

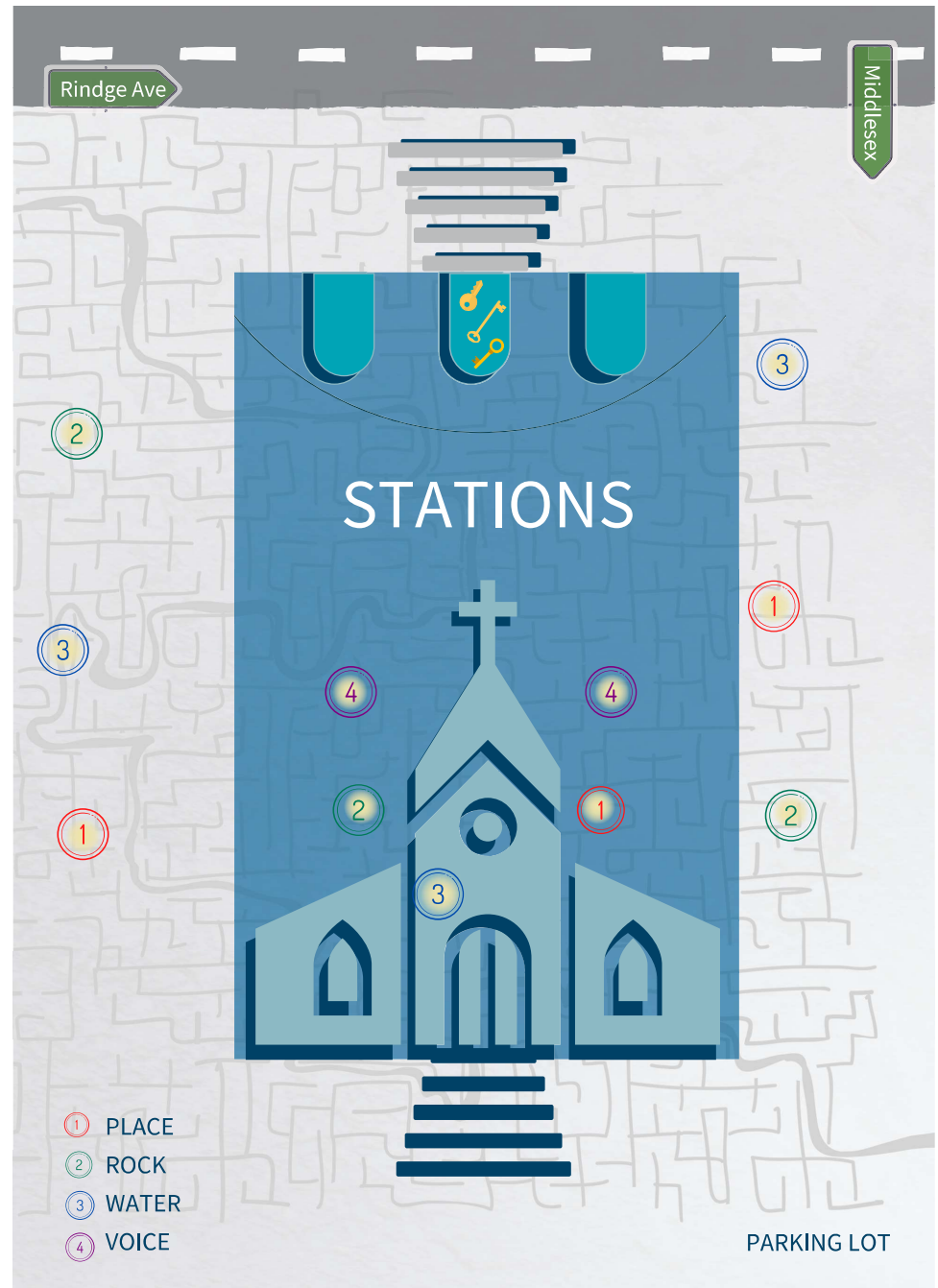
God is Here

A PARTICIPATORY LITURGY

*"There isn't just one place to encounter godliness,
it exists in all places - at crossroads,
dead-ends - and in all moments."*

