

# Finding Hope and Healing in the Psalms

ELF 2023  
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*the Psalms are the voices  
of the church*

*Ambrose of Milan – 300s*

*a compendium of all theology*

*Basil, Bishop of Caesarea – 300s*

*the epitome of the whole scripture*

*Augustine of Hippo – 400s*

*the little book for all saints ... and  
the summary of the whole Bible.*

*Martin Luther – 1400s*

*the anatomy of all parts of the soul*

*John Calvin – 1500s*





*Wassily Kandinsky, 1912*

Come now, little man!  
**Flee** for a while from  
your tasks, **hide your-**  
self for a little space  
**from the turmoil**  
**of your thoughts.**  
Come, cast aside your  
burdensome cares, and  
**put aside your**  
laborious pursuits.

For a little while **give your time to God, and rest** in  
Him ... Enter in to the inner chamber of your mind, shut out all  
things save God and whatever may aid you in seeking God;  
and having barred the door of your chamber, seek Him.

*Anselm of Canterbury, c. 1033–1109*

Let the  
word of  
Christ  
dwell in  
you  
richly.

Colossians 3.16

**1.**

# Entering into Friendship ———

a relational dialogue with the Divine



*Michelangelo, The Creation of Adam, 1510*

**To be transformed** by the psalms, one has to be willing to be engaged in a **relational dialogue**,

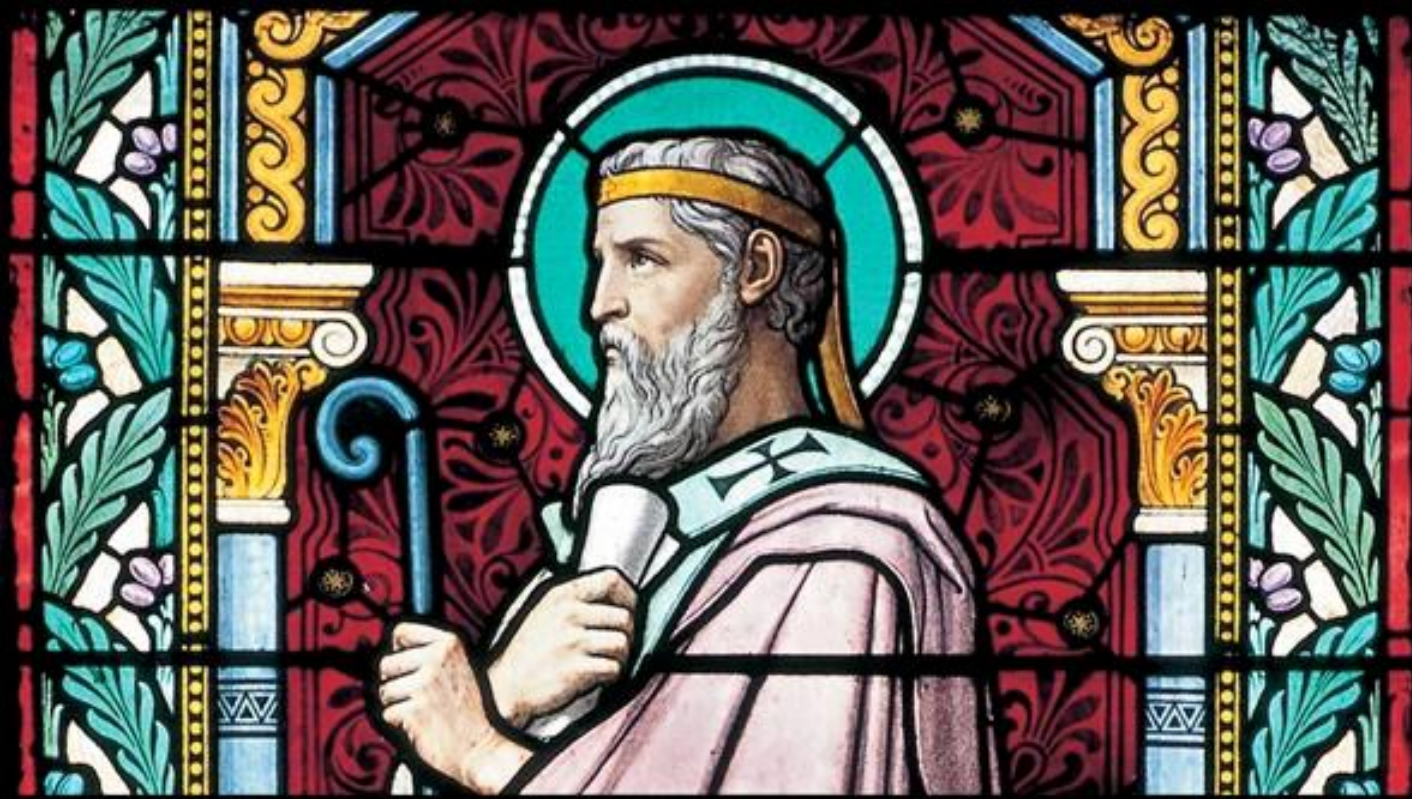
phrase-by-phrase,  
image-by-image,  
stanza-by-stanza,  
book-by-book, and beyond ...

