

A8 | Awaken to God's Presence: Finding Calm in the Storm | Holding in the Light  
Project Zion Podcast

Joelle Wight

A gift of peace in the midst of troubling times Project Zion Podcasts offers this series of guided practices to help you connect with the Divine no matter where you are, what's going on around you. Take a deep breath and allow your spirit to find calm in the storm of life thing.

Katie Harmon-McLaughlin

Hi, this is Katie Harmon-McLaughlin with Community of Christ Spiritual Formation Ministries. This week I invite you to join me in the spiritual practice of holding in the light. Holding in the light comes to us from the Quaker tradition and is a form of intercessory prayer in which we hold ourselves or those who are owner hearts in the light of God's healing love and presence. There are many times when we feel the impulse to pray, but don't have the words when we yearn, toe hold each other close and offer comfort and healing in the midst of challenging life circumstances, but wonder what we should pray for or what prayer looks like, or how prayer is expressed. Holding in the light is a powerful form of prayer that does not rely on words, but instead invites us to a single simple image that is rich throughout our Christian heritage in Scripture and story and song. This image is the light of God in light is a powerful image in the Quaker tradition. Right now I have a candle lit on my desk, and I am watching the slow, gentle flicker of the flame noticing the light and the heat, seeing the shadows that are illumined every time it moves in their direction. For this time of prayer, you are invited to bring to mind a situation that is on your heart. Perhaps it is something in your own life or something for which you are praying for a loved one. Maybe it's a situation for our global community, something that feels especially present within you today. If you choose, you can pause this recording and get a candle and light it yourself, gazing at the candle as you enter this time of prayer. Or you can let the candle or the light simply be an image in your mind, using it as a metaphor and as a way to focus your hearts attention.

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So first, let's enter this time of prayer by quieting within letting your breath slow can deep in as you find yourself fully present here and now, if you feel restless or distracted or busy in your mind, simply bring that also to God, bringing whatever you come with into this time of prayer and letting it gradually settle as a space of receptivity opens within. And now bring to mind that person or persons for whom you would like toe hold in prayer. Know that in this time of prayer, no words are necessary. Just this simple image and impulse. Toehold in love and healing and light. If you have a candle lit, you may gaze steadily at the flame as a point of focus, or you may choose to close your eyes. Imagine a light growing within. If it helps to visualize, you might bring to your imagination that person or situation for whom you are praying and gently slowly begin to imagine, then being touched, flooded, held by this sacred life. For the next few moments in the silence, hold them in this light of God, trust that no words are necessary and rest in tow. What unfolds for you in this time of prayer? If in the silence another person or situation comes to mind, you may also hold them in the light. Doing this as many times as it feels necessary or natural to you.

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Let's begin by entering this time of silence and holding these names of people in situations into the light of God's healing love and presence.

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Rest in this place of holding in God's light for a few more moments.

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Notice if there is anything you are invited to see or feel as you hold those who come to your heart in prayer in God's light. The Quakers believe that the light of God is intrinsically within us all. This is part of the reason why, for them, peace and Nonviolence are such an important posture of everyday life. How can we harm or destroy another who is a container for this Divine light needed to illuminate a hurting world? As you continue throughout your day, returning to this practice whenever you need, let this sense of God's light go with you, recognizing it within yourself, filling you, holding you a part of who you are and notice it also within others. Look for opportunities to let your light shine and to notice that light shining in those you encounter throughout your day when you don't know how or what to pray. But you feel the impulse to. Hold another in love. Even if there is distance between you, you can return to this practice of holding in God's light of healing love and peace. From John 1, "What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness and the darkness does not overcome it" Amen.