RABBI SPITZER

INSPIRED BY COLE ARTHUR RILEY
& RABBI TOBA SPITZER

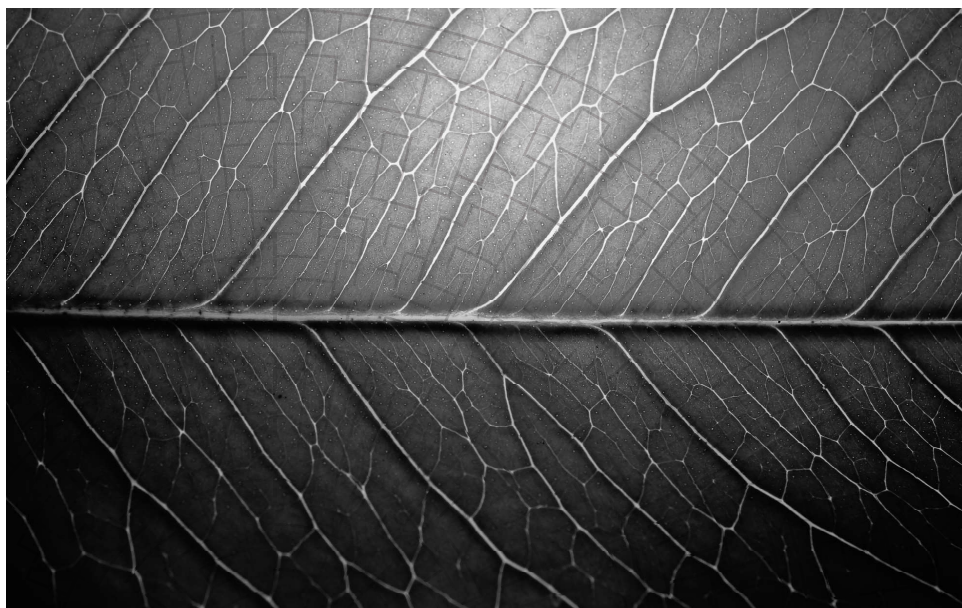


1 PLACE

INTERSECTION

*“If asked to choose, I want a God who is someplace.
Not just in 'the heart,' but God standing on Fifth and
Lothrop - God beyond the glass. I don't just want to be
rescued; I want to be taken someplace safe and good.”*

COLE ARTHUR RILEY



REFLECTION

What intersection(s) are you standing at these days?

- It could be a physical intersections like Rindge Ave. & Middlesex St., or the intersection of wherever you call home, or where you spend most of your days - at work, or at school, or on a playground, etc.
- It could be an intersection of career & family, faith & doubt, fear & rest, commitments & values, health & finances, relationships & honesty, boredom & vision.
- It could be a 2-way intersection or a many-way intersection.

ENGAGEMENT | tags & keys

- Grab a few circle tags and write the intersections where you feel most jammed, where it is hard for you to perceive a way forward. Where you long for God to be standing with you.
- On one of the tags, write down a name for God that you need at this intersection - God of retreat, God of relief, God of comfort, God of direction, God of momentum, God of safety, or any name that comes to your mind and heart.
- Grab a key, and hold all of your tags in your hands. A holy prayer, symbolizing your opening unto God, and God's opening within you.

