

# Meditations with music

The following meditations were written for us in evening devotions for the Birmingham District ministers' retreat in 2017.

The Bible readings set a context.

The meditations were written to be read before listening to the music, but if helpful can be referred to during the music to help focus.

## Letting go, letting God.



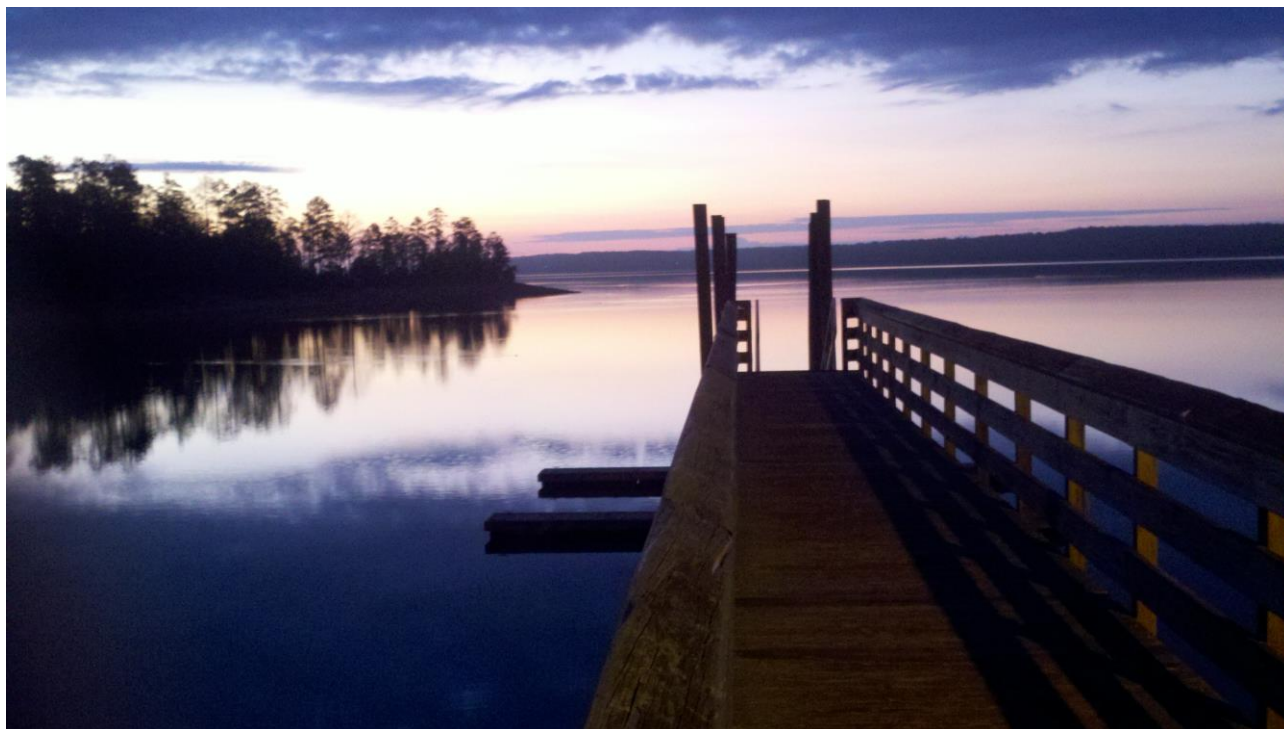
**Bible Reading:**  
Matthew 4: 12 - 16

### **Meditation**

The bell tolls,  
a time for letting go,  
a letting go of that which gets in the way,  
of that which holds you back.  
A release into the deeper realities,  
into the deeper complexities,  
A release into the heart of God,  
into the glimmer of light  
shining in the darkness.

into the all surrounding love  
that encompasses all.

Music: Arvo Pärt: Cantus in memoriam Benjamin Britten  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sp2oxWdRMuk>



# Generation gap?



## **Reading:**

Matthew 9: 16 - 17

Matthew 13: 52

## **Meditation:**

A clash of cultures,  
Ancient choir and modern jazz,  
The new transforms the old,  
opening up undreamed of possibilities;  
the old gives depth to the new  
undergirding with the wisdom of the ages.  
In contrast, yet in harmony  
breathtaking, yet challenging beauty emerges.  
There are tensions in the collision,  
sometimes hard to live with,  
but essential for creativity.  
God's creativity  
works with the tensions  
for a divine purpose,  
can we?

## **Music**

Officium: Hillyard Ensemble and Jan Gabarek

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0\\_dmQ7-b-c](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0_dmQ7-b-c)





# The depth of ambiguity

## Reading:

Luke 9: 23 - 25



## Meditation:

Happy or sad  
teasing uncertainty  
context is all  
Strange how potent cheap music is  
Moving to tears  
invoking memory, association,  
reminding of the beauty in ambiguity,  
pointing to a deeper sense of what is real.  
touching on what really matters,  
gaining life and losing it,  
a cross the symbol of glory  
the divine mystery at the heart of creation.

## Music:

La, la land: Epilogue

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W7QLflqniZs&index=13&list=PLywiNEAPE4I9mIv\\_edkzGeyJkeJmB9b8J](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W7QLflqniZs&index=13&list=PLywiNEAPE4I9mIv_edkzGeyJkeJmB9b8J)



**Suggested hymn:** StF 485: When we are living

## A shaft of light



**Reading:** Luke 2: 22 - 32

### **Reflection**

An old man in a dark temple  
Looking for light  
Promised the light  
And there is a family,  
with a new born child.  
And into his hopes,

into his fears,  
a light shines  
In his ordinariness  
he glimpses the extraordinary.  
'A light to lighten the gentiles'

And later we hear the voice of this child:  
'While I am in the world,  
I am the light of the world'  
But is he in the world now?  
We see the darkness,  
We fear the uncertainty  
Where does the light break in?  
Where does it shine on us?  
How does the light shine through us?

And shining what does it show?  
A lighting up of the ordinary,  
the humdrum made sacred,  
as the oboe cuts into the  
rum-ti-tum of the clarinets,  
so a shaft of his light transforms  
into wondrous beauty.

But light also uncovers darkness,  
the darkness of poverty,  
of injustice, of hatred,  
of divisive power.  
the light of Christ reveals it for what it is.

Shining light in dark places  
raises questions,  
sharpens issues  
taking on the powers of darkness  
needs courage.

Can we long for the light of Christ,  
the light of love, of peace, of justice,  
Unless we are prepared let it shine through us?

**Music:** Adagio from Serenade for 13 wind instruments: Mozart

**<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5BWN1KuXGVM>**



