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Taizé Music Opens a Window to the Soul The Midweek Contemplative Service Features Song and Silence

Holy Trinity is enhancing an already rich music and worship tradition with the addition of Taizé music.

Taizé (pronounced teh-ZAY) music is prayer chants of repeated simple phrases, usually from the Psalms or other scripture. The repetition is designed to help prayer and meditation.

Wednesday evening services will become Taizé services, and Taizé music will be added during communion on Sundays.

“The decision was inspired,” said Rector Tim Patterson. “One part of our big Co-Creation 2012 event this past April was an incredibly beautiful and inspiring Taizé service over at First Presbyterian Church. Candlelight in the front of their powerful, elegant sanctuary, several skilled musicians and their instruments, a number of cantors, people joining in the singing in a most heart-felt way, repeating these simple, beautiful melodies, weaving wonderful harmonies, sacred music resonating in the space and vibrating in our hearts, opening us to a deep and shared experience of God’s Presence. It was a profound experience for me, and it reminded me of just how spiritually powerful this kind of Christian contemplative chanting and singing can be.

“Each Wednesday evening can be a still point in our turning week and our often spinning lives, a time to re-center our lives in God.”

– *Tim Patterson*

What Is Taizé?

“Someone described Taizé music in this way: ‘Through singing simple chants, the mind is quieted and the heart is opened as the song becomes prayer,’” Tim added. “We, the clergy, had been in prayer and discernment about what

to do with our Wednesday night Eucharist, which previously had been built almost completely around the unique and considerable gifts of Joshua Varner and his music. As I walked out of the candlelit darkness of that service at First Presbyterian into the April evening air, my heart carried a vision of our new Wednesday service this fall as a Taizé service called Stillpoint, a contemplative Eucharist.”

Tim said the name Stillpoint was inspired by a line in a T. S. Eliot poem that reads, “at the still point of the turning world.”

“Each Wednesday evening can be a still point in our turning week and our often spinning lives, a time to re-center our lives in God,” Tim said. “Then as we began to plan, it occurred to us that the spiritual power of this Taizé



Br. Roger founded the Taizé community in 1940

music might enhance our Sunday morning worship as well. So, we decided to introduce Taizé as the music

during communion, which is a spiritually powerful and emotionally charged part of the service for many people at Holy Trinity. We hope that the Taizé music will deepen and enrich our experience of communion, and we hope people

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Holy Trinity Kicks Off the Fall with New Staff Team

New Energy and Vision Invigorate Programs for the Church

Holy Trinity has a vision for the new program year and a new team to help implement it.

“Last year was such a challenging year and, understandably, a lot of our energy and focus were distracted from our mission, and directed instead toward damage control and just making it through a time of crisis,” said Tim Patterson, rector. “But Holy Trinity has tremendous strength as a community of faith and we have come through it all in good shape, with our health, sense of integrity and spiritual vitality not just intact but renewed. We have put together a new team with some new energy and ideas, we have a renewed sense of direction focused on our mission, and I believe we will hit the ground running this fall.”

Christian Formation

New staff members the Rev. Ginny Bain Inman, the Rev. Greg Farrand, Marjorie Donnelly and Hope Tyler have been featured in recent Parish Posts.

“This tremendously gifted group of people has really gelled into a great working team,” Tim said. He pointed to two examples, Glory Ridge and the new young adult ministry.

This was the first year that Greg, as youth minister; Marjorie, as director of Christian formation; and Hope, as program coordinator for children and youth, worked together to lead Holy Trinity’s annual mission trip to Glory Ridge, a Christian work camp in the North Carolina mountains. About 40 young people and adult leaders spent a week repairing homes for needy people in this rural area by day, then spending time in deep worship and community in the evening.

“This is a 26-year tradition for Holy Trinity,” said Tim, “and from all reports, this year’s Glory Ridge was one of the best weeks we have ever had. I’ve had more than a couple parents tell me that their child told them that Glory Ridge was ‘the best week of my life.’ Considering the source, I take that kind of feedback seriously, given that teens are not known for being lavish in their praise nor for readily sharing the inmost thoughts of their hearts with their parents.”

