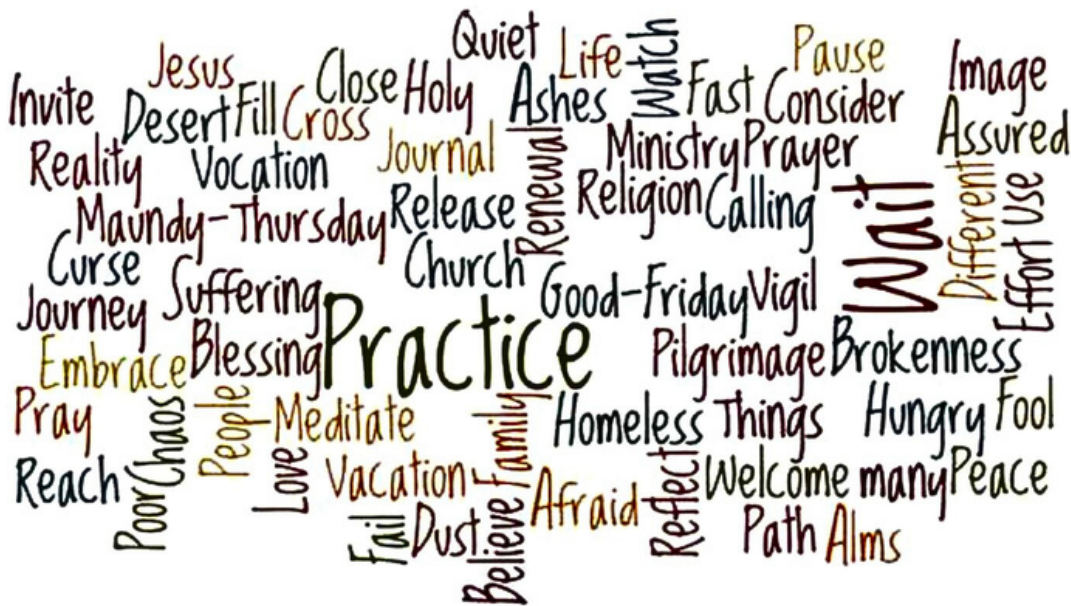


# BREAD FOR THE JOURNEY



2024 LENTEN REFLECTIONS BY AND FOR  
THE PEOPLE OF ST. BARNABAS



## INTRODUCTION REV. KAREN HAIG

For Christians, Lent is a time set apart. Forty full, rich, and long days to reflect and to pray, to look within, to discover the things in our lives that create distance between God and ourselves, and to consider gently letting them go. Lent is a time to discern how God may be calling us. What might we take on, or let go of, in order to more freely love God, our neighbors and ourselves?

We offer you the St. Barnabas Lenten Devotional and invite you to spend some time each day reflecting on Holy Scripture with our St. Barnabas community. These reflections have been written with great care and attention by the people of our community, and they offer us an opportunity to move more deeply into our relationships with God, with one another, and with ourselves.

My heartfelt thanks to all who prayed and pondered and wrote so beautifully from the riches of their own lives to make this booklet happen. This little devotional is a great gift to us all, and it has been my privilege to have had a hand in bringing it to you. I invite you to use it to pray with and to come closer into community by coming to know a bit more of the people who have written these reflections. May this Lent be an especially rich and holy season for us all.

Faithfully,

*Karen<sup>+</sup>*

*Matthew 6:2. So whenever you give alms, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may be praised by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward.*

They were hot, filthy, exhausted and incredibly satisfied as they sat on the dock at camp. It had been a packed summer filled with endlessly exuberant young people and the last of them had just left camp. I walked up to the sprawling, fatigued staff and said, “Let’s circle up.”

This routine was a ritual now. As time passed over the summer this ritual was one they grew in appreciation of regardless of the level of tiredness. I invited someone to offer an opening prayer and then posed the question, “Share as you’re comfortable what you’ve learned about yourself this summer.” A moment of silence followed then one of my favorite extroverts spoke up. “You told us in the beginning of the summer that our time on staff at camp is grounded in servanthood. It took me a while to lean into what that meant and frankly I didn’t know how self-oriented I was. So my big learning is that it isn’t about me but letting God work through me.”

Wise words and transformational learning for a 20 year old! In my experience this is the life long learning for all of us who have chosen to follow Jesus. As he so clearly articulates this in the Gospel, “Do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may be praised by others...” It is not about us. Rather, we are called to use the gifts given to us by the Holy Spirit for God’s greater glory, not ours.

The Lenten journey invites each of us to both exam our lives and to begin to recalibrate our focus from the human tendency to be self-oriented toward living a life of servanthood for God and neighbor. Like the experience of the camp staff it can be a long and exhausting trek but also one filled with many opportunities for transformation into the people God is calling us to be.

The Right Reverend Brian Prior, Assisting Bishop of Olympia

*Philippians 3:13-14. Beloved, I do not consider that I have made it my own; but this one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus.*

Love thy neighbor....pure, unselfish friendship,  
All through life's allotted span,  
Nurtures, strengthens, widens, lengthens,  
Man's relationship with man.  
-Anonymous-

In our reflective hours we almost always look back on the rocky road and turbulence of our past. Oh yes, we also can see green pastures and sunshine too. There were times we paid little attention to God in our decision making and daily comings and goings leaving others in need on their own to find their own way. At some point in our growth and discernment we began to see ourselves in our neighbors. We realize that our neighbors are a collection of states, of experiences, thoughts and desires, just as real as we ourselves.

The more we have looked to God for direction the more this grasp of moral awareness has instilled in us the desire to share God's love with others. We look to the future in a more compassionate and loving manner. Our greatest joy can come from sharing what we have, to open our hearts to the man or woman alone, to listen to the difficulties others must endure. Most important, however, is to bring happiness to someone else. We look towards God to give us guidance. As Rev. Jim Friedrich once said, "The wind of God is always blowing.... all we have to do is hoist the sails."

Helene and Steve Schmitz

*Philippians 4:6. Do not be worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.*

My mother once told me that I am descended from a long line of expert worriers. My siblings and I tease that she is a master of the fine art of worrying.

In truth, there is much to be worried about; it's hard not to be overwhelmed every time we check the headlines. Over the past few years, one could be forgiven for saying: 'if you are not worried, you're dead!' An epidemic of anxiety is upon us.

By itself, the instruction "Do not worry" sounds like the catchy Bobby McFerrin song of the late 1980's....