PUBLIC PRAYER INSTALLATION

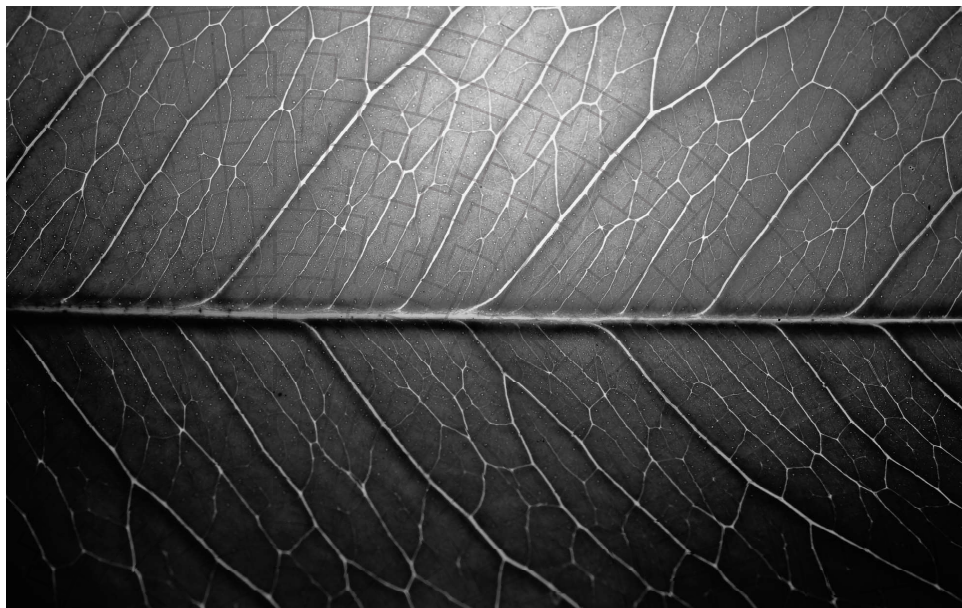
Add your tag(s) and key(s) to the installation under the arch, facing Rindge Ave.

1 PLACE

“HERE, A PLACE WITH ME”

"God is the Source of compassion that I can draw on, my own capacity for compassion to which I always have access."

RABBI TOBA SPITZER



REFLECTION

"Here, a Place with me" is the holy, godly place inside us that has the capacity to grow in care and compassion. What space within do you hope becomes an expanded godly Place with more capacity for yourself and those around you?

- Perhaps today you call this Place compassion, humility, courage, perspective, voice, patience, attention, awareness, hope, etc.

ENGAGEMENT | *tags*

- Write on a tag this Place within you that you want expanded.
- Take the "Here, a Place with me" prayer tag with you as you walk to the art installation. Allow this to be your prayer.

MINI-PRACTICE | *blessing*

A starting point for stretching your heart can be to offer blessings to yourself. Draw near to God and pray:

*"May I be blessed by being excessively generous with myself."
"May I be blessed with courage for the journey that is today. "
"May I be blessed to love, and be loved, well."
"May I be blessed with the wisdom of my ancestors."*

As you are ready, offer blessings to someone else you know.

Bring someone to mind to whom you'd like to send these blessings. Bring this person's face to view. Start with someone you have an uncomplicated relationship with, and after a little while, extend to folks that are more difficult.

PUBLIC PRAYER INSTALLATION

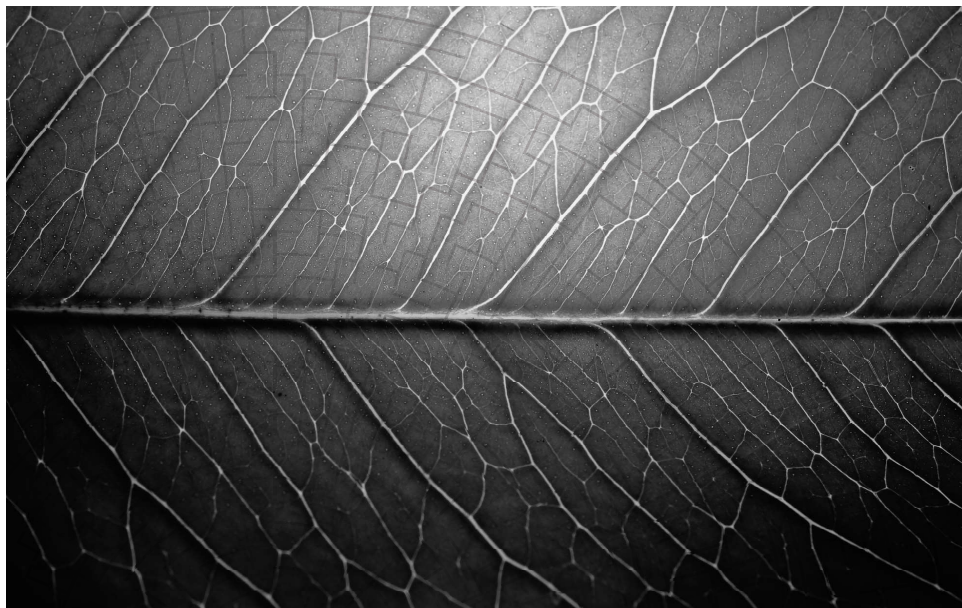
Add your tag(s) to the installation under the arch, facing Rindge Ave.