This fall, an energetic and focused young adult ministry will bring together people in their 20’s through youngish 40’s. Greg Farrand has expanded his role to include young adult ministry, which has long been one of his passions and strengths. Greg will team up with Ginny Inman, Hope Tyler and Ryan Danker to launch a revitalized ministry for young adults.

“Remember,” said Tim Patterson, “when I first arrived at Holy Trinity, I was 36 years old. So, young adult ministry flowed very naturally here for a good number of years and we really grew and solidified that generation as a vital part of the church. But I aged out. And, to be honest, we have kind of neglected bringing an intentional focus to that age group in recent years. So, I am very excited to see this revitalized effort.”

Greg, Ginny Inman and a core group of young adults have planned a variety of social events, service opportunities and a Sunday morning class for this fall.

Gateway and Engagement

Among those young adults is Ryan Danker, who is also the newest member of the staff team. Ryan will serve as Gateway and Engagement Coordinator.

Ann Vaughn retired from the position at the end of July. Ryan will work about quarter-time. His other job is special assistant to the president for church relations at Greensboro College.

“Ann was very good at that job, and it’s hard for some people to imagine anyone else doing it” Tim said, “but Ryan brings many talents to the position. He’s a young, traditional Episcopalian, and a real student of church history, with special focus on what leads to spiritual vitality and growth. Ryan has studied what it takes to be a welcoming church.”

Ryan has a bachelor’s degree in philosophy and religion from Northwest Nazarene; a master’s degree in divinity from Duke University’s School of Divinity; and a doctorate in church history from Boston University.

“I have a passion for bringing people in and welcoming them into the church.”

– Ryan Danker

“Ann Vaughn did such a wonderful job. I’m just trying to learn her system and bring things to add to it. People feel welcome at Holy Trinity and I don’t want to

change that,” said Ryan.

Ryan said he hopes to help make Holy Trinity more accessible to new and established members alike. This is the engagement part of his job title.

“Beyond the welcoming of newcomers, which is vitally important,” said Tim, “I also want Ryan to help us focus on ways we can engage all of our members, at every age and stage of life, as participants in our church’s mission. He’ll look at systems to connect people with people, and people with ministries beyond their initial welcome,”



Photography by VanderVeen Photographers

Dr. Ryan Danker, Gateway and Engagement Coordinator for Holy Trinity

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Godly Play Teaches Children the Wonder of the Bible

Inscribing God's Stories On Children's Hearts

In science class, copying down notes from the teacher only goes so far. Students don't fully grasp each topic until they conduct experiments to gain hands-on knowledge of how the world works, and the best experiments are the ones that don't seem like work but rather feel like play.

Why should learning the stories of the bible be any different?

The Godly Play method is learning the bible in such a way that it becomes inscribed on children's hearts. Godly Play provides an environment that fosters discovery learning and real engagement with scripture in which children feel safe and welcomed.

Children already know something about the presence and mystery of God, even before they have language to express it. In Godly Play, children learn the art of using religious language to encounter God and to find meaning in their lives.

When children come to their Godly Play room, they know that it is a special place. They are greeted at the door by the doorkeeper, instructed to remove their shoes, and then enter the sacred space of the room when ready.

Inside the room, the storyteller is waiting, and each of the children finds a place in the circle. Once everyone is seated, the storyteller brings the story of the day alive through words and silence, movement and stillness, using specialized materials to aid the telling.

The storyteller recites stories from the Hebrew scriptures and New Testament, from the Parables of Jesus and the liturgical year to lay the foundation of the faith.

Godly Play invites children to not only hear scripture as the storyteller recounts the story, but to see it come alive using the materials. The story of the Exodus is told using real sand to describe the perils of the desert and Jesus the Good Shepherd is shared by showing a wooden figure of Jesus seeking out the lost sheep.