"Here's a little song I wrote  
You might want to sing it note for note  
Don't worry, be happy"

Easier sung than done? The apostle Paul provides the formula, not only to avoid worrying, but for obtaining the "peace of God, which surpasses all understanding." It may be helpful to remember that Paul penned these words, with Timothy, while imprisoned in Rome, facing uncertain circumstances beyond his control. Despite his own dire situation, Paul's hopeful message to the Philippians echoes across time. When Paul urges the Philippians, and by extension, all of us, to 'not worry about anything,' he acknowledges the tendency of human hearts to be weighed down by worries, uncertainties, and fears. Yet, he doesn't leave us there; instead, he offers a transformative approach to facing anxiety: through prayer, petition, and thanksgiving.

In the midst of life's challenges, whatever they may be, we are invited to bring our concerns to God in prayer. This act of surrendering our anxieties to a loving God is not mere ritual, but a powerful and freeing act of trust and dependency.

Paul's guidance to accompany our prayers with thanksgiving is significant. Gratitude shifts our focus from what worries us (often what we lack or want to be different), to what we have received. It cultivates a spirit of contentment and trust in God's provision, even amidst trials. By intentionally finding reasons to be thankful, we cultivate a perspective of faith that sees beyond our immediate circumstances to the faithfulness of God.

And so, as Paul suggests, let's do it together:

*Gracious God,  
In moments of worry and fear, teach us to turn to you in prayer and thanksgiving, as your servant Paul has taught.  
Help us release our anxieties and embrace your peace, which passes all understanding.  
Amen.*

*John 17:22. The glory that you have given me I have given them, so that they may be one, as we are one.*

God as He has graciously revealed Himself in Christ and the Spirit. “[we] behold God in the face of Christ.”

God is love and He revealed His love through His son Jesus Christ. Jesus, when human and living on earth, gave us the gift of his glory, and it stays with us still to this day that gift.

It has been very difficult for me to feel the same way about Jesus Christ compared to how I feel about God and the Holy Spirit. I can visualize or feel what God and the Spirit are to me- they are warm and golden and live in my heart. Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and we are all children of God, so what was more special about Jesus than about me or you? Obviously - a lot, but (hang in here with me) shouldn't we as children of God be able to be just as transformative as Jesus Christ? Don't we have the some undiscovered/hidden ability to be just like Jesus? The answer is no.

God revealed Himself through Jesus, He didn't pass through. Jesus wasn't a medium for God.

God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit must be chosen together for the glory to be received and be part of the “one.”

We call this the Trinity (yes obviously) but look inside yourself and reflect on how you feel and imagine the words “God,” “Jesus,” and “Spirit.” Take a moment to see if you feel differently in a profound way when thinking the words. Then take a moment and combine how you feel into the “one.”

Lisa-Marie MacKenzie

*Mark 1:12-13. And the Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness. He was in the wilderness forty days, tempted by Satan; and he was with the wild beasts; and the angels waited on him.*

What intrigues me most about this passage in Mark is that he uses the phrase “drove him out” when referring to the action of Spirit at the beginning of Jesus’ 40 days of temptation in the wilderness. We know that “Jesus drove out the money changers” in one of his very few recorded displays of anger. We also hear that a mob in Jesus’ home of Nazareth “drove him out” of town. Neither of these instances sound pleasant or gentle in the least, but rather violent.

The synoptic gospels are called such because Matthew, Mark, and Luke describe many of the same events in similar fashion. However, Matthew and Luke use the more gentle “led by the Spirit” when referring to this particular event before the beginning of Jesus’ earthly ministry; it is as if His hand was held as He was guided to the wilderness as a prerequisite to His very important earthly ministry.

Why the discrepancy? I suppose there could be a number of reasons, but my opinion is based on our subjective nature as individuals. What two apostles understood as an unpleasant but necessary experience that Jesus had to endure before his very important earthy work, another interpreted in an adverse way as if the Spirit was angry or somehow an adversary.

I know that in my life I have had moments when I questioned why I was going through something in particular, that at the time felt confusing and punitive. Time would always reveal that no matter how difficult, it ultimately strengthened me and assisted me in ministering to others. So, even if in those times I initially experienced it like Mark’s description, as if I was being “driven” to something challenging and painful, by the grace of God I know that the Spirit is always holding my hand, leading the way and providing angels to be there with me all for the glory of working for God’s kingdom.

A.J. Davies

*Mark 1:2b. See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way.*

Who among us doesn't experience fear or anxiety when embarking on a new venture –be it a job or new role, a trip or even a social encounter? In the Bible, encounters with angels typically begin with the words, "Fear Not!" Revelation comes as a shock, even when its good news. And so Mark's introduction to his gospel hints at something new and extraordinary, something requiring preparation and a laboring in advance. Take heart! The Lord you seek is coming!

Scholars tell us Mark is writing his gospel to a Gentile audience, a group who would have been familiar with only the last of the Old Testament prophets, John the Baptist. John was popular, drawing big crowds to the wilderness to be told they needed to repent – which in Hebrew means turn back, change direction. Like the prophets of old, he told the people a new way of being is needed to be in right relationship with God. This is Good News! The Lord you seek is coming!

Jesus comes into human history at the point where Jews had already recorded revelation of God. The prophet Elijah says the Lord is not to be found in the power of storm, but the still small voice of consciousness. The prophet Moses points to our responsibility to answer a call to enter the Promised Land. Jesus comes to us as the fully human, fully divine, fulfillment of the promise of God to be with us. Jesus comes to demonstrate how to be. The revelation is shocking, if not also sobering. We are to be the hands and feet of God. Take heart! The Lord we seek is here!

This Lent, may I consider the ways God has prepared my path and my heart to respond to the needs of the world today. It may be a small role, but knowing that God is in our midst preparing others as well is enough. Hallelujah! The Lord we seek is here!

Julie Emry Dougherty



*1 Corinthians 1:25. For God's foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God's weakness is stronger than human strength.*

The Lenten season's inevitable journey toward the death of Jesus always feels stark and ominous to me. Even if I know the good news of Easter morning, I also know this season will walk me through a palpable grief.

When other seasons begin, I often get a rush of excitement—whether it's the new year with its resolutions, a creative project churning in my imagination, or just a turn of the weather. I may establish practices to nurture ideas or build boundaries around my hopes and plans. Lent is a different sort of invitation, asking not what will grow? but first, what must die? Lent invites me to get acquainted with my own deficiencies and with death. It holds me close to the dirt—the humus—a word bound up with humility and humanity.

