

Taizé Worship¹

Taizé is a unique style of Christian worship that has become popular in churches, retreat centers and seminaries throughout the world.

History

Taizé worship began in a Christian monastic community in Taizé, France. The Taizé community is an ecumenical monastic order with a strong devotion to peace and justice through prayer and meditation. The 100-strong community of Roman Catholic and Protestant monks is drawn from 30 countries across the world.

It was founded in 1940 by Roger Louis Schutz-Marsauche (known as 'Brother Roger'). The 90-year-old monk died in August 2005 after being stabbed during a prayer service.

Today Taizé is one of the world's most important sites of Christian pilgrimage. Each year tens of thousands of young pilgrims flock to the small village of Taizé in central France to share in the community's way of life.

Prayer and silence are at the heart of the Taizé experience. People from every corner of the globe are encouraged to live out the Christian gospel in a spirit of joy, simplicity, and reconciliation.

Ecumenism (a movement promoting Christian unity among Churches) is the key to Taizé's appeal, making it a magnet for people of many different cultures and traditions.

Music

The singing of distinctive and much-repeated prayer chants during candlelit prayer services is one of its trademarks. Taizé music highlights simple phrases, usually lines from the Psalms or other pieces of scripture, repeated or sung in canon. The repetition is designed to help meditation and prayer.

Prayer

The style of prayer is highly meditative. Singing and long periods of silence play a large part in a Taizé worship service.

Visual Worship Arts

Icon, a Greek work that means "picture", are used during Taizé worship services. These highly symbolic pictures are designed to aid in meditation and prayer.

¹ Information received from bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/christianity/priests/taize_1.shtml