

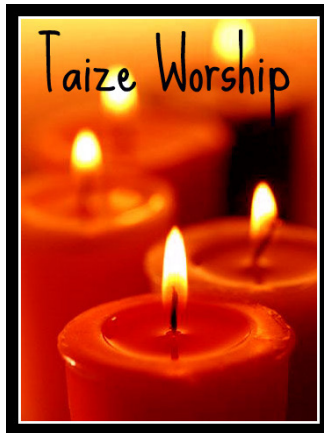
What is Taizé?

(Pronounced *tuh-ZAY*)

Taizé-style worship consists of prayers, Scripture readings, meditative silence, and short songs sung repetitively. It is our opportunity to rest in God. It is adapted from the worship of the **Taizé Community**, an ecumenical Christian monastic order in Taizé, Burgundy, France.

The community is composed of a little over 100 brothers who come from Catholic, Orthodox and Protestant traditions. Over 100,000 young people from around the world make pilgrimages to Taizé each year for prayer, Bible study, sharing, and communal work.

The Taizé Community was founded by Roger Louis Schütz-Marsauche (later known simply as Brother Roger), born on May 12, 1915 in the village of Provence, Switzerland, the son of Amélie Swiss Reformed pastor. Brother Roger recalled that when he was twelve he saw his father go into a Roman Catholic church to pray. About a year later, when Roger needed to leave home to attend secondary school, his parents sent him to lodge in the home of a poor Catholic widow, who had several children. Although lodging with another Protestant family was possible, his father thought the extra money would help the Catholic family more, despite the fact that this family came from a different ecclesial tradition. Roger remained there until he began his university studies. In 1936, after a bout with education in literary studies, Roger entered his first year of theological education in Lausanne.



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In the summer of 1940, after four years of theological studies and with only a short thesis to write to complete his academic degree, he decided to take a break from his education. Many surrounding countries had already been overrun by Nazi Germany, and Roger felt that his academic pursuits were too far removed from the war that persisted around him. He pondered what it really meant to live a life according to the Scriptures and began a quest for a different expression of the Christian life.

A year after this decision Roger reflected, "The defeat of France awoke powerful sympathy. If a house could be found there, of the kind I had dreamed of, it would offer a possible way of assisting some of those most discouraged, those deprived of a livelihood; and it could become a place of silence and work." Because his Swiss homeland was neutral and thus less affected by the war, he felt as if France would be ideal for his vision. For Roger, France was a "land of poverty, a land of wartime suffering, but a land of inner freedom." He eventually settled in Taizé, which was a small desolate village just north of Cluny, the birthplace of western monasticism.

In September 1940, Roger purchased a small house that would eventually become the home of the Taizé community. Only miles south of the separation line that divided a war-torn country in half, Roger's home became a sanctuary to countless war refugees seeking shelter. On November 11, 1942, the Gestapo occupied Roger's house while he was in Switzerland collecting funds to aid in his refuge ministry. Roger was not able to return to his home in Taizé until the autumn of 1944, when France was liberated. Soon, the village church of Taizé, which had been used for the community's prayers, became too small to accommodate the pilgrims. A new church, the Church of Reconciliation, was built in the early 1960s with the help of volunteers, and expanded several times in the subsequent decades, first with tents, and then with simple wooden annexes.

In 2005, Brother Roger was fatally stabbed by a mentally ill woman during the evening prayer service in Taizé. He was succeeded by Brother Alois, a German-born Catholic, who was appointed by Brother Roger to be his successor eight years earlier.

Welcoming young people to Taizé and during European and international meetings is since the main focus of the Taizé Community.

Taizé worship at Olmsted Community Church is a 40-minute service of music, prayers, Scriptures and silence, open to anyone who seeks a place for meditative worship. The service is held in the Chapel (lower level) on the first Tuesday of each month at 7:30 p.m.



OLMSTED COMMUNITY CHURCH

7853 Main Street Olmsted Falls, OH 44138

440.235.3326

www.olmstedcommunitychurch.org