1 PLACE

"I DON'T WANT TO BE IN THIS PLACE."

"We don't need to be in contention with the truth of our lives as we encounter it. God is in this place. Not just in the good or the perfect, but in the truth of what is."

RABBI TOBA SPITZER



REFLECTION

Is there a place you wish you didn't have to be?

- Emotional turmoil, grief, a point in a relationship, a stage of your career, a schedule of non-stop travel, an empty calendar, minimal connection with God, standing out in the cold, etc.?

ENGAGEMENT | *tags*

Write all the places you wish you didn't have to be, on a tag.
(One tag for each place.)

On the flip side write your sense of God's presence in those places. You could try: "I don't know," and/or "God is in this place."

MINI-PRACTICE | *how awesome*

In the story of Jacob, he is on the run. He comes upon a place that seems to be no place. He takes a rock for a pillow, falls asleep and dreams that God is with him, giving him a promise that will extend to his descendants. Jacob wakes and exclaims, "God is in this place! I didn't know! How awesome is this place!"

Grab a few "*how awesome is this place*" tags.

Put these in physical places that you wouldn't easily associate with God's presence, i.e. work computer, desk, car dashboard, etc.

May they be a reminder that there is godliness in *this* place.

PUBLIC PRAYER INSTALLATION

Add your tags from the engagement section, to the installation under the arch, facing Rindge Ave.

2 ROCK

TOUCHSTONE

"God tells Joshua to set up stones of remembrance to mark the time when the Jordan River stopped its flow so that they could cross it. Joshua tells them that when their children ask what the stones mean, they must always stop and tell them the story."

COLE ARTHUR RILEY



REFLECTION

We use stones to mark important moments and places - graves, sacred sites and memorials. God's people over time have also used stones to mark the presence and help of God in their lives, a reminder and touchstone that God is indeed with us and for us.

What are the touchstones you first encountered of God?

- How have you touched back to them in your times of help?
- How do these touchstones link to your ancestors?
- How do you hope they'll link to the next generation?

ENGAGEMENT | *key*

Take a key as a prayer that the next generation would know God with them - as Joshua did, and as you seek to do.

Carry a rock in your hand as you go.

MINI-PRACTICE | *carry your rock*

As you carry your rock to the public art installation, allow the weight of the rock to signify the generations of God's people that have laid their touch stones out as reminders for us.

Thank God for these people still touching your life & faith today.

Pause and tell someone what you remember of first knowing 'God as here,' with you.

PUBLIC PRAYER INSTALLATION

Place your rock on the stairs alongside others, and add your key to the installation under the arch, facing Rindge Ave.

2 ROCK

TIME

"Each crevice in the boulder and each wrinkle on my hands show the passage of time and life. If every crack in the rock and every line on my face could tell their stories, I know they would be worthwhile teachers.

[Stories] of love, time, forgiveness, endurance and a constant reformation."

NITA GILGER
(QUOTED BY RABBI SPITZER)



REFLECTION

Rocks are formed by time and pressure that combine to shape & form their composition. Some by fiery lava, or by flowing water - or by big tectonic shifts *over the ages*.

Is there something in your life that feels like it is taking eons to form? Eons to be heard by God? Eons to change? Eons to cease?

- It could be circumstantial, a deep desire, your own patience, anger, freedom, or external pressure - or all of the above!

ENGAGEMENT | *keys*

Grab as many keys as it takes to represent the layers of fear, anxiety, stress, exhaustion, wrinkles that have been formed in the waiting.

Grab as many keys as it takes to represent the layers of God's presence that you hope have also been formed in the waiting. i.e., *patience, resilience, wisdom, partners, creativity, rhythms, strength*

MINI-PRACTICE | *draw near*

As you find yourself in this waiting place, offer a simple prayer to God as you walk, "*God, draw near to me.*"

And if it helps start your prayer with a rock name for God: *Rock of Ages, Rock of my heart, Rock of liberation, Rock of refuge, Rock of my strength, Rock and Redeemer, Rock of Help.*

PUBLIC PRAYER INSTALLATION

Add your key(s) to the installation under the arch, facing Rindge Ave.