In contrast to what I may tell myself in other seasons of the year, I have found it impossible to do Lent well, my strength and wisdom startlingly futile. And this is how Paul lays it out too: human wisdom and human strength, when measured against God's stupidity and frailty, will always fall short. Paul turns our faces toward our ridiculous attempts at self-improvement by asking us to imagine God as an idiot, a fool, a weakling.

God's foolishness – what would that even look like? In a poem celebrating a beloved mentor, poet Kwame Dawes writes: “to find my own strength, / I seek out your splendid weaknesses.” There must be splendor in the weakness that Jesus embodies when he sets aside earthly power to demonstrate the extent of love. If God's foolishness looks like Christ, perhaps this is the path for us as well, to get acquainted with him: God riding on a donkey, God washing dusty feet, God giving his human body to death. Death looks neither wise nor strong. Death looks so much like giving up. And Jesus is going to die not in spite of the vessel of the body, but through the vessel of the body.

But in Paul's startling comparison, rather than leading us to despair over our human futility and bodily death, Paul uses the epistle to turn us toward the candle of Christ, the light that draws us into a community birthed in love. Love says we do not have to despair, though we do have to walk the road of weakness, as a learner, as a listener. We have to come face to face with our own unknowing.

Through the incarnation of Jesus, what we understand of strength, what we understand of power, alters. God alters our sight. Jesus shows us that this is a good road – not comfortable or glamorous, but a road of love – love that Paul will later describe as never-failing, the greatest of these. He asks us to tip our heads to one side and watch what happens in our relationships when ambition is not the goal, when we look at our human eloquence and giftings through the lens of the cross.

*Luke 4:20. And he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant, and sat down. The eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him.*

Those of you who know me might be a little surprised to know how challenging I find it to speak publicly. It has been a lifelong struggle for me to get up in front of a crowd to even read a passage aloud. I do not like to have “the eyes of all” fixed on me. These fears, over the course of my life, have led me to shy away from situations where I am in the public eye.

I wonder if Jesus ever felt this way. Jesus was in Nazareth in this passage, and although he was having great success in the surrounding countryside, here he was rejected by his hometown crowd. I wonder if Jesus was nervous about being judged by the people he had grown up with, by their resistance to his message.

Circumstances have lead me to roles and situations where I felt compelled to stand in front of everyone to make a statement about what I believed or what I was committed to, regardless of how uncomfortable it made me feel. An example of this is the simple act of being an acolyte (thankfully, no speaking role required). I began this role at a time when our parish was suffering greatly and many people were leaving. There was a group of families who decided to make their presence known and to show commitment to the parish by serving as acolytes, ushers and readers as family units. My husband, son, and I all became acolytes together. We were all pretty uncomfortable with the prospect but it was a simple act and the message was clear. We were here to stay. I believe that, together with several other families, our simple display of commitment was important in the life of St. Barnabas.

Times are certainly different now at St. Barnabas, but I learned from this experience that no matter how uncomfortable it makes you, it is so important to share who you are, and often quite rewarding to do so. The lesson I continue to be taught, is that life is meant to be participated in and our lives and our gifts are meant to be shared, no matter the fear, no matter the cost. Lent seems to me like a good time to renew our commitment and participation in a Christian life and to step outside our comfort zone to use our lives and our gifts to help bring about God’s kingdom on earth.

Mary Anne Smith

*1 Corinthians 3:9. For we are God's servants, working together; you are God's field, God's building.*

I used to think of the Christian phrase “being born again” as merely describing a change in attitude or feelings, without much changing the person. “Being born again” was, for me, like liquid water turning into solid ice—a change to be sure, but still the same stuff. Then I started reading St. Paul’s letters and I realized I had it all wrong. “Being born again” is much more like magnesium becoming gold!

In his letter to the Corinthians, Paul stresses the fundamental difference between two kind of lives: living according to the Spirit, and living according to the world. Being jealous of your fellow Christians or quarreling over who is doing Christianity “right”—that’s being worldly. Life by the Spirit is a life where rather than being in charge or being right, we are servants, all equally living in obedience to the only Lord, Jesus the Christ.

That means our work as the Church is not something we do to get praise or reward, because we’re only God’s assistants, however vital. One of us plants the seeds of Good News, another waters the seed, but it is God who makes new life flourish in our hearts. One of us raises walls for a new home, another puts a roof on the place, but there can be no sure foundation other than our Jesus. With these metaphors Paul can say two things at once: that we are all servants farming and building souls, and yet we are all God’s crop, God’s home. For all of us are growing, being built up in Christ, and yet all of us have a responsibility to help each other grow and be built by God’s grace. That’s the art of being Church.

Michael Fitzpatrick

*Mark 2:16. When the scribes of the Pharisees saw that he was eating with sinners and tax collectors, they said to his disciples, "Why does he eat with tax collectors and sinners?"*

At this time Jesus had been baptized by John. The heavens had opened, the Holy Spirit descended as a dove and God cried out, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." There is no mention of Jesus' reaction, but he must have felt empowered.

He went on to collect his disciples. He preached in the synagogue. He called out demons.

The Pharisees began to question Who is this? Why does he have such power? They probably thought we should be afraid. Jesus continues his holy journey. He prays; he heals. He states that this is his calling; he must continue. He seems to have no doubts about godly abilities. He was constantly flocked by people in need. He listens; he cures. It is miraculous.

Again the scribes question his actions. Only God can cure; who does he think he is? Jesus continues his calling. When he eats, he asks Levi to follow him. They eat together. Again the scribes and Pharisees question why does he eat with publicans and sinners?

Two forces are at work. Two groups are diametrically opposed. This is over 2,000 years ago. In the present not much has changed. The entire world seems to be in conflict. People in power wish to hold tightly to their positions.

Jesus' life was controversial. He made enemies of people in power. He did not resist or fear. He had a mission to accomplish, a mission that cost his life.

We aren't usually asked to give up our lives, but we are asked to love; we are asked to live each day with purpose. I try. Some days are better than others. Life is full of challenge and strife. Despite the state of the world, the fear of the future, I continue to live in His peace with hope.

Bonnie Chan

*John 15:7. If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.*

When I read this verse, I feel like a kid in a candy store. I can have whatever I want? What's the catch? Oh, there it is, in the first half of the sentence. A condition. I have to eat my vegetables first. Now I'm suspicious I won't really get what I want; I only get to have what God wants for me. All of a sudden, it doesn't sound like such great news.

At one level, that's not so off the mark. As a kid I don't always know what's best for me. I get a terrible stomach ache and realize I only thought I wanted to eat all the candy in the store. It's disappointing and makes me doubt all my desires.

