

## **A NEW HEART FOR A NEW YEAR**

**a series of conversations and study based on Celtic wisdom**

### **LORD OF MY HEART**

Lord of my heart, **give me vision** to inspire me,  
that working or resting, I may always think of you.

Lord of my heart, **give me light** to guide me,  
that at home or abroad I may always walk in your way.

Lord of my heart, **give me wisdom** to direct me,  
that thinking or acting, I may always discern right from wrong.

Lord of my heart, **give me courage** to strengthen me,  
that amongst friends or enemies, I may always proclaim your justice.

Lord of my heart, **give me trust** to console me,  
that hungry or well-fed, I may always rely on your mercy.

Lord of my heart, save me from empty praise,  
that I may always boast of you.

Lord of my heart, save me from worldly wealth,  
that I may always look to the riches of heaven.

Lord of my heart, save me from military prowess,  
that I may always seek your protection.

Lord of my heart, save me from vain knowledge,  
that I may always study your word.

Lord of my heart, save me from unnatural pleasures,  
that I may always find joy in your wonderful creation.

Heart of my own heart, whatever befall me,  
rule over my thoughts and feelings, my words and actions."

*Ray Simpson, in Daily Light from the Celtic Saints: Ancient Wisdom for Modern Life*



#### **4 : COURAGE**

**guest - Rev. Ruben Rodriguez**

*Pastor Rubén Rodriguez is the Senior Pastor of Mountair Christian Church, on the border of Lakewood and Denver, Colorado. Mountair is one of the most active congregations in that area of Denver with a Food Bank that serves both the working poor and the homeless. The mission statement for this dynamic congregation is "Reach, Teach, Serve." Ruben was born in New York, raised in Puerto Rico, and repatriated to the mainland in 1986. Trained as an Electronics Engineer, he was a small business owner/entrepreneur and worked in international business. He served in lay ministry, mostly with immigrants, in churches in the early 90's and has been serving in a pastoral role since 2005. He has helped in New Congregation development and mission experiences. He has lived in the Denver area for the last 7 years. Ruben also studied business at Northwest University and has an MDiv from Lexington Theological Seminary. He was ordained in 2009 in the Christian Church (DOC).*

## SESSION 4 : COURAGE

welcome : Michael Karunas

session : Ike Nicholson in conversation with **Ruben Rodriguez**

### PRAYER FOCUS

*Lord of my heart, **give me courage to strengthen me,**  
that amongst friends or enemies, I may always proclaim your justice.*

### SCRIPTURE FOCUS

Joshua 1:5b-9 (NRSV)

*I will not fail you or forsake you. Be strong and courageous; for you shall put this people in possession of the land that I swore to their ancestors to give them. Only be strong and very courageous, being careful to act in accordance with all the law that my servant Moses commanded you; do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, so that you may be successful wherever you go. This book of the law shall not depart out of your mouth; you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to act in accordance with all that is written in it. For then you shall make your way prosperous, and then you shall be successful. 9 I hereby command you: Be strong and courageous; do not be frightened or dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.*

### MAIN IDEA

Courage is a gift from God. Courage assumes we are entering a context of uncertainty and opposition or the gift is unnecessary. **To pray for courage assumes we are willing to go where we have never been.**

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- ⇒ A gift of faith is the refusal to live as an intimidated person. Who are some people and stories that have displayed the courage to live undaunted by intimidation?
- ⇒ What are some of the results you have seen others suffer as a result of lost courage? In your own life?
- ⇒ What are some of the lessons you have learned together with your sisters and brothers in your church, in your community, in your family during this pandemic?
- ⇒ What is the river God is calling you and yours to cross? What are the giants that God is calling you to face? Consider sharing your own goals, hopes, and vision for which you will need God's gift of courage.
- ⇒ You have made it this far through the pandemic and you are probably already thinking about your future. How will God's gift of courage manifest in the days ahead?