2 ROCK

LAMENT & HOPE

"In lament, our task is never to convince someone of the brokenness of this world; it is to convince them of the world's worth in the first place. True lament is not born from that trite sentiment that the world is bad but rather from a deep conviction that it is worthy of goodness."

COLE ARTHUR RILEY



REFLECTION

Take a moment to imagine yourself on a rock orbiting around the sun.

Reflect on how much you can see and witness of your own life and the world - all its interconnections - so much brokenness, so much beauty.

So much to lament, so much to hope for.

ENGAGEMENT | tags

Take some tags and on one side write a lament, on the flip-side write a hope. *Write as many hopes & laments as you need.*

MINI-PRACTICE | attentive walk

Take a 2 minute walk around the perimeter of campus. Take your tags with you as hope & lament prayers for the neighborhood. And consider that, *"your hope can only be as deep as your lament. And your lament as deep as your hope."* (CAR 101)

- As you walk, allow yourself to lament. Consider the brokenness you know, in your own history, memory, story, people, neighborhoods, world.

You may want to place your hand over your chest as "ow!," or raise your fist in the air as a gesture of this lament.

- As you walk, allow your lament to inform your hope. What dreams, healing, imaginations do you have for your community, the world?

You may want to hold your hands open as a gesture of this hope.

PUBLIC PRAYER INSTALLATION

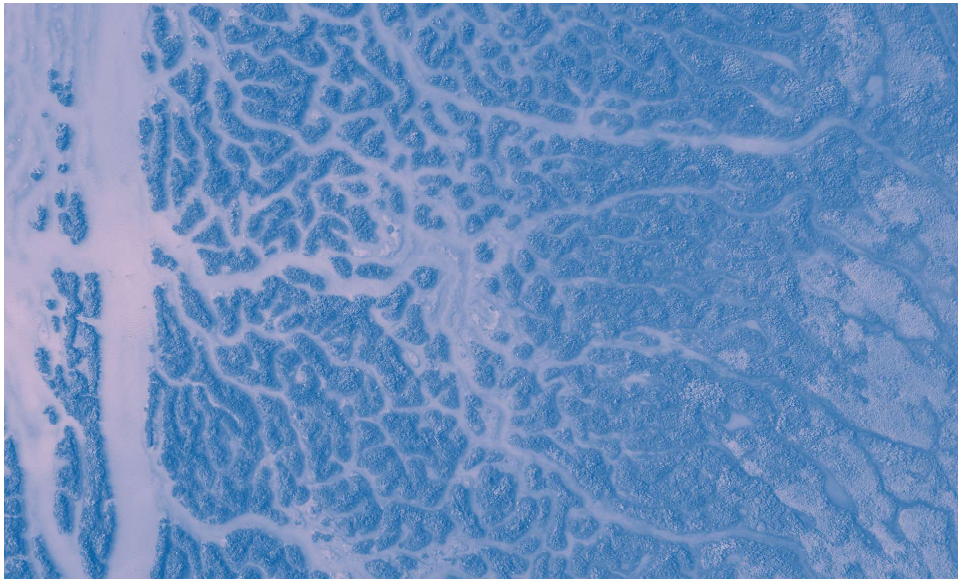
As you return from your walk, add your tag(s) to the installation under the arch, facing Rindge Ave. May they be both personal and collective prayers for the neighborhood.

3 WATER

JUSTICE

"Wash the earth in justice and watch what rises to the surface. Curses can't breathe underwater."

COLE ARTHUR RILEY



REFLECTION

The Hebrew scriptures declare, "Let justice flow like streams of water" (Amos 5:24). What matter of justice is close to you today? In your body, in your day, as you look at the world?

- Do you have a sense that justice is flowing like water? Where is the flow in motion? Where is it being blocked?
- Where are you feeling called to take action? What's enabling you to act? What's holding you back?

