**Contemplative Service for Wednesday**

**August 23, 2023**

[](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Hand_gottes.jpg)

*Hand of God, from Catalonian fresco*

**First reading:** adapted fromJeremiah 31:33-34

The days are surely coming, says the Holy One, when I will make a new covenant with my people. It will not be like the covenant that I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt—a covenant that they broke, though I was their guide. But this is the covenant that I will make with you: I will put my law within you, and I will write it on your hearts, and I will be your God, and you shall be my Beloved Community. No longer shall you teach one another or say to each other, “Know the Lord,” for you shall all know me, every one of you, says the Holy One.

**Music:** “Something Beautiful,” by Sinead O’Connor

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=haYbyQIEgQk>

**Second reading:** from *Days of Awe and Wonder* by Marcus Borg

As a prophet, Jesus called Israel to a national reorientation in which both attitudes and institutions would be conformed to the inclusive compassion of God.

Repentance, though done by individuals, was not a turning from individual “sin” so much as a turning from a certain understanding of God and Israel to a transformed understanding. It called for a departure from the established structures that had shaped and nurtured the existence of those who heard Jesus and turned those listeners to a compassion that would allow them to face a future that was largely unknown […]

Repentance so understood entailed risks. There was not only a risk to the individual who responded, but also a risk to the existence of Israel, for the function of Torah and Temple as institutions preservative of Israel’s cohesiveness would largely disappear if they were subordinated to the paradigm of compassion.

**Music:** “Out of the Depths,” by Sinead O’Connor

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m920jYP002c>

**Time of Silent Contemplation**

Grant, Holy Mystery, Thy Protection;  
And in protection, strength;And in strength, understanding;And in understanding, knowledge;And in knowledge, the knowledge of justice;And in the knowledge of justice, the love of it;And in that love, the love of all existences;And in the love of all existences, the love of You, Great Spirit and all goodness.

—ancient Druid prayer

**Communal blessing**

Great Mystery,

In you, we enter a sacred site of disorientation. We pray that you make our unknowing fruitful. Beneath our feet the soil quivers. Above us the air springs in coils. But you hold us in the center around which all things move and evolve. Let us risk casting seeds, even if we do not know where they will be sown. The garden of our bewilderment will arise in your light and nurture. Look, it is alive with color. All who hunger will be fed here. Amen.

**Music:** “Whomsoever Dwells,” by Sinead O’Connor

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5_CoCepMu7k>

*May your heart be confident and may grace uphold you in all your adventures in faith.*



**Save the date!**

**We will be celebrating OCC Homecoming on Sunday, September 17th!**

**Good food, good friends, lots of fun.**