But a deeper reading is possible, and I'm staking my life on it. Here's why. Twelve years ago, I hit bottom with illness and depression and lost my faith in God. Whatever joys and anticipations of joy I had experienced in my faith now seemed impossible. Yet a new world opened to me, and I felt freer and more at home than ever before. After being a Christian my whole life, my faith died and I was born again. It was a blessing abundantly above all I could ask or imagine. It was the answer to prayer I didn't know I wanted. Now I trust deep guidance as a pattern of life and that it's what Jesus is actually talking about.

Ultimately I can trust my desires. I just need to stay open about where they are leading me. And trust that I can follow a higher intelligence that is neither mine nor ultimately distinct from me. The candy and the vegetables transform into a single thing called Love that fulfills in every dimension of my being: intellectual, physical, emotional, sexual, relational, social. The Good News is better than I thought! A fully embodied desire for God is a fully embodied desire for Life, and it's destined to be fulfilled. You know how that makes me feel? Like a kid in a candy store!

Evan Lenz

*Mark 8:35. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it.*

These words of Jesus are preceded by his dramatic rebuking of Peter: “Get behind me, Satan! For you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things.” When I ponder how to set my mind on divine things—how to discern, how to focus, how to persevere—the clue to a key obstacle is in the passage which follows: “*Those who are ashamed of me and of my words...of them the Son of Man will also be ashamed...*” The opposite of shame is pride. While I think of myself as a humble person, there are certainly parts of my identity which are firmly prideful:

Pride of being an artist—my work is unique and special. Therefore, I deserve to avoid unpleasant tasks and do the special things.

Pride cultivated by American consumer culture—I should always be comfortable. I will purchase what is “right for me” AND shiny enough to ensure happiness.

Pride in my health—why am I so tired this morning? I deserve to spend time considering - but not acting on - a new diet/schedule/product/guru...

Pride in being a performer—how do I look? Do I want that posted?

Rooting out pride is a challenging spiritual pursuit for many reasons, including the risk of being proud of your (shiny, guru-approved) de-priding process. Instead of trying to remove pride, this Lent I will work on stepping out of self entirely. I can occasionally hold that empty space open, but have never tried to make it a daily practice. For forty days. In a row. Here goes (literally) nothing!

Sheila Bristow

*Mark 3:9. He told his disciples to have a boat ready for him because of the crowd, so that they would not crush him.*

Would I have been among the crowd? I don't even like crowds. Yet here in Mark he speaks of the whole city gathered at the door of Simon's Mother in Law's house. Wherever Jesus went we read that "many were gathered" or, in this chapter, "a great multitude" had come to hear him, to be near him, to be healed. It wasn't just one city of people, it was 7 different cities that drew the people out to Galilee to see this man. The stories of his preaching and of his healings had gone viral!

Would I have followed the crowds to see Jesus?

It was about 10 years ago I clearly recall saying "Jesus, I don't know who you are. But I want to know you; I want to be able to talk with you." Now, as I sit with this passage, as I read about Jesus retreating to the sea, or going to the country or going to a lonely place in the early hours, I know those to be the places that also give me quiet and renewed energy. And as I look into the heart of the Jesus I'm coming to know, I'm drawn to the presence of him - the gentle, loving, caring presence. I feel my walls breaking down under his gaze, my heart given over to follow him.

Yes, I guess this means that I would have been in the crowd, trying to quietly move closer. Closing my eyes, I'd absorb his words, words that can mend a soul and set one on the best pilgrimage ever - the pilgrimage of Coming Closer.

Pat Todd

*Psalm 61:8. So will I always sing the praise of your Name, and day by day I will fulfill my vows.*

Reading this entire psalm is like a day that starts with a lament and ends in a song. And like so many psalms, it is such a familiar pattern to me. When things seem to be falling apart, psalms can show us that the better solution is to turn them all over to God. Resting in the stillness that comes in that present moment allows God to act in my heart and body. The situation that gives me worry or concern or that I struggle with doesn't go away. Instead as God wraps it with love and peace so tightly, it becomes small enough that I can leave knowing that all is in the hands of the Holy Spirit. My day begins anew.

That release of the immediate burden allows me to recognize the gifts that I have been given and the abundance of God's love that I then want to share. Becoming less focused on my little struggles I recognize that there are others for whom I wish to offer God's peace. As I bring others into my prayers of lament, the singing begins.

This may sound a little crazy, start with my self-absorbed issues, say a few words and all my problems and worries go away. And if words were all there were, it would be crazy. Crazy to think that God can be fooled by the words that come out of our mouths. God only hears the words of our hearts and in that intimacy, there are no false words uttered. Once we give everything we are to God, who knows us better than we know ourselves, we are able lay aside our worries and join the chorus that sings praises. We are then ready to fulfill the promises we have made. With the help of the Holy Spirit, of course.

Joan Collins



*Psalm 72:4. He shall defend the needy among the people; he shall rescue the poor and crush the oppressor.*

Psalm 72 is David's prayer to God that Solomon will lead his people as God leads those who trust in him. In verse 3, David notes that God comforts his people through the majesty of the mountains that bring peace. In verse 6, God nourishes the Earth by bringing rain down upon the green grass and aging olive trees. In verse 7, the righteous flourish and in verse 17, assuming Solomon leads as God does, then Solomon's name shall be continued as long as the sun warms the Earth and all nations shall call him blessed.

While we know that Solomon initially led his people in righteousness, he ultimately oppressed them. The same is true throughout most of history, including today. Throughout my life, I have wondered what I can do as an individual to treat others as God does since I am not a leader of a nation. First, I recognize that all good comes from God through many examples such as the peace of nature, the beauty of classical music and the warmth of relationships.

Next, I search for those who may be less fortunate so that I can help in small ways, whether it is a smile addressed to a stranger, the expression of concern for someone's children, the giving of advice, or the encouragement to someone disheartened. While these acts of kindness may not be considered leadership skills or involve the exercise of judgment, I do consider our interest in and kindness to the needy endures forever; and as stated in verse 7 all the righteous shall flourish, and as provided in verse 17, all nations shall call God, our leader, blessed for as long as the sun warms the earth.

Bonnie Peterson

*Mark 4:31a. It is like a mustard seed.*

Mustard seeds shall grow  
Nurtured with care, grown in faith  
So are we God's seeds.

In the scheme of this universe we are but tiny seeds. But as we relish in our spiritual communities (thank you Saint Barnabas) nurtured by our fellow parishioners, like-minded others, and those who wonder, we are free to grow in faith knowing of God's sweet grace and love. Be the leaves of our God, sharing room with all who need, want, and/or are willing to know Him.

