I return from the same walk a day later scarcely knowing my own name. Litanies hum in my ears; my tongue flaps in my mouth Ailino, alleluia! I cannot cause light; the most I can do is try to put myself in the path of its beam. It is possible, in deep space, to sail on solar wind. Light, be it particle or wave, has force: you rig a giant sail and go. The secret of seeing is to sail on solar wind. Hone and spread your spirit till you yourself are a sail, whetted, translucent, broadside to the merest puff.

In You Is Joy! BWV 615

In The is gladness amid all sadness,
Jesus, Sunshine of my heart!
By Thee are given the gifts of heaven,
Thou the true Redeemer art!
Our souls Thou wakest, our bonds Thou breakest,
Who trusts Thee surely hath built securely,
He stands for ever: Hallelujah!
Our hearts are pining to see Thy shining,
Dying or living to Thee are cleaving,
Nought can us sever: Hallelujah!

Meditations selected by Mary Jo Tryba and Anne Flammang

NEXT ORGAN MEDITATION:

Sunday, January 17th at 4PM (Tentative)