



FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
TUSCALOOSA

From FUMCT Wellness - “Sitting with the Divine Presence” Exercises from Praying with the Body: Bringing the Psalms to Life by Roy DeLeon

These six exercises, a form of contemplative prayer or one-ing with the One, are designed to help you focus, be still, and connect with God as you rest in His Presence.

Sit quietly, being still in body and mind. On every exhale, relax the muscles of the face – particularly around the eyes and in the forehead. Lift the corners of your mouth slightly to a smile. See yourself as a child again, held with love by the Divine One. Feel His quiet strength and amazing love as you sit on his lap. Absorb more of God’s calmness and peacefulness on every inhale. Simply receive. Be loved. Unconditionally.

Sitting comfortably, breathe in long and deep, then breathe out slowly. During exhales, allow the lower body to feel heavier. Allow yourself to feel deeply rooted and stable, unmovable like a mountain. Just sit and enjoy God’s presence, your reason for being. Feel that no one and no event can shake you at your core, because God, who is your Root, your Stability, your Foundation is within you and around you, always drawing you into love. Thanks be to God.

Sitting relaxed but alert with your hands palms down on your lap, invite your body and mind to calm down. Now with the eyes of your imagination, see the Divine One standing in front of you, asking you to walk with Him. As you walk side by side with God, silently and prayerfully, you feel something within you start to change. It feels like little by little the anger, resentment, impatience, envy, and other dark thoughts in your heart begin to disappear. As you walk with your Creator, you begin to understand what it means to “walk with integrity of heart.” Sit with reverence for a few minutes, just breathing.

Sitting comfortably, your spine long, be aware of the Divine Presence as you pay attention to your breath. Imagine yourself sitting on the bank of a mountain stream. The Divine One sits with you as you watch the clear water flowing by your feet. Listen to the sound of moving water. As you inhale, breathe in the pure, clear mountain air, and as you exhale, watch your cares flow away with the stream. Feel cleansed and stay as long as you like.

Sitting comfortably, relax your shoulders as you breathe in and out through your nose. Lengthen and deepen the inhales and exhales for a few more seconds. When you feel ready, come back to your normal breathing pattern. For three to five exhales, say to yourself, “Be still and know that I am God.” Then, for the next three to five exhales, say to yourself, “Be still and know.” Finally, say only, “Be still.” Then without words, simply BE with God. Feel God blessing you and the space around you every time you breathe in.

Sitting still, breathing deeply and smoothly, be aware of the Divine Presence in your heart. Smile and keep smiling. Imagine this presence as the sun shining brightly within your heart. As you breathe in, let this light shine brighter, and on every exhale, let its rays expand until it fills your whole body, mind, and breath. Let the light expand to fill your world – where you are right now and beyond – the city, state, country, planet, universe.... Smile widely.