ENGAGEMENT | *keys*

As you think of the curses in our public life - of hate, shame, isolation, despair, death - take a key and ask that God would open the flow of justice like streams of waters. Waters of repentance, repair, and restoration. Streams of living water that restore life to life. Hold this key in your hand as your prayer.

MINI-PRACTICE | *god is here*

Bring to mind the matter of justice close to your heart, and consider the prayer "God is here." What form of punctuation marks your prayer: A confident period. An uncertain dot dot dot... A question mark of doubt?

Pray the truest prayer of your heart today, with these words.

God is here.
God is here...
Is God here?

PUBLIC PRAYER INSTALLATION

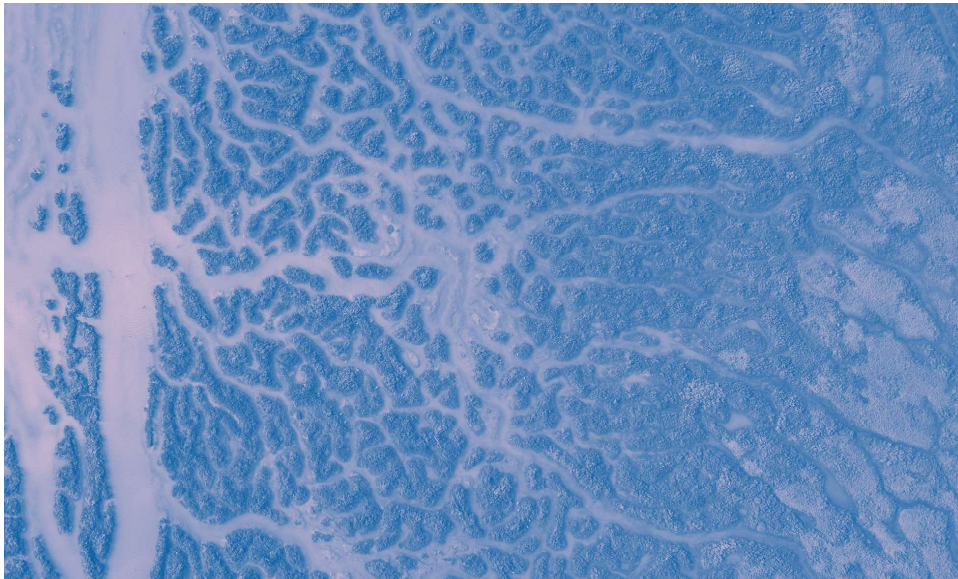
Add your key(s) to the installation under the arch, facing Rindge Ave.

3 WATER

STILL

“Stillness makes for a capable mirror. Look down in a rough and fast current, and you won’t see a thing. Still water allows you to lean in without danger and really see yourself. And in doing so, you may remember a liberty over yourself that is easily forgotten when things are jostling you about.”

COLE ARTHUR RILEY



REFLECTION

Whether the waters are stormy or still in your mind and heart today, can you remember something true and clear of yourself? Of God? Call this by name.

ENGAGEMENT | tags

Grab a tag and write a word or phrase that is true and clear of you.

Grab a tag and write a name that is true and clear of God, the God you most want *here* in the midst of your life and all that you are experiencing.

- Perhaps you long for a watery name for God: Well of Liberation, Torrent of Delight, River of Life, Fount of Living Waters, Fount of Justice, Fount of Wisdom, etc.

MINI-PRACTICE | still waters

Look around at the homes nearby. Imagine the neighbors here along Middlesex St., or your own neighbors. Ask the Spirit of God to offer stillness to this place, that folks might see something true and good of themselves as they move about their day.

Offer this prayer:

May God lead you to still waters in this place.

May the waters reflect the light of our own true nature.

PUBLIC PRAYER INSTALLATION

Add your tag(s) to the installation under the arch, facing Rindge Ave.