After seeing and hearing the story, children are invited to actively participate in what the story means. Much like *lectio divina* for adults, the group is led through a series of questions to find meaning for themselves. Each question starts with "I wonder..." Children draw connections through these questions between the bible story and the story of their own lives.

Next, the children are invited to respond to the story by choosing from a variety of materials. They can pull out the Desert Box to reenact stories in the sand, they can use art materials, or even get out a story box from a previous week. All of these responses help children draw connections between scripture and their own lives.

"This is a spiritual practice for children," noted Marjorie Donnelly, Director of Christian Formation. "It engages their creativity and allows them to make choices in how they respond to the story."



Marty Keeton teaches Godly Play Sunday mornings and during the week for the Holy Trinity Day School.

People new to Godly Play often ask, "Where does the name come from?" The invitation to come and play is based on Jesus's proscription to welcome children and become like them.

Play is fundamental to our nature as humans. Plus, play is fun! We play for the experience of play itself rather than any product the action might produce. Play is a way to know God and to enter God's Kingdom.

//The real fun for me is never exactly knowing in what direction our discussion will go, based as it is on what comes from the children's hearts and minds. Each session is as unique as the children in our care—a joyful journey in God's midst.//

– Marty Keeton, Godly Play Instructor

During play, there is also deep concentration. Sometimes the action appears to speed up so time passes quickly. Other times it slows down so movements appear to be in slow motion.

Parents sometimes wonder why the stories are repeated

over the years. The goal is for children to enter adolescence knowing the stories and seasons of the church. This is accomplished by spiraling back through the biblical stories, just as adults follow the lectionary and repeat biblical passages in church. Each time children and adults re-encounter a story, we bring a fresh set of eyes, a new maturity and have the opportunity for God to touch our hearts in a new way.

"As a mother and a priest, I value the way in which Godly Play imparts the love of God so that children know and understand the stories—that the stories are for them. The ability to enter into the stories makes it real in ways that just hearing the story cannot," said Rev. Ginny Bain Inman.

The heart of Godly Play is creating sacred space, building and working in community, learning religious language, and using that language to make meaning. Godly Play is a rich program that not only nurtures children's creativity but their innate spirituality.

– Marjorie Donnelly, Director of Christian Formation and Rev. Ginny Bain Inman, Clergy Liaison for Children

Glory Ridge Continues to Change Lives

Reflections From a Thin Space



Photograph by Robert Payne

Holy Trinity sent 28 youth, 18 adults and 2 college students to Glory Ridge

For the past several years, I have helped with the extensive planning and preparations for the annual Glory Ridge mission trip.

I have helped with the shopping, packing and loading of the vans. I have waved goodbye to the group as they pulled out of the parking lot. I have worried and prayed over the youth and adults while they were serving on the Ridge.

This year, I was able not only to help with the extensive prep and planning required of each trip, but also to go!

I couldn't know what to expect,

but what I found was one of the most beautiful and rewarding experiences of my life.

Each day was filled with great people, hard but oh-so-satisfying work, thought-provoking worship and an amazing sense of community. Every evening, after the work was all done, the dirt

showered off and the group shared a meal, we would gather in the Worship Pavilion. Through the Rev. Greg Farrand's amazing storytelling and insight, we were able to learn so much about ourselves, each other and God.

Greg said a few times, that this beautiful mountain was a "thin space"—a place where the barrier between our everyday world and the spiritual world is very thin.

I have to agree. Walking along that ridge, watching the youth sing, worship, work and play together, sharing

this magical place with all of the advisors—I could feel God all around me.

That was the easy part. The hard part was leaving.

On the last morning, we met at the top of the ridge for our last circle time together. Instead of holding hands, facing inward as we did the other mornings—we held hands and faced outward.

As I looked all around at the mountain chain, I couldn't help getting choked up. I didn't want to leave this sacred place or these precious young men and women, all of whom are stellar people and great news for our future. I couldn't imagine going back to the "real world."

But, back I came, and I brought with me the spirit of the week and the knowledge that this type of experience is the "real world."

This is what God calls us to do—to help and love one another and to see the enormous beauty in the world, each other and ourselves.