Babe Kehres



*Mark 4:37. A great windstorm arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that the boat was already being swamped.*

Mark relates this story of Jesus and the Apostles alone on their small boat; the Disciples frightened by the storm and Jesus asleep in the stern. Almost daily, I read about over-crowded boatloads of immigrants, swamped, and sinking into the sea. They are fleeing lands no longer able to sustain them, either because of climate change that has ravaged their crops, or endless infighting, ravaging their towns and villages. At the same time, the news describes how the super-rich are preparing to flee into lavish underground bunkers, or up, on private rockets, to escape onto other moons and planets.

And I ask myself, in this cruel storm of wars and ecological devastation, is Jesus asleep? Have we been deserted, left to founder in the consequences of human folly? Is that sleep so deep that we are left to witness even the turning of the Holy Land back into a land of colonial devastation? Where should this angry sea lead my Lenten contemplations? The Old Testament tells of Job, or the people of the city of Nineveh donning sack cloth and ashes in preparation for destruction by an angry God. It pleased Him that they did it. So is this to be a Lent of penitence?

But Mark tells that the Disciples woke Jesus and He stilled the wind. How am I to wake Him? With help from walking the Stations of the Cross, perhaps I can begin to understand His final suffering in a new way. I can see that He took on the suffering of colonial oppression beneath His Crown of Thorns; the paths of desperate immigrants as He carries the cross, and finally, the cruel death suffered by the innocents in His crucifixion. Perhaps he was never asleep in that boat with His disciples. It was they who awoke when He asked “Why are you afraid? Have you no faith?” These are the questions I will contemplate this Lent. Can I feel the Holy Spirit in me in the face of devastation? What does that presence lead me to do? How to wake, not Jesus, but myself into the Mysteries of the Christian faith.

Sue Ellen Case

## SATURDAY, MARCH 2

*Psalm 27:17. What if I had not believed that I should see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living!*

There's no question that Psalm 27 has some pretty dark and upsetting imagery, as do many of the Psalms. Evildoers eating up flesh. War. Enemies. Days of trouble. Adversaries. False witnesses. Malice... And when we look around, we see this troubling and dark imagery come to life; sometimes in far-off corners of the world, and sometimes in our very own backyards. Some days, it feels impossible to avoid getting bogged down by the weight of the world. It's all so heavy.

Yet, in Psalm 27 we also read that in the midst of these days of trouble, it is the adversaries who fall and the psalmist is sustained, shown a level path, set high upon a rock, and ends up singing praises. Ok...but *how*? How do we handle all of this heaviness and “*see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living*”...?

When I was a little girl, I was perplexed every Sunday at church during the Memorial Acclamation. I may not have been very interested in science, and I know that I stumbled across the finish line in math every year. But language arts was my forte, and I did not understand how “Christ *is* risen,” could be correct. Shouldn't we say, “Christ *has* risen,”...? Perhaps, “Christ *rose*,”...? Was something lost in translation, here? Or maybe the folks of the Early Church were just bad at grammar. I tried in my elementary way to ask questions, but there was little room for questions in my Roman Catholic household, and far less room in my Roman Catholic catechism class.

It wasn't until I was an adult—a parent with my own questioning children—and beginning my own spiritual healing and growth that it was made clear for me. Yes, Christ *is* risen. Continuously. Then, now, always, and in all things. There was no class that made this clear for me. No one gave an explanation that resulted in an “a-ha” moment. Over time, I realized that there was joy and wonder to be found in the mystery of the risen Christ. Christ is risen every day in each sunrise and each sunset. In every wave of the ocean and in every wave of joy in our hearts. In the birth of every baby on Earth and every star in the heavens. In the people we most cherish and in the people who drive us bananas. Christ *is* risen.

To have faith, belief, assurance that Christ lives in me and I live in Christ, that Jesus is resurrected and at work in all of our exuberance and sorrow, is what makes it possible for me to “*see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living!*”

And “*what if I had not believed...*,” as the psalmist poses? Oh, I'd rather us not think about bearing the burdens of the world without Jesus to help carry the weight. Let us just relish in the gift.

Etienna Wright

*John 2:22. After he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this; and they believed the scripture and the word that Jesus had spoken.*

There are a lot of moments where the disciples have doubt or unbelief in the Bible. That is something I can definitely resonate with. The moment that his disciples were remembering in this scripture was when Jesus had said at the physical temple in Jerusalem if the Pharisees destroyed the temple, he would raise it up in 3 days. The temple he was actually referring to was his body.

A fascinating thing about that moment was that it was the only time that Jesus talked about his body being a temple. Of course, Jesus loves being cryptic with his messages, so he never told anyone that his body was a temple, directly. Jesus ended up being crucified on the cross, which leads the disciples to remember what Jesus said and finally put the final pieces of the puzzle together. It wasn't the temple made of bricks and stone, but his body.

Some may look at it now and see the whole picture from the start, but the Jews thought that Jesus was crazy, "It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and you are going to raise it in three days?" John 2:20

There are moments in my life that I also am missing a piece of the puzzle until much later. My mom would always tell me to enjoy childhood while I still had it because I would end up missing it one day. I always thought my mom was crazy, just as the Jews probably thought about Jesus. I would always think 'I can't wait to be older, I will be able to eat candy whenever I want and be able to drive anywhere I desire.' I never realized until more recently that my mother was indeed right. I thought that the person I most looked up to was also a bit crazy. I didn't truly understand what it meant to be an adult, for I had never had any adult experiences. Getting older has given me more and more responsibilities, but I know that eventually there will be a time that I can see clearly about how life isn't just all work and responsibilities, but puzzles take time.

John 2:22. After he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this; and they believed the scripture and the word Jesus had spoken.

Brennan Davies

*Genesis 44:19. My lord asked his servants, saying, "Have you a father or a brother?"*

In the above quote, Judah, the fourth son of Jacob by Leah, is pleading with an Egyptian official, who (unknownst to him) is his own younger brother Joseph (whom, years earlier, Judah and his brothers had sold into slavery). Judah is reminding Joseph of the words he had used on the brothers' previous trip to Egypt; Joseph had told the brothers that one of them would have to stay in Egypt until their younger brother (Benjamin) was brought to him. Benjamin and Joseph were full brothers – sons of Rachel (Jacob's favorite wife).

