CALL TO PRAYER
LEADER: We often use the phrase “healing presence” in Catholic health care, but do we remember what that truly means? Our modern world seems to value doing and action more than contemplation and simply being present. Please listen to an alternative approach offered in the words of Hebrew Scripture.

READER: (From Psalm 46)
God is our refuge and our strength, an ever-present help in distress. Thus we do not fear, though earth be shaken and mountains quake to the depths of the sea, Though its waters rage and foam and mountains totter at its surging. The Lord of hosts is with us; our stronghold is the God of Jacob. Streams of the river gladden the city of God, the holy dwelling of the Most High. God is in its midst; it shall not be shaken; God will help it at break of day. Though nations rage and kingdoms totter, God’s voice thunders and the earth trembles. The Lord of hosts is with us; our stronghold is the God of Jacob. Come and see the works of the Lord, who has done fearsome deeds on earth; Who stops wars to the ends of the earth, breaks the bow, splinters the spear, and burns the shields with fire;

Who says:
“Be still and confess that I am God! I am exalted among the nations, exalted on the earth.”
The Lord of hosts is with us; our stronghold is the God of Jacob.

READER: The Word of the Lord.
ALL: Thanks be to God.

REFLECTION
LEADER: What does it mean to be a “healing presence?” It means:
To listen more than we speak.
To remain calm even when others are in chaos.
To stay clear and focused even when no clear direction is apparent.
To value people exactly as they are and not as we think they should be.
It means being with people in the midst of human suffering, and not trying to have all the answers or explain what is ultimately “mystery.”
It is about letting go of the temptation to show only the clinical and professional side, and hold back the personal and human side of caring.
Healing presence is not about doing something, it is about being still and present.
And when we allow ourselves to be in this vulnerable state of simply being with another person who is in pain or in sorrow, they and we are all able to experience the healing power of God.

It is only in those vulnerable moments of “being” that we experience God’s healing presence.
(Pause)
Let us pray together:

ALL: Good and gracious God, You are the source of all healing. In You, we share in this wonderful ministry we call “healing presence.”

Today, we honor not only those who give direct care to the patients;
But all who indirectly serve our patients as well.
We celebrate the way your grace moves through each one of us:
Revealing your healing touch, your compassionate glance, And your consoling words.
Bless all of us who serve in this healing ministry; And strengthen us so we may be your compassionate presence to others.
Bless our patients and their families who need to feel you are with them.
May we never forget you minister to us through them as well.
We ask all of this in the power of your Holy Name.
Amen.