— Hope Tyler, Program Coordinator for Children and Youth

Renovated Youth House Is a Welcoming Space

Remember when EYC was in the (often flooded) basement of Holy Trinity? At the Boy Scout Hut? At the Franciscan Center? In the Haywood Duke Room? At the Big Yellow House?

For the last 25 years, Holy Trinity's EYC has wandered from location to location like the tribes of Israel.

Several years ago, EYC finally settled in the Merrimon Building on the corner of Smith and Greene.

With our new space, we've been able to expand our program from one youth group to three youth groups meeting on Sunday. Other groups like Kindermusik and Prayerful Yoga use it throughout the week.

We want the Youth House to be a

space that will help facilitate rich community, great conversation, healthy spiritual formation and a whole lot of fun. We desire this space to communicate to our youth that they are important and we care enough about them to



An interior designer and artist generously donated their talents to envision a new youth space. This is a concept illustration that guided the planning.

create a wonderful gathering space for EYC, Sunday school, lock-ins, dinners, coffeehouses and many other youth activities. We have been working hard all summer to make this renovation a reality and want to invite everyone to our grand re-opening.

On Sunday, September 9th, as a part of our Fall kick-off event, we will have a ribbon cutting ceremony and blessing of the Youth House to celebrate the teenagers and recognize this new chapter in youth ministry. Please join us for this event.

— Robert Payne, Youth Advisor and Greg Farrand, Minister for Youth and Young Adults

Learn to Carry Deep Peace with Welcoming Prayer

Mary Dwyer to Lead Workshop on October 5

How do we carry the deep peace that passes all understanding that sometimes occurs in prayer or during a church service into our daily life? Mary Dwyer, Contemplative Outreach Resource Faculty, international retreat leader, and a long time practitioner of Centering Prayer, will be with us on Friday, October 5th for a one-day workshop on The Welcoming Prayer.

The Welcoming Prayer helps us to actively let go of thoughts and feelings that support our false-self system. Thomas Keating in his book *Open Mind, Open Heart* says: "The Welcoming Prayer is a practice of 'letting go' in the present moment in the ordinary routines of daily life. . . [so that] the ordinary events of daily life become our spiritual practice . . . The routine of daily life is the path to holiness for lay folks. Contemplative prayer is aimed at transforming daily life with its never-ending round of ordinary activities."

Cynthia Bourgeault suggests in her book *Centering Prayer and Inner Awakening* that this welcoming practice turns our daily life into virtually a limitless field for inner awakening. Bourgeault points out that this practice teaches us to notice how a "triggering event" starts our "pre-recorded" tapes and how we might use the Welcoming Prayer to interrupt this cycle and offer a different response. Bourgeault describes this spiritual practice as one that "combines deep surrender

with a gutsy, unflappable presence."

The Welcoming Prayer helps us to gently become aware of our bodies and our interior state. The Contemplative Outreach programs teach that there is never a thought, feeling or emotion that does not have a corresponding body sensation. Each experience is imprinted in every cell of our body. The Welcoming Prayer is a way to embrace or welcome our daily experience.

Thomas Keating says we are to lead ordinary lives with extraordinary love and The Welcoming Prayer offers us a practical way to respond in love instead of react in anger or fear to what is happening.

Mary Dwyer, a former member of Chrysalis House, lived with Mary Mrozowski—the founder of Welcoming Prayer. Currently a participant in the Living Flame Program, Dwyer is deeply involved with the Welcoming Prayer Service Team. She was a Licensed Clinical Social Worker in Erie, PA until moving to Miami. Mary gives retreats and workshops throughout the US and internationally.

Bourgeault claims that The Welcoming Prayer is the most potent spiritual practice for engaging the attention of the heart and applying it to the total transformation of our lives.

— Ruth Anderson

New Staff *(continued from page 2)*

"If you get an invitation that's general and broad, you think, 'That's nice,'" Ryan said. "But someone reaches out and says, 'I want you.' That's different."