unlike literature merely telling us to “do this” or “do that,” and thus placing a **distance between us and the text**, the psalms become a **twirling dance** anyone may join. The free-for-all invitation to participate.

Julius Wong Loi Sing



Matisse, Icarus, 1944



The glory of God is a human being  
who is fully alive.

– Irenaeus, 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD



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**2.**

# Cultivating Hope

from study to surrender through meditation





*Are you tired? Worn out?  
Burned out on religion? **Come  
to me.** Get away with me  
and you'll recover your life. I'll  
show you how to take a real  
rest. Walk with me and work  
with me—watch how I do it.  
**Learn the unforced  
rhythms of grace.** I  
won't lay anything heavy or ill-  
fitting on you. Keep company  
with me and you'll learn to live  
freely and lightly.*



will make  
people glad

at all times

I will bless  
the Lord

praise  
continually

humble  
will hear

boast in Him



OH MAGNIFY THE LORD WITH  
AND LET US EXALT HIS NAME  
T-O-G-E-T-H-E-R

He delivered me

He heard me

I sought  
the Lord

they were  
radian

they looked  
to Him

not asha

He saved  
me



DO / ARE

bless

praise

boast

magnify

exalt

sought

4-7  
radian

unashamed -

heard -

saved -

delivered -

magnify

unashamed

taste

see

blessed -

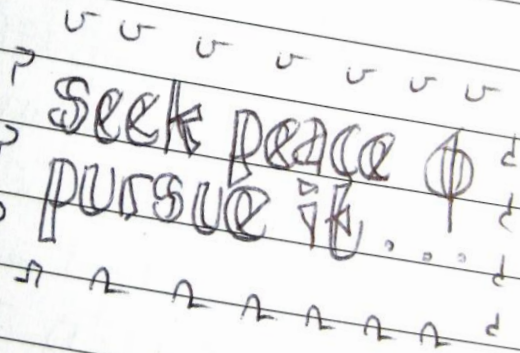
fear

looked after -

taught -

SEEK PEACE

PURSUUE IT



1. **Pray** – invite God into this time
2. **Read** slowly
3. **Write** out the verse/passage
4. Underline the **verbs**
  - a. **Ponder** these words and ones with similar meanings
  - b. BibleGateway / commentaries to shed more **light**
  - c. Perhaps **rewrite** the verse in your own words
5. **Note** repeated phrases, promises, commands
6. **Map** the verse through image or diagram

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Colossians 3.16

**3.**

# Exploring the genius of the Psalms patterns and structure that make us sing





# Book 1 : 1-41

**Ps 1–2** Introduction, framed by two ‘ashre (“Blessed is/are”) declarations

- 1 Evokes instructions of Torah [Law] and Hokmah [Wisdom]
- 2 Evokes Former and Latter Prophets (Yahweh and his anointed, Israel’s only hope in the turmoil of history)

*Thus 1. The Psalter must be read in the context of the rest of the OT canon.*

*2. As portal to the temple of the Psalter, these two psalms teach that those who would appropriate the prayers and praises of the Psalter must fit the profile of the framing declarations; their lives must be shaped by Law and godly Wisdom, and they must “take refuge” in Yahweh and his anointed—the two components of “the fear of Yahweh.”*

## Ps 3–14

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 3 Plea for deliverance from foes                                     | 9 Plea for deliverance from hostile nations   |
| 4 Plea for relief in time of drought                                 | 10 Plea for deliverance from the wicked   |
| 5 Plea for deliverance from foes                                     | 11 Trust in Yahweh’s righteous rule   |
| 6 Plea for healing   | 12 Plea for help in an ungodly time   |
| 7 Plea for deliverance from foes                                     | 13 Plea for deliverance from serious illness and enemies  |
| <b>8 Praise of the Creator (the glory of God bestowed on humans)</b> | <b>14 The folly of humankind (“The LORD looks down . . . to see . . . All have turned aside”)</b> |

