



# FIRST-SUNDAY CONTEMPLATIVE SITTING

OCTOBER 2020 • CHOOSE LIFE

*"I set before you, life and death, blessing and curse. Choose life, then, that you and your descendants may live ..."*

*— Deuteronomy 30:19*

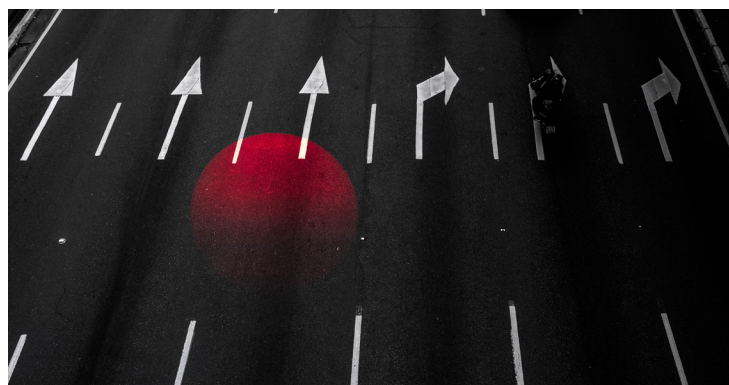
**H**ow many choices have you made today since you put your feet on the floor and got out of bed this morning? What to wear? What to eat for breakfast? Many of our daily choices become routine; this frees us to spend more time on choices that actually require more conscious awareness.

*"Between stimulus and response there is a space. In that space is our power to choose our response. In our response lies our growth and our freedom."*

*— Victor Frankl*

In the coming weeks we are being called to exercise our right and duty to vote in national, state, and local elections. Let us take a deep breath and relax into the fears and the hopes we have for our country at this time. What are you thinking as you prepare to vote? What are you feeling as we approach the elections? Hold these thoughts and feelings in your heart ... in prayer following your breath in and out.

Our country is in the ninth month of the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic has disrupted our everyday life. We understand that the restrictions placed on us by governmental and congregational leaders are for our own protection and that of others in our communities. We continue to pray for those who have died, those suffering from the disease, and those who have lost family and



friends. We remember also all hospital staff and first responders, all who in any way serve us in these difficult times. Spend some time reflecting on how these limitations have been both a burden and a gift, a heartache and a healing, a sorrow and a grace.

Recently, our Congregational leadership presented us with Horizon 2030, which laid out the future implications for our Adrian Campus in light of our changing demographics and the planet's changing climate. As we look to the future we understand that we will not be needing all of our buildings in Adrian and in our response lies our growth and our freedom. Amazing!

May we take each other's hands, face into the wind, and co-create a new future on this land worthy of our lives and loves. May we sit quietly, pray, or share with one another our response to the future changes on campus. Could it be true that in our response, yours and mine lies our continued growth and freedom? May the One who calls us by name, smile upon us as we grow our capacity to release and let go in love.

# CONTEMPLATIVE SITTING

*Mindfulness gives you the inner space and quietness to look deeply,  
listen well, and be alive, awake and aware.*

- In stillness dwells the calm abiding Presence. I rest in you.
- There beyond reason, and thought is the One who draws me on. Be still my soul.
- Nothing to do, nowhere to go, no bells and whistles, only silence. I am free.

*Mindfulness, that deep silent encounter with the innermost center of our being.  
Therein grows our capacity for the universe, for spirit, for God.*

Remember, AWARENESS is key – awareness I am sad, awareness I am cranky, awareness I am withholding, awareness I am at ease, awareness of such felt gratitude.

Awareness of just what is without blame or judgment or criticism ... Awareness is the gift.

## **Mindfulness Practice: Set a time of 5, 10, or more minutes.**

Gently in silence, invite yourself to be with whatever you are aware of, whatever is arising in you ... thoughts or feelings ... breathing into it and out ...

- If what you are aware of is unpleasant, difficult or brings dis-ease, focus your breath there and allow the discomfort to soften and release.
- If your awareness is pleasant, receive it with a smile and release, pass it on. Each time returning to the breath, in and out.
- If your mind wanders, gently bring it back to the breath flowing in and out.

## **Simple mindful verses: You may choose just one to practice.**

- Breathing in, I know I am breathing in. Breathing out, I know I am breathing out.
- Breathing in ... breathing out, breathing in ... breathing out, in and out.
- Breathing in, 2,3,4. Breathing out, 2,3,4.
- Breathing in, I am aware of my heart, Breathing out, I smile at my heart.

Let your imagination name any part of your body you wish; you could name friends, family, co-workers, elements of the cosmos, Earth, and other species.

My responses to this First Sunday reflection:

