**Musical Creativity for Worship:**

**Drawing from the Whole World!**

“The daily practice of incarnation…

is to discover a pedagogy that is as old as the gospels.”

Barbara Brown Taylor

from *An Altar in the World*

“Music is Song and Dance.”

As heard from pianist Sara Davies Buechner.

Attributed to Byron Janis

* **Welcome and Introduction**
* **Broadened Awareness and Enlarged Frames**

*Let the beauty we love be what we do.*

*There are hundreds of ways to kneel and kiss the ground.*

*~ Rumi (from the Essential Rumi)*

* **Enthusiasm and Guilty Pleasures: Of Listening and Living**

*The spiritual life, to which art belongs and of which she is one*

*of the mightiest elements, is a complicated but definite and*

*easily definable movement forwards and upwards.*

*~ Wassily Kandinsky (from Concerning the Spiritual in Art)*

* **Tradition, Translation & Imagination**

*“As with all living things, each according to (their) gifts.”*

*~ Spock (from Star Trek II: The Wrath of Khan)*

Quotes from *An Altar in the World*

(We)… are happy to use inherited maps for some of life’s journeys.

All we lack is the willingness to imagine that we already have everything that we need. The only thing missing is our consent to be where we are.”

What does my life depend on?... the conviction that there is no spiritual treasure to be found apart from the bodily experiences of human life on earth….Acknowledging the need to perform ordinary activities with exquisite attention. Ignoring the all touted distinctions between the secular and the sacred, the physical and the spiritual, the body and the soul. Becoming more fully human… there is no way to God apart of real life in the real world.

Practice…. Doing … living…. Reading, thinking, talking about it….. Who wants to study the menu when you can eat a meal? Faith is not a mental thing, but a body thing… and we can be changed (quickly or slowly) like water dripping on stone. Faith is a way of life.

(Practice) the priesthood of your own life practiced in the altar of the world.

How had I forgotten the whole world was the house of God? Who persuaded me that God preferred four walls and a roof to wide-open spaces? When had I made the switch myself, becoming convinced that church bodies and buildings were the safest and most reliable places to encounter God?

We bought – or were sold- the idea that God is chiefly interested in religion. We believe that God’s home was the church, that God’ people knew who they were and that the world was a barren place...

Wisdom is not gained by knowing what is right. Wisdom is gained by practicing what is right and noticing what happens when the practice succeeds or fails. Wise people do not have to be certain what they believe before they act. They are free to act, trusting that the practice itself will teach them what they need to know.”

Human beings may separate things into as many piles as we wish—separating spirit from flesh, sacred from secular, church from world. But we should not be surprised when God does not recognize the distinctions we make between the two. Earth is so thick with divine possibility that it is a wonder we can walk anywhere without cracking our shins on altars.

(On leaving the safety of the familiar)—Because once you leave the cow path, the unpredictable territory is full of life. True, you cannot always see where you are putting your feet. This means you can no longer afford to stay unconscious. You can no longer count on the beat-down red dirt path making all your choices for you. Leaving it, you agree to make your own choices for a spell. You agree to become aware of each step you take. Tuning all of your senses to exactly where you are and exactly what you are doing.