



Pathways Monthly Prayer Readings

January 2025

January's Author	Cole Arthur Riley, a 34-year old native of Pittsburgh, is a spiritual teacher and writer whose focus is on black spirituality.
Tuesday, January 14 Contemplative Sit	<p><i>The chasm between the spiritual and the physical is no greater than that between a thought and a word. They cannot be disconnected. And it is difficult to tell where one ends and the other begins, perhaps because there is no such place.</i></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Cole Arthur Riley, <u>This Here Flesh</u></p>
Wednesday, January 15 Lectio Divina	<p>I Corinthians 12:4-7 There are different spiritual gifts but the same Spirit; and there are different ministries and the same Lord; and there are different activities but the same God who produces all of them in everyone. A demonstration of the Spirit is given to each person for the common good. (CEB)</p>
Thursday, January 16 Centering Prayer	<p>Psalm 36:5-6 Your love, O God, reaches to the heavens, And your faithfulness to the clouds. Your righteousness is like the strong mountains, your justice like the great deep; you save all your creatures, O God. (St. Helena Psalter)</p>
Tuesday, January 21 Contemplative Sit	<p><i>For me, the story of God becoming body is only matched by God's submission to the body of a woman. That the creator of the cosmos would choose to rely on an embodied creation. To be grown, fed, delivered—God put faith in a body. In Mary's muscles and hormones, bowels and breasts. And when Christ's body is broken and blood shed, we should hold in mystery that first a woman's body was broken, her blood shed, in order to deliver the hope of the world into the world.</i></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Cole Arthur Riley, <u>This Here Flesh</u></p>

<p>Wednesday, January 22 Lectio Divina</p>	<p>I Corinthians 12:12-14 Christ is just like the human body—a body is a unit and has many parts; and all the parts of the body are one body, even though there are many. We were all baptized by one Spirit into one body, whether Jew or Greek, or slave or free, and we all were given one Spirit to drink. Certainly, the body isn't one part but many. (CEB)</p>
<p>Thursday, January 23 Centering Prayer</p>	<p>Psalm 19:1-4 The heavens declare your glory, O God, and the firmament shows your handiwork. One day tells its tale to another, and one night imparts knowledge to another. Although they have no words or language, and their voices are not heard, Their sound has gone out into all lands, and their message to the ends of the world. (St. Helena Psalter)</p>
<p>Tuesday, January 28 Contemplative Sit</p>	<p><i>We are a people much more concerned with ruling than loving. This is a mistake that positions us in places where we are no longer close enough to another person or thing to perceive its pain or need. To be human in an aching world is to know our dignity and become people who safeguard the dignity of everything around us. To protect everything may seem like too great a call. But we will not survive without it.</i> Cole Arthur Riley, <u>This Here Flesh</u></p>
<p>Wednesday, January 29 Lectio Divina</p>	<p>I Corinthians 13:4-7 Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable; it keeps no record of wrongs; it does not rejoice in wrongdoing but rejoices in the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. (NRSV)</p>
<p>Thursday, January 30 Centering Prayer</p>	<p>Psalm 71:5-6 For you are my hope, O God, my confidence since I was young. I have been sustained by you ever since I was born; from my mother's womb you have been my strength; my praise shall be always of you. (St. Helena Psalter)</p>

*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, [This Here Flesh](#)

*I've accepted that the whole of my life will be a pilgrimage toward the sound of the genuine in me.
This may sound troubling to those who've been conditioned to believe that our journey is to God and God alone,
but I say the two paths are one.*

*My journey to the truth of God cannot be parsed from my journey to the truth of who I am.
A fidelity to the true self is a fidelity to truth. I won't apologize for this.*

Cole Arthur Riley, [This Here Flesh](#)

*Joy situates every emotion within itself. It grounds them so that one isn't overindulged while the others lie starving.
Joy doesn't replace any emotion; it holds them all and keeps them from swallowing us whole.*

Society has failed to understand this.

When it tells us to find joy in suffering, it is telling us to let it go, to move on, to smile through it.

But joy says, Hold on to your sorrow. It can rest safely here.

Cole Arthur Riley, [This Here Flesh](#)

*We had learned from the native Onondaga tribe...that believing yourself a possessor of the land is a damaging practice.
I believe them.*

*My ownership of the apple grove or barn or brick is an illusion that I chiefly entertain as a societal formality;
or rather, my ownership does not mean what you think it means.*

The land I live on is not mine to have, but mine to nurture...

I have known that my devotion to this place rests on my willingness to release any pretense that it belongs to me more than it is making me.

Ask me what I'm made of and I'll tell you to look down.

Cole Arthur Riley, [This Here Flesh](#)