Now, through trickery, Joseph attempts to keep Benjamin in Egypt with him and send the other brothers back to Jacob in Canaan. Joseph had ordered his valuable silver cup to be hidden in Benjamin's bag to make it look as though he had stolen it. Judah gives an impassioned speech, pleading to save Benjamin from a life of servitude or possible death. He offers himself, in Benjamin's place, to stay behind so Benjamin can be allowed to return to Jacob as he feels it would kill Jacob to lose Benjamin. Judah explains how devastated Jacob was when he lost Joseph so many years before. Moved by Judah's transformation and obvious repentance of his earlier deeds, Joseph reveals who he is, forgives past deeds, and the brothers are tearfully reunited.

While, for most of us, our disagreements and reconciliations are not so dramatic as is found here, we can look to these two men as (maybe extreme) examples for our lives. Like Judah, people can change for the better. We can put others ahead of ourselves and share other's burdens. And like Joseph, we can forgive things in the past that caused us pain. Forgiveness is better than getting revenge. This is something we can concentrate on in this Lenten season.

Kirk and Peggy Eichenberger

## TUESDAY, MARCH 5

*Mark 6:4. Then Jesus said to them, "Prophets are not without honor, except in their home town, and among their own kin, and in their own house."*

Leading up to this passage, Mark tells us of the travels of Jesus and how he, with the disciples at his side, taught and healed as he went. Many were captivated by his words and were witnesses to his miraculous healing. A certain Jairus, one of the rulers of the synagogue, approached Jesus (actually fell at his feet) asking Jesus to accompany him home and lay healing hands on his daughter, who was gravely ill.

As Jesus makes his way through the throng, a woman, who has suffered a condition of hemorrhaging for over a decade, reaches out and touches his robe. With her touch, she is healed. Jesus applauds her for her faith and blesses her.

Before the party is able to proceed further, they are stopped by members of Jairus' household, who bring news of his daughter's death. They advise Jairus to not detain Jesus further, as it is now too late to save his daughter. Jesus, overhearing their words, advises Jairus to trust in him and they proceed to the child's bedside. Jesus takes hold of the little girl's hand and restores her to life.

In our passage 6:4, Mark explains that Jesus has now returned to Nazareth, his home turf and is preaching on the sabbath at the temple. His reception is less than welcoming. Initially, the people are surprised by both his ability and his wisdom. Sadly, these people soon turn on Jesus, denying his message and challenging his authority. They inquire, "Is this not the carpenter, the son of Mary?" They may well be stating, "Who does he think he is?" They close their ears to his message and are offended, aggrieved. The mob mentality takes hold and Jesus is shaken by their rejection.

This experience rocks Jesus. He is, after all in human form and is not indifferent to the unwelcoming reception in his own home town. He however, saddened, is not shaken and he leaves with his faithful disciples and continues to teach and heal and to prepare his disciples to take up the cross.

It is painful when our best efforts are rejected and those who should embrace us turn away. It can leave us shaken with little resolve. Jesus provides us with good counsel: Mark 6:11 "If any place will not welcome you and they refuse to hear you, as you leave, shake off the dust that is on your feet as a testimony against them." It is the gift of faith that allows us to move forward, to let go of past hurts and to take up the cross.

Drucy Burnet Hodge

*1 Corinthians 8:8. Food will not bring us close to God. We are no worse off if we do not eat, and no better off if we do.*

Paul is in Ephesus and is writing to the church he formed in Corinth. Corinth is a large urban center with a very diverse population. The people in the church were mostly gentiles and were grouped in smaller groups reflecting the diversity of Corinth. There were some groups that were people of wealth and some, maybe most, were people of lesser means. The people in each group meet with their group regularly in houses reflecting the diversity. Periodically they come together as one group for a common meal and worship.

The differences among the groups were causing problems and people complained to Paul. Hence Paul writes to them to settle these disputes about different behaviors. One of the issues Paul deals with is food sacrificed to idols. Paul tells them that all possess knowledge. “Knowledge puffs up but love builds up.” Paul tells the group that idols are not God, that there is only one God, so while everyone needs to be careful not to create difficulty for others (being loving rather than being smart or right), the matter of the food itself doesn’t need to worry them.

Some people have been worshiping idols for so long they don’t worry about the food they eat as food having been sacrificed to idols. Some people do worry about it. Paul explains that “Food will not bring us close to God. We are no worse if we do not eat and no better off if we do.” In this way Paul is attempting to defuse the importance of food that has been sacrificed to idols as part of their beliefs and worship.

Mike Killion



## THURSDAY, MARCH 7

*Psalm 85:7. Show us your mercy, O LORD, and grant us your salvation.*

As I read this Psalm and the others that surround it, I cannot help but think about the people of Ukraine, Russia, Israel, Palestine, and others in peril. I pray each night that God will provide mercy and grant salvation to those who now suffer.

We are surrounded by so much, a community that cares, schools to educate our youth, fresh air to breath, water to drink, food to eat, shelter to keep us warm, and a church community that supports and prays together.

At times I wonder why we are so fortunate. However with thought, I know it is so we can do our part to make the Lord's task a little easier.

Each night I pray that I never forget the gifts we are given and always remember those who have so little.

Rosalys Peel

*1 Corinthians 9:25. Athletes exercise self-control in all things; they do it to receive a perishable garland, but we an imperishable one.*

In chapter 9 of 1 Corinthians, Paul explains that he has been entrusted to preach the gospel to everyone, his goal being to bring every person to Christ. (Yikes—sounds like evangelism to me!) He writes that his behaviors and words are tailored to his particular audience—Jews, Gentiles, the “weak”—approaching them in ways that they will understand without compromising the truth of his life and message. His joy comes whenever he wins another person to Christ.

Athletic games were an important part of life during Paul’s time. He compares himself to an athlete, training for an important race. The athlete must have great self-discipline as he trains, avoiding worldly pleasures and distractions while staying laser focused on the prize. Paul says that he similarly practices great self-discipline so that his life is a reflection of the gospel he preaches. The difference is that in the athletic race, there could be only one winner, only one first prize, usually a crown of laurel or other leaves that immediately began to wither and die. The prize that Paul offers is available to everyone, a crown of eternal life and inheritance in the kingdom of God.

Decades ago, I “won” two Mylar jackets for finishing the Seattle to Portland bike ride two different years. I trained hard for months to be ready. Today, those jackets are long gone, perishable prizes. But, knowing of the imperishable reward that can belong to everyone, what can I, a total introvert, do to be more like Paul? I’m pretty certain I won’t be boldly proclaiming the gospel to whoever crosses my path, but, assured of my eternal “prize,” I can keep up my “training,” striving to live a Christ-centered life, and praying that others may see a glimpse of Christ reflected through me—a win/win!

