**Contemplative Service for Wednesday,**

**December 13, 2023**

*Third Week of Advent: Joy*



*15th Century illuminated manuscript, Dutch*

**First reading**: Psalm 94:19

When the cares of my heart are many, your consolations cheer my soul.

**Music**: Excerpt from Busoni’s “Nuit de Noelle” performed by Igor Levit

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sXjJquwsFh4

**Second reading**: from Soren Kierkegaard

[It takes moral courage to grieve; it requires religious courage to rejoice.](https://www.azquotes.com/quote/784902)

**Music**: Partita No. 1 in B flat major—BWV 825 by Bach, performed by Igor Levit

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hg0EItS0cu0

**Time of Silent Contemplation**

*May all I say and all I think  
be in harmony with thee,  
God within me,  
God beyond me,  
maker of the trees.*

*—Chinook prayer*

**Communal Blessing:**

Sacred One,

We enter the Holy of Holies in awe and fear, but are opened to light, openness, and joy. How have we so misunderstood you, God? Your deepest haven is not dark, but alive with freedom. We stretch, we move, we breathe into you. We embrace joy as nourishment and as necessary oxygen. We live our joy in defiance of the world we have always known as broken. Here is your world, made of kindness and joy. We step into it. Amen.

**Music**: “Ode to Joy,” from Beethoven’s 9th Symphony, performed by Igor Levit

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t1f_cDQDEYY>

*May peace and wholeness arrive for you in the form of joy.*