

Welcome to Meditation & Beer at Christ's Church Cathedral with Hamilton's Well. In a few minutes, we will begin with a 20-minute simple silent meditation. Some of you may have a lot of experience with meditation for others this may be new. You are all deeply welcome.

If you haven't joined us before, please take a moment to look at the back of the cards that were on your chairs to familiarize yourself with our ground rules.

Research has shown that the practice of daily meditation helps reduce anxiety and stress and helps us develop a resilience to live well in the complexities of modern life. One way we find helpful and recommend is the use of what is called an anchor word or a mantra-based form of meditation. The Benedictine monk John Main developed the use of an anchor word meditation using the word 'Maranatha' which roughly translated means 'The presence of the divine.'

In this approach to meditation. We gently repeat the anchor word, split into four syllables 'ma-ra-na-tha' in tandem with our breath to help us focus and still our mind. At first we try to still the cacophony of competing voices in our mind by bringing attention to the anchor word. So when we feel distracted or feelings arise, we come back to our anchor word as a focus, and actively lay aside any distracted thinking and feeling, by repeating the word 'maranatha' as 'ma-ra-na-tha'. If you have a prior meditation practice with your own mantra, you are welcome to use your own mantra or anchor word.

We begin by focusing on our anchor word to get beyond distraction. And in time as we develop our practice we will have moments where we transcend our thinking and feeling to encounter what is beyond ourselves. Meditation will begin with three bells. Every five minutes an intention bell will ring again to help bring us back to our breath and our practice. The meditation will then end with three bells. I will then read some words from John Main before a final benediction.

Before we begin, you might want to stand or stretch your muscles, and then find a comfortable seat, seating alert and upright, supported in the back of the chair, but relaxed at the same time. Become aware of the feeling of your body. The feeling of your feet on the ground. The feeling of the chair beneath you. Do you feel any tense muscles? Your shoulders, your neck, your jaw? Let them relax. Finally, become aware of your breath, the rising and falling of your chest and abdomen. The feeling of your breath in and out. Settle into your breath and your anchor word. We will begin our practice in a few moments.