Elaine Percival

*Psalm 90:1. Lord, you have been our refuge from one generation to another.*

How often do you bring to mind and heart the dearest elders in your family and your found-family who have passed on? As an elder myself, I find myself calling them to me even more at this stage of life. One story that immediately comes to mind is about my Basque grandfather. He arrived as a shepherd to the US, married my Basque grandmother, and they had their first child together in 1923, my father. My grandfather had not attended church until my father was born, very premature, weighing about three pounds, his first bed in a top drawer of a small dresser. After going to church to desperately pray for his son, Grandpa never missed mass for the rest of his life. He died with a rosary in his hand. And when my father passed away in the house we grew up in, the one my grandparents had built, we found 3 rosaries around our father's favorite chair. We four Ruiz children had many, many rosaries prayed for us by our grandfather and father!

Lord, you have been our refuge from one generation to another.

Two themes seem to intertwine in this psalm: home (a frequent translation in place of refuge) and time. Bible scholars link this psalm to Moses, sometimes referring to it as “The Prayer of Moses in the Wilderness”: Having spent 40 years in search of the Promised Land with the people of Israel, Moses reassures them, and us, that no matter our physical or mental surroundings, God is our home, our refuge. The next verse tells us how long we have had, and will have, this refuge:

Before the mountains were born, before you gave birth to the earth and the world, from beginning to end, you are God.

It's clear to me that Grandpa and Dad knew about the everlasting home we have with God; they acted upon that knowledge throughout their lives. Some of us, however, need a reminder, especially when we're feeling unsettled, out in whatever “wilderness” we're making our way through. Could calling up our dear ones of past generations help bring alive for us those reassuring feelings of an ever-present, safe refuge in God? I believe it can.

Nadeen Ruiz

*Ephesians 2:8. For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God.*

I have several people in my life that are difficult to love. They cause me an enormous amount of worry as they often act in ways that are clearly not in their own best interest. They may smoke cigarettes or drink too much or eat unhealthily or believe in conspiracy theories espoused by radical political parties. It is always difficult for me to watch them make choices that seem so dangerous...precisely because I love them and want to continue to have them around. I also want those I love to be content and happy so I am confused when their behavior may cause them grief or misery in the long run. Fortunately, I have at least learned that my advice and attempts to change them will probably backfire and lead to a rift in our relationship. It is so hard, though, to watch silently as someone you love goes down a treacherous path.

I wonder if this is how God feels watching us silly mortals bumble along making good choices and bad ones. Does he feel the same annoyance when we make bad choices. It seems that this passage is saying that there is nothing that we can do or not do to earn God's love. It is out of our hands. We are God's children and are saved despite ourselves. The gift for me is knowing that my loved ones are ultimately in God's hand. It's not my job to save them or to fix them but only to love them. Believing that God loves me too, and forgives my arrogance in thinking that I know better how others should behave is the icing on the cake.

Claire Hicks

*Mark 7:27. He said to her, "Let the children be fed first, for it is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs."*

Mark 7:27 was perplexing to me when I read it. My first response was, "Well, of course!" Then I read the entire chapter to have context and went on to research its meaning as interpreted by biblical scholars.

Many scholars interpret this passage to reflect the fact that Jesus was sent to save Israel (the children) and that gentiles were the dogs. In other words, Jesus was making clear the purpose of his life on earth. The context of the verse is that this gentile woman is asking Jesus to cast demons out of her daughter. She understands that Jesus has the power and is trusting of his compassion despite her being a gentile. Jesus shows her this compassion because she believes and tells her to go to her daughter who is no longer possessed.

What does this mean for us as 21st century Christians? It's clear that Christ is here to save all who will come to him. And yet, our culture seems to be caught up in self-centered, divisive thinking and religions that divide us rather than honor and provide compassion for one another. I've believed for many years that there is no one religion that has a faster road to Jesus and our God than another. Rather I believe that Jesus is there for all of us, believers and nonbelievers. The nonbelievers simply need to invite Jesus into their lives.

There are plenty of blessings to go around if we only look for them. The trick for me is to keep my heart focused on compassion and blessings and not to get distracted by the negative aspects of the world we live in right now. The more we let the light of Jesus shine through us into the world, the more likely we are to influence the "dogs," the nonbelievers, to come to Jesus just as the gentile woman came.

Holly Gray

*Mark 8:2. I have compassion for the crowd, because they have been with me now for three days and have nothing to eat.*

One of the best known miracle stories in the New Testament, this one is also remarkably short. In only 9 brief verses, the author tells a remarkable story of feeding more than 4,000 men, women and children who had been listening to Jesus' teaching for 3 days with only 7 loaves of bread and a few pieces of fish. No flowery language, just the simple facts: these people were hungry and Jesus felt compassion for them. He responded by meeting their immediate need for nourishment so that they could begin their journeys home. A short time later when the Pharisees begin testing him and demanding a "sign from heaven," Jesus replies wearily that there will be no sign forthcoming. This miracle was not meant to demonstrate his power or his divine identity, it was merely a compassionate response to a human need; no other agenda or hidden message. I wonder if we are asked to be so present, so compassionate and so practical.

Linda Heller

*1 Corinthians 12:7. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.*

To one who was raised Quaker, this is a truism, something so common that it doesn't need to be said. After all, as a child you sit in the Silence every week and feel the deeper hush when someone is led to stand and speak. After Meeting, you listen and usually hear someone say, "Thank you for that message. It was for me, I think—at least, now I know what I'm called to next." As a young adult, you realize that the shared messages are usually for someone else, or the community—the inner convictions and whisperings of the Spirit to you are personal, holy, not commonly to be spoken. The point of Meeting, you understand, is to teach you to listen more for the Spirit all the time, to become transparent, so the Light can shine through you, and through the community. Quakers, it may be said, have had a huge impact for good on the world, especially considering how few of them there are.

To me, Lent is like Quaker Meeting, a time of deeper listening, a hush. As Advent is for watching and waiting and marveling, Lent is for turning to the Spirit, and quieting the mind and heart to listen and obey. In those forty days before His passion, Jesus must have been doing the same. Paul is urging the early Corinthian church to be attentive and obedient to the Spirit, that the Spirit may manifest through them in different ways, each to the common good. But how can we obey, if we do not hear? And if we do not hear, how can the Spirit work through us?

Grant us grace to use the time well, Lord. Let us quiet ourselves and listen.

Mari Bickford

*Psalm 73:21. When my mind became embittered, I was sorely wounded in my heart.*

Do you think the writer was asking for forgiveness?

Something, or someone, was distressing him; perhaps it was a misunderstanding, or an action, he could do nothing to change. In frustration and worry his heart was aching. He seemed to be pleading for forgiveness from God for his continued anguish.