3 WATER

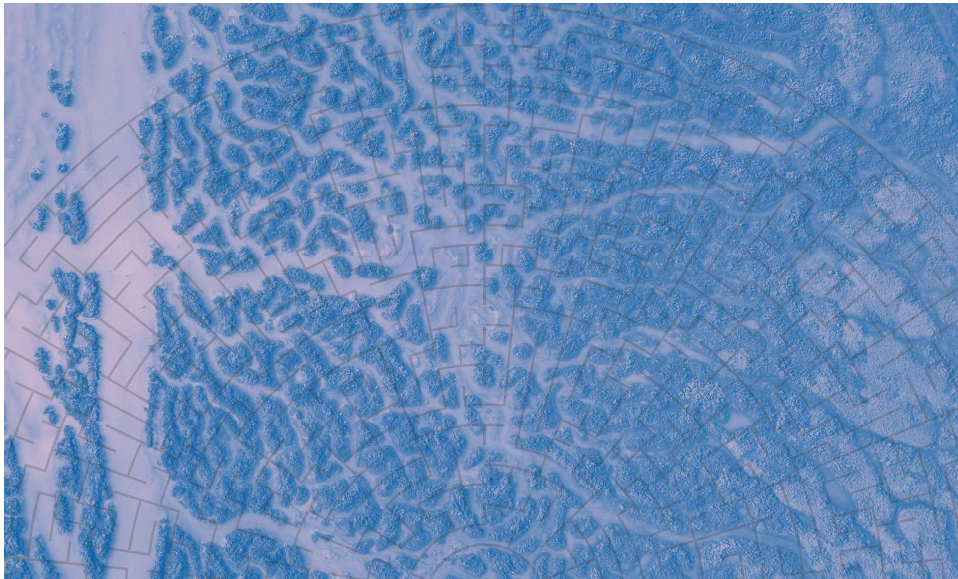
HARBOR

"What does it mean that in response to the terrors of the world, God would have us come to still waters...

Come to me all who are weary...

*You say confess your sins, okay, fair enough,
but maybe I'm saved a little bit
every time I rest my eyes."*

COLE ARTHUR RILEY



REFLECTION

Harbor is found by finding peace, a stability of heart, in a frustrating world.

- Where and how do you find harbor?
- Who are the people that offer you harbor?
- What is keeping you from rest?

ENGAGEMENT | tags

Take a tag for every harbor you most desire:

- *Peace in your work*
- *Peace in your home*
- *Peace in your relationships*
- *Peace in your mind*
- *Peace in your heart*
- *Peace in your body*
- *Peace in your finances*

MINI-PRACTICE | rest your eyes

Find a quiet place, in the sanctuary, under a tree, on the steps.

Close your eyes.

Stop, take a deep breath, and listen to your body.

Where do you feel restless. Your mind? Your body? Your soul?

As you can, release any language you've inherited in your mind or body, of how God might "use" you - and consider that God just wants to *be with* you.

Allow the prayer, "God just wants to be with me," to roll through your harbor.

PUBLIC PRAYER INSTALLATION

Add your tags to the installation under the arch, facing Rindge Ave.

4 VOICE

WHEREVER YOUR HEART IS

I'm still searching for wherever your heart is

We should get started

It's a good time for trying to walk through the darkness

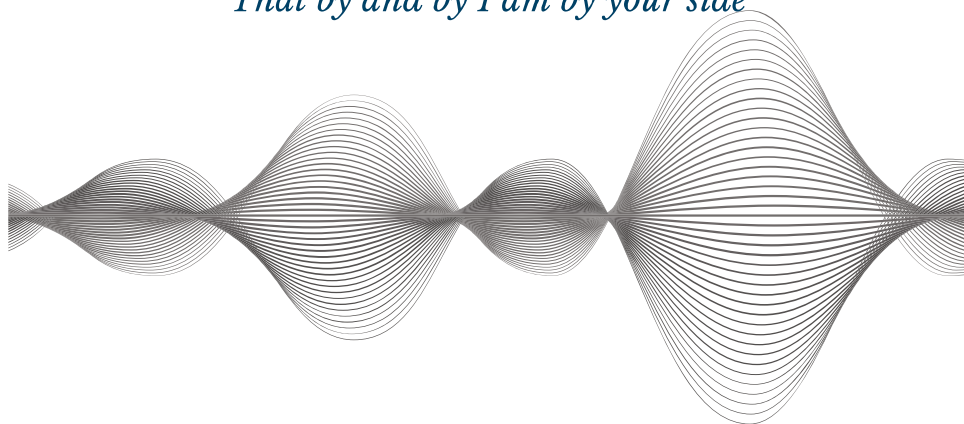
We should get started

Feels so good to know

That there's a little fight left in me

Feels so good to know

That by and by I am by your side



THE LONE BELLOW

MINI-PRACTICE | *cantico divina*

Much like Lectio Divina (reading with the Divine), or Visio Divina (seeing with the Divine), you are invited to Cantico Divina.

