

# Quiet Space for Reflection

July 14, 2020

**Practice of Presence:** While seated in a quiet place, feet on the floor, hands in lap, eyes closed, take 3 slow, intentional deep cleansing breaths.

**Lectio Divina** A sacred reading adding intentional meditation on the words as one reads

**Read silently** (reflect)

**Read aloud to yourself** (then, respond silently to yourself)  
(or say your thoughts aloud to someone with you)  
(or e-mail them to our group to share.)

**Rest in your reflections** (perhaps re-read the passage again to affirm what it has to say to you)

## **First Reading:**

“The earth is the Lord’s and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it.” ~ Psalm 24:1

## **Second reading:**

### **A prayer of Confession and Repentance on Finally Admitting Culpability**

O God, you have already shown us how it should be.  
From the first moments of the heavens and the earth,  
Your winds swept over us as a catalyst for change.  
As you made each atom dependent on another,  
You put into motion a system of interdependence.  
You declared that it was good.  
You asked humanity to steward that design.

And today you are doing the same.  
Your wind is sweeping over us – begging us to change.

You have created humanity to depend on each other.  
While those of us with less melanin in our skin  
Have chosen to look out for ourselves alone.

You long for us to value our interdependence.  
Instead, those of us who see ourselves over-represented  
In culture, media, and literature claim what is  
Good and better and best for our own.

You declared that it is all good.  
While white people have bruised and broken and battered this gift.

You asked us to take care of what’s been given to us.  
And those of us who have been the oppressors, have squandered it  
With no thought of the immense sacrifices that have been made.

For you see, God . . .  
Somewhere along the way,  
We forgot.

(Or maybe we never truly knew, or simply didn't fully believe you.)

We began to worship ourselves.

Our whiteness.

We began to believe the false narrative.

That the absence of color is equal to purity, light, life.

But we missed your message entirely.

For the world you created requires all hues and calls them all good.

And one color simply cannot exist without the other.

Our idolatry limits us from seeing that the world around us is

More full, more whole, more rich,

Than the limited, white-washed world we have attempted to create.

Forgive us, O God

For sheltering us from your winds.

For deciding that we know better and that we are better.

For forgetting to love all of your people as you do.

For harming our black and brown brothers and sisters

With our actions

And our inactions.

And if we cannot be forgiven by the ones whom we have so deeply failed,

Let us press on anyway.

Let us work towards justice –

Because God requires it.

Let us deny ourselves so that others might thrive, succeed, live –

Because God demands it.

Let us love and encourage and uphold and lift up and elevate –

Because God commands it.

May we eradicate feelings of racial superiority.

May we make reparations for the actions of our forebearers –

and for our own misdeeds.

May we seek justice and mercy as we humble ourselves before you

and your creation who we have failed.

Compel us, O God

To know and believe that your entire creation is good.

Compel us, O God

To live, not as it has been, but as it should be.

Amen.

~ Rev. Courtney Jones Willis, Associate Pastor, First Baptist Church,  
Greensboro, NC, graduate of Elon University and Princeton Seminary

**Guided Breath Meditation (5 minutes)** by Denise Pastoor. Hover your cursor over the site, press "control" & left click at the same time, and it will open.

<https://www.facebook.com/denise.pastoor/videos/10216263185069352/>