

A Psalm from New Orleans
May 10, 2017

Trinity Episcopal Church, St. Charles Avenue Presbyterian Church,
Temple Sinai, and St. Charles Avenue Baptist Church

O Lord, I am tired and burned out
I am full of doubt and need assurance that you are with me
Tell me you are with me and with my family
Tell me you are near as I grow old

The spiritual whiplash of certain nightmares
has haunted me for months
In despair I cried to the Lord,
"What has become of our nation?"
In autumn last, our collective soul was frozen.

How far are you from my presence?
Lord, we peer out at you through the Hubble telescope
into an ever expanding creation.
Have you gone with the expansion?
Have you left us alone in the boondocks of the universe?
What has become of you, O God?

Even through my cries and questions,
through fog of pain and uncertainty,
through loss and unbearable change
I feel you invisible—there.
Through sunlight of joy I know you—
visible with me.

When I am filled with gratitude, your joy enraptures me.
When I am sad, your spirit buoys me.
When I am fearful, your presence steadies me.
When I weep for my child or town or nation,
your love holds me together.
In all these things, you keep me safe and sane.

In you, O God, I find my purpose
sometimes tangible

yet so ineffable and changing
Your grace abounds and
it fills the void.

Through stormy seas of trouble and despair,
You, my God, are a beacon of light that
guides me to safe shores.

I will wait for you.
I will keep my praise strong
for your plans for me are good
and I am grateful.
Even though I am missing your presence,
I know you will always be with me.

You open a glorious door to me;
I know you are near
in the warmth of light
in the touch and feel of breath
in the comfort of love
in the color of the pen with which I write these words.

I speak to you in poetic phrase
and my spirit is expressed and released—
I am closer to you now;
more one with my God.

In the morning I rise and walk
with eyes wide open to notice
and adore.
Spying “breadcrumbs” that you, my Creator,
leave for me along my way.
You remind me that you are walking with me always.

I see you in a single blossom,
a wise old oak, a friend.
You paint the mountain with flowers of all colors—
you give loving attention to each little blossom—
a masterpiece of beauty.
And again I know I am never alone.

Keep me enveloped in your love, O God.
May I know your protection and your eternal spirit
as I praise you with my life.

Praise the Lord with strings and brass
violins and cellos, violas and basses
trumpets and horns
trombones and tubas
oboes and flutes and clarinets
bassoons and contra bassoons
harps and pianos
organ and singing
percussion and dance

Listen for me as I listen for you.
Hear my now as I praise you.
Praise the Lord.
Praise the Lord.
Praise the Lord.