Cantico Divina is a way to prayerfully engage with God in song.

As you settle in to listen, take a key in your hand as a tangible sign of God's presence with you.

LISTEN #1:

Imagine God singing this song to you.

- Listen for the word or phrase that strikes you.
- Does the word or phrase resonate, bring emotion, cause feelings of resistance?
- As you continue to listen - listen for the way in which your life is touched by this word.
- What in your life needs to hear this word/phrase today?
- Spend a few moments sitting with God. Do you notice anything stirring in you?

LISTEN #2:

Bring to mind someone whose heart you are searching for, and listen with the same prompts as above.

ENGAGEMENT | *key*

Allow the key you've been holding to absorb your prayerful word, phrase or heart stirring.

PUBLIC PRAYER INSTALLATION

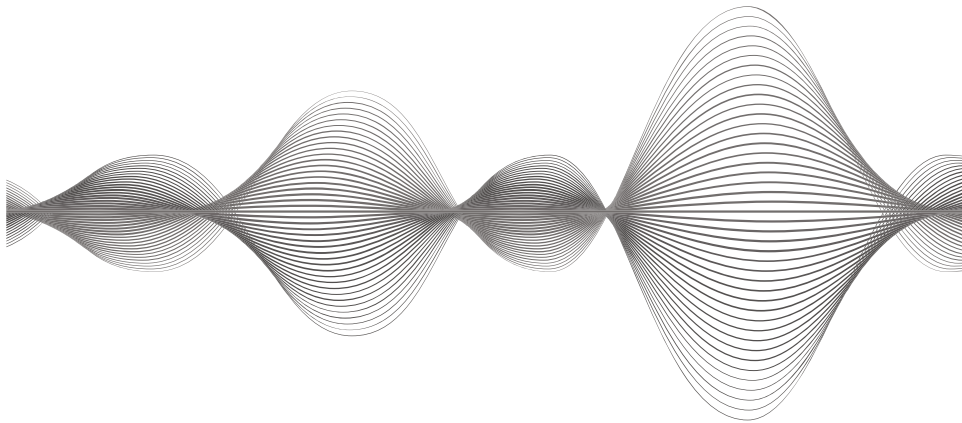
Add your key to the installation under the arch, facing Rindge Ave.



VIBRATION

"God is vibration that saturates the universe."

RABBI SPITZER



REFLECTION

What is a prayer you have that is beyond words? A prayer that can only be formed by sounds like:

- Laughter, a deep sigh, a deep breath, groaning too deep for words, sniffles, gratitude, lament, a clap, a snap, a roar, a whisper, a babble, a tone, etc.

Let this be a comfort, from Cole Arthur Riley: *"There is no such thing as a lone wail. Every howl reverberates off the walls of God's chest and finds its way back to us, carrying God's own heart with it."*

A reminder that you are not alone, even when the wailing, groaning in prayer seems to fade.

MINI-PRACTICE | *cymbals*

The truth of sound is that it is not about speaking and hearing; it is about vibration, touch, and connection. Rabbi Spitzer puts it this way: "[sound is] Something moving through us, Something that both shapes who we are and allows us to express ourselves."

- Go to one of the cymbals, and express your prayer. Use a mallet or your hand to strike it once. Listen to the sound in the space, and feel the vibration.
- As the audible sound and vibration dissipates in the room. Move your ear closer to the cymbal and notice the sound still present. God still with you.

ENGAGEMENT | *keys*

Take a key from the basket that has been saturated by God's vibrations in this room. Trusting that you are carrying God's heart close to yours as you do.

PUBLIC PRAYER INSTALLATION

Add your key, filled with your sounds and God's sounds, to the installation under the arch, facing Rindge Ave.