

Nicolaus von Zinzendorf

Nicolaus von Zinzendorf (1700-1760) was a Count of the Holy Roman Empire who always had more interest in religious matters than in affairs of court. Following studies at the pietist center of Halle, he developed his own “theology of the heart,” which placed great emphasis on a close personal relationship with the suffering Savior. This “heart religion” was not just inner emotion, however, but was to result in a life totally devoted to the Savior. “All of life becomes a liturgy,” said Zinzendorf, and even the most mundane task can be an act of worship.

Always a champion of the underdog, he granted asylum to Czech Protestant exiles. Following a unifying experience on August 13, 1727, in their settlement of Herrnhut on his estate, the old church of the Unitas Fratrum or Bohemian Brethren was reborn and developed a rich liturgical and devotional life. This Moravian Church as it came to be called launched pioneer mission work, first in the Caribbean and then around the world.

Zinzendorf himself became a bishop, and devoted his personal fortune to furthering the work of the church.

He was an early advocate of ecumenism, and in America he attempted to bring Protestant denominations together in the “Pennsylvania Synods.” He was not a systematic theologian, but produced numerous theological writings, widely read in Germany. In addition to these, he was a prolific hymn writer, and many of his hymn texts remain in use today in the Moravian Church and beyond. His view of the church is summed up in his stanza:

Christian hearts, in love united,
seek alone in Jesus rest;
has he not your love excited?
Then let love inspire each breast.

Members on our Head depending,
lights reflecting him, our Sun,
brethren—his commands attending,
we in him, our Lord, are one.

(Moravian Book of Worship 1995: 673)

Leader: Peace on each one who comes in need,

All: ***Peace on each one who comes in joy.***

Leader: Peace on each one who offers prayers,

All: ***Peace on each one who offers song.***

Leader: Peace of the Maker, Peace of the Son,

All: ***Peace of the Spirit, the triune one.***

Psalm 101

Blessed are those who fear the Lord.

1 I will sing of faithfulness and justice; •
to you, O Lord, will I sing.

2 Let me be wise in the way that is perfect: •
when will you come to me?

3 I will walk with purity of heart •
within the walls of my house.

4 I will not set before my eyes •
a counsel that is evil.

Blessed are those who fear the Lord.

Leader: O God, for your love for us, warm and brooding, which has brought us to birth and opened our eyes to the wonder and beauty of creation,

All: ***We give you thanks.***

Leader: For your love for us, wild and freeing, which has awakened us to the energy of creation: to the sap that flows, the blood that pulses, the heart that sings,

All: ***We give you thanks.***

Leader: For your love for us, compassionate and patient, which has carried us through our pain, wept beside us in our sin, and waited with us in our confusion,

All: ***We give you thanks.***

Leader: For your love for us, strong and challenging, which has called us to risk for you, asked for the best in us, and shown us how to serve,

All: ***We give you thanks.***

Leader: O God we come to celebrate that your Holy Spirit is present deep within us, and at the heart of all life. Forgive us when we forget your gift of love made known to us in Jesus, and draw us into your presence.

John 16:16–22

Jesus said, “A little while, and you will no longer see me, and again a little while, and you will see me.” Then some of his disciples said to one another, “What does he mean by saying to us, ‘A little while, and you will no longer see me, and again a little while, and you will see me’; and ‘Because I am going to the Father’?” They said, “What does he mean by this ‘a little while’? We do not know what he is talking about.” Jesus knew that they wanted to ask him, so he said to them, “Are you discussing among yourselves what I meant when I said, ‘A little while, and you will no longer see me, and again a little while, and you will see me’? Very truly, I tell you, you will weep and mourn, but the world will rejoice; you will have pain, but your pain will turn into joy. When a woman is in labor, she has pain, because her hour has come. But when her child is born, she no longer remembers the anguish because of the joy of having brought a human being into the world. So you have pain now; but I will see you again, and your hearts will rejoice, and no one will take your joy from you.

Sharing of the day

Prayer

Leader: We bring to God someone whom we have met or remembered today and for whom we want to pray; Holy One, ***We ask your blessing.***

Leader: We bring to God someone who is hurting tonight and needs our prayer; _____
Holy One, ***We ask your blessing.***

Leader: We bring to God a troubled situation in our world tonight _____
Holy One, *We ask your blessing.*

Leader: We bring to God, silently, someone whom we find hard to like or forgive or trust
Holy One, *We ask your blessing.*

Leader: We bring ourselves to God that we might grow in generosity of spirit,
clarity of mind, and warmth of affection. Holy One, *We ask your blessing.*

Hymn 656

1 Blest are the pure in heart,
For they shall see our God;
The secret of the Lord is theirs;
Their soul is Christ's abode.

2 The Lord, who left the sky
Our life and peace to bring,
And dwelt in lowliness with men
Their pattern and their King,--

3 Still to the lowly soul
He doth Himself impart;
And for His cradle and His throne
Chooseth the pure in heart.

4 Lord, we Thy presence seek;
Ours may this blessing be;
O give the pure and lowly heart,
A temple meet for Thee.

Closing responses

Leader: O Trinity of Love, You have been with us at the world's beginning,

All: ***Be with us till the world's end.***

Leader: You have been with us at our life's shaping,

All: ***Be with us at our life's end.***

Leader: You have been with us at the sun's rising

All: ***Be with us till the day's end. Amen***

All:

Lord make me an instrument of your peace

Where there is hatred let me sow love.

Where there is injury, pardon.

Where there is doubt, faith.

Where there is despair, hope.

Where there is darkness, light.

Where there is sadness joy.

O Divine master grant that I may

**Not so much seek to be consoled as to
console**

To be understood, as to understand.

To be loved, as to love

For it is in giving that we receive

**And it is in pardoning that we are
pardoned**

**And it is in dying that we are born
To eternal life. Amen**

Leader: And now may the God of hope bring us such joy and peace in believing that we overflow with hope in the power of the Holy Spirit. ***Amen***