64 lines

64 lines

**4.**

# Engaging the whole self with the theology of the Psalms

- a. Art
- b. Music
- c. Poetry



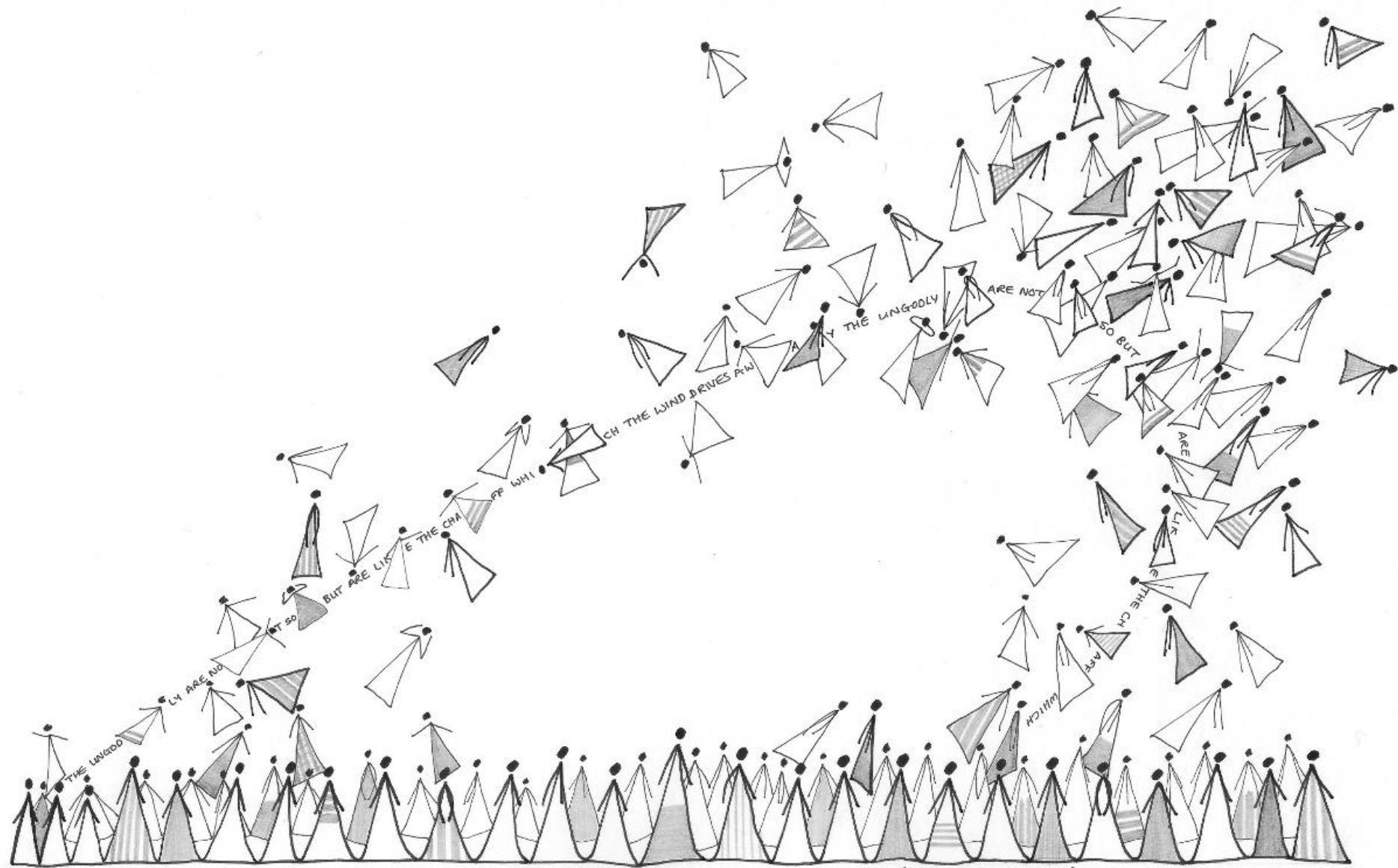




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Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.





Let the word of  
Christ dwell in  
you richly  
as you teach  
and admonish  
one another  
with all wisdom,  
**through  
psalms ...**

Colossians 3

## Bible text

*New International Version, Biblica, 1984*

## Photographs

*Unsplash and speakers own*

## Drawn Images

*'Landscape of Hope – An Illustrated Journey into the Psalms'*  
*Moody Press, November 2023, Heather Holdsworth*  
*Contact [heather.holdsworth@gmail.com](mailto:heather.holdsworth@gmail.com) regarding use*

