

# Guided Meditation: An Everyday God

## Passages

From the song of the Psalmist

For it was you who formed my inward parts;  
you knit me together in my mother's womb.

I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.

Wonderful are your works; that I know very well.

My frame was not hidden from you, when I was being made in secret,  
intricately woven in the depths of the earth.

Psalm 139.13-15

From the words of Job

Remember that you fashioned me like clay; and will you turn me to dust again? You have granted me life and steadfast love, and your care has preserved my spirit.

Job 10.9,12

From the prophecy of Isaiah

O Lord, you are our Father; we are the clay, and you are our potter; we are all the work of your hand.

Isaiah 64.8

-oOo-

## Meditation

Take up a posture that is comfortable and close your eyes.

Now become aware of your breathing. Become aware of the air as it enters and leaves your nostrils . . . Not as it enters your lungs, just as it passes through your nostrils . . .

Do not control your breathing. Do not try to deepen it or change its rhythm. Simply observe your breathing, in and out, in and out . . .

Now imagine yourself entering a workshop, God's workshop. It might be dedicated to weaving, pottery, carpentry, or another craft . . .

Take time to imagine the whole setting as vividly as possible, its sights, sounds and smells. Picture its size, layout, spaciousness or clutter, the quality of its light . . .

If it is a pottery, perhaps there are bins of clay and pots of glaze . . . a kiln, a wheel, other tools and equipment . . . pots or figures already finished, or fashioned and awaiting glazing and firing . . . a few pots waiting to be mended . . .

Compose yourself in the place . . .

Why have you come here? What are your feelings as you survey the scene? . . .

As you continue into the space, you see God at work. How does God appear to you? . . .

What else do you notice? What are your feelings as you watch God? . . .

Gradually you become conscious that God is inviting you to come further in. Notice your reactions . . .

You start to approach God . . . What are you thinking and feeling as you move closer?

What is God making? . . .

You might have a question for God, or something you want to say. Imagine yourself speaking to God. How does God respond? . . .

God is continuing to invite you into this space of making. What is God's invitation now? It might be to continue to watch or talk gently, or to interact with whatever God has been making, or to try your hand . . .

How do you respond? What do you do or not do? . . .

Spend a while now doing or being in the scene in the company of God . . .

If your attention becomes distracted, become aware of your breathing again and then gently return to the scene . . .

Now return gradually to an awareness of your breathing and your posture . . .

When you are ready, open your eyes.

-oOo-

## Notes

This is the third of a series of meditations drawing on *Everyday God: The Spirit of the Ordinary* by Paula Gooder, one of the books which the Slow Book Group at Exeter Cathedral has been reading. The book is divided into six sections, for reflection over the six months between June and November 2022 (Ordinary Time in the Church's calendar). The theme of Section 3 is "An Everyday God". Gooder imagines God sitting on the throne and knitting. Jesus was a carpenter by trade. In this meditation, the pottery workshop is explored in more detail, but a different type of craft might attract attention instead.

God as weaver, God as potter are both vibrant metaphors, attempting to approach a description of an aspect of God. This is the affirmative way, the *via affirmativa* or kataphatic approach to prayer. The apophatic way or *via negativa* recognises that God is like a potter but is not a potter (or weaver, or father or rock or shield or any of many other metaphors). The approaches complement each other, it is valuable to use both in prayer.

The style of the meditation is based on the "unsuspected and untapped source of power and life in our fantasy" as presented by Anthony de Mello in [\*Sadhana: A Way to God, Christian Exercises in Eastern Form\*](#) (pdf).

Some people imagine in pictures, others in sounds, and others have a way of being present in the scene that is particular to them. If you would find it more helpful than using your mind's eye, think your way into the scene as though you were writing about it. How is God guiding your mental quill?

*Clare Bryden*  
*18 August 2022*