Servant Leadership School

At the Servant Leadership School of Greensboro, Amelia Poole has left after many fine years of service, and the Rev. Tonja Thorpe comes in as coordinator and leadership/education consultant. She has a bachelor's degree from Laurel University, a master's degree in divinity from Hood Theological Seminary and is doing doctoral work in spiritual transformation at Northern Seminary.

Tonja's first exposure to Servant Leadership was at a training workshop at the Servant Leadership School in 2005.

"It was a transformational experience for me," she said. "Where the concepts were not necessarily new, the language was. I held the intention of coming back, engaging with the school, its teaching and practices. The way just opened."

"Tonja brings us not only organizational skills but also a mature faith with many interests including healing touch, the labyrinth and the development of leaders in ministries. We are blessed to have Tonja with us," said Ruth Anderson,

director of the Servant Leadership School.

"Last year was a hard year for Holy Trinity," Tim said. "We went through a lot of change. But the pieces of the puzzle have fallen into place. This group of people enjoys working together as a staff, they bring complementary talents, a common commitment to our mission as a church, and I think they will take us in exciting and energizing new directions."

— Harriette Knox



Rev. Tonya Thorpe, Coordinator and Leadership/Education Assistant for SLS

The Rev. Timothy J. Patterson
Rector

Return service requested

The Rev. Virginia N. Herring
The Rev. Ginny Bain Inman
Assistants

Taizé *(continued from page 1)*

will join in the singing and experience it as a form of prayer in community.”

Organist and Associate Choir Master Ben Brafford said Holy Trinity has used Taizé music over the years. Several Sunday services in August included Taizé songs during communion, and more will be added during the fall.

Origins of Taizé

The Taizé community, in Taizé, a small village in the Burgundy region of France, is an ecumenical monastic order of about 100 Protestant and Roman Catholic monks devoted to peace and justice through prayer and meditation. Founded in 1940 by Brother Roger Louise Schutz-Marasaucheleft, today Taizé draws literally thousands of young Christian pilgrims each year for prayer, meditation and worship inspired by the special music of Taizé.

The Taizé web site (www.Taizé.fr/en) notes that “singing is one of the most essential elements of worship. Short songs, repeated again and again give it a meditative character. . . Meditative singing thus becomes a way of listening to God.”

Assistant to the Rector Ginny Inman explained that for people who have not grown up in a church, hymns can be daunting to sing. “Taizé is easy and accessible,” she said. “It’s music that people can rest in.” She added that when teachers introduced a Taizé song at Holy Trinity’s Vacation Bible School this summer, the children loved it so much they wouldn’t stop singing.

Ginny Herring, assistant to the rector, noted that while the music can be complex, “only a few words are sung over and over, but the musicians can expand on it.”

Ben said Holy Trinity will start with piano, organ and voices. Taizé music can include string, wind and percussion instruments. Ben has prepared for the addition of Taizé by singing the pieces, listening to recordings and studying Taizé services from all over the world.

“Some Taizé pieces have myriad layers of vocal music that will occur over the repetition of the main theme the congregation sings,” Ben said.

Because the lines are repeated over and over, there is technically no “end” to the songs. Ben explained that Taizé songs can be as long, or longer, than hymns we use now.

“The time to end a song will feel organic to the congregation,” said Ben. “The piano will drop out during the final repetition of the piece.”

It may sound complicated, but the congregation will need little instruction.

“We are asking the congregation to participate more than usual, to feel more welcome to sing,” Ben said. “These pieces are simple, and once the singing is there, the spiritual component takes over. At first, people may be reluctant to join in rather than just have the service flow over them, but I hope they’ll feel welcome to leave that observer role and become creators.”

“Taizé music adds a depth of prayer and contemplation that allows the mind to rest and the heart to open,” Ginny Herring said. “I think people will like the gentleness, the quiet, the kindness of the liturgy. Spoken and sung words flow together in a very peaceful way.”

– Harriette Knox

“Taizé music adds a depth of prayer and contemplation that allows the mind to rest and the heart to open.”

– Virginia Herring