Please, dear Lord, forgive my bitterness. Help me to remember that you are a loving God who forgives. So must I.

Dear Lord, please help me to forgive. Help me to toss that pebble into the sea and let it go.

Alice Reasoner



*1 Corinthians 12:31. But strive for the greater gifts. And I will show you a still more excellent way.*

Through studying the anatomy of the body, I have found the interdependence of each and every single cell, each organ and body part, to be absolutely mind boggling. Paul's use of the body as an analogy for the function of the church and Spiritual gifts, is a keen example of how we too, as the body of Christ, rely on the diverse gifts from our member community.

For the first half of my life I was not very interested in doing much more than sticking my big toe in the living water of any church community and I had little interest in finding the gifts of the Spirit. To be honest, the task was just too uncomfortable, too inconvenient and it did not seem to serve ME very well. Self-centered to the core, I chose to use my God given talents as it suited me at the time. Now you should ask me, "how did that work for you Gigi?" I chuckle now, but that chuckle is truly born from pain. For at this point in my life I had a truly Damascus road moment. And no, I am not exaggerating.

You see God did show me a more excellent way. He loved me and showed me the unconditional and most beautiful love I could ever imagine. No words can explain, but it is wholehearted and starts and ends with loving God with all my heart and loving my neighbor as myself. This is the greatest gift of all. This is true freedom. The price for this love and peace is to accept that God is loving you right now at this very moment and the result will be to pay His love forward. My love in Christ to all of you!

Gigi Norwine

## SATURDAY, MARCH 16

*Exodus 3:4. When the LORD saw that he had turned aside to see, God called to him out of the bush, "Moses, Moses!" And he said, "Here I am."*

My thoughts immediately jumped to a song I learned on a religious retreat that I would like to share:

I, the Lord of wind and flame, I will tend the poor and lame.

I will set a feast for them. My hand will save.

Finest bread I will provide till their hearts be satisfied.

I will give my life to them..... whom shall I send?

Here I am Lord....is it I Lord?

I have heard you calling in the night.....

I will go Lord....If you lead me.....

I will hold Your people in my heart.

(Here I Am, Lord, 3rd verse, 1981 by Dan Schutte and New Dawn Music)

So, what does this verse mean to me? Our Lord is both powerful and caring for those who are in need, especially those who live at the margins of our live...and I don't need to rely on my personal strength/skills to achieve His purpose in my life. I just need to embrace the opportunities to help others and trust in His strength and unselfish love to support my work to create a better family, community, or world. It really is so simple. Just step forward and trust that you will be guided by Him and provided with the resources or skills necessary to have a positive impact on others. Here I am, Lord!

Phil Fergusson

*John 12:21. They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and said to him, “Sir, we wish to see Jesus.”*

This seemingly innocuous request came from “some Greeks” who were attending a “festival” occasioned by Jesus re-visiting the home of Lazarus, whom, earlier, he had raised from the dead, in Bethany. That festival was followed the next day by people laying the palm fronds on which Jesus then rode into Jerusalem—the final journey in his mortal life.

No further mention of these Greeks—travelers, clearly—is made. One can wonder what it was they wanted to “see,” a word which has many implications, one of which is the verb “experience.” Imagine rephrasing the question to “Sir, we wish to experience Jesus.” After all, in the discourse following the request, Jesus tells Phillip “Whoever has seen me has seen the Father.” John 12:45

To experience the places of Jesus’ life, and thereby establish a more real connection with his life and ministry was one of the prime reasons why the two of us traveled to Israel nine years ago at the end of the Easter season. Memorably, we visited the home of Lazarus in Bethany, and many other places where Jesus carried out his ministry through the final years of his life: from the neighborhoods of Nazareth, to the waterfront of Capernaum, on the waters of the Sea of Galilee, to the baptismal waters of the Jordan, to Bethany, to the streets of Jerusalem and the Via Dolorosa where he carried his cross, and finally to the crypt where he is believed to have been buried, and from which, resurrected.

We stood in the physical places of Jesus’ life, where he moved and taught and lived, and in that way now have a more tangible experience to relate to—and to understand—in thinking of his life, his teachings, his self-sacrificing. And it was, and still is a powerful experience, to be able to remember what we saw, what we felt, and the sense of reality of it all that is difficult to imagine from half a world away. And, yes, God’s presence in all that is a powerful experience.

Understanding the politics and social unrest in the Holy Lands was another aspect of our desire to travel there. And again, the reality of the experiences our Israeli guide, and our Palestinian guide, each exposed us to was a revelation—particularly understanding that these conflicts have been recurring for at least 2800 years, from the time of the prophet Isaiah. It reminds us that the work and world envisioned by Isaiah, and sought to be realized in the words and ministry of Jesus, the long-awaited Messiah, remains a work in progress, and that the need for our individual and collective faith in “seeing” Jesus remains a reality yet today, and will likely be forever.

*Mark 9:31. For he was teaching his disciples, saying to them, "The Son of Man is to be betrayed into human hands, and they will kill him, and three days after being killed, he will rise again."*

As I read the passage from Mark, I understand it to be the foreshadowing of his betrayal, capture, death and resurrection. Jesus has taken the disciples away from the crowds to continue his teachings. This is the second time of three times that he foretells the death and resurrection to his disciples, and portends the themes around humility and service. The fulfillment of the prophecy portrays Jesus' divinity and ultimate sacrifice.

The original word rather than "betrayed" was "delivered" which speaks to the idea that Jesus' fate was not just in God's hands but in ours. Our own betrayal, exemplified by Judas and later Peter, speak to the idea of free will, as well as our own dissonance (sin), disbelief and incongruence with what we/they intrinsically understood.

When asked to write the reflection, we are asked to share our personal understanding and witness to the scripture. As many of you know, it is often through music, that I hear and feel the essence of our Lord! One of my favorite works is J.S. Bach's St. Matthew's Passion.

St. Matthew's Passion

"So ist mein Jesus nun gefangen"

"Sind Blitze, sind Donner"

These two selections in particular, of Bach's St. Matthew's Passion, depicts so well the dissonance, suffering and and betrayal of Jesus. The translation is below, but rather than the words, hear the music-the lyrical melismatic soloists, in somber tonality and the jux-a-position with the choral sharp dissonant chords depicting thunder and lightening.

Below are QR codes to two different recordings. Listen...and sink into the meaning of this Lenten season!

## TRANSLATION

Blessings,  
Judith Hanna

So ist mein Jesus nun gefangen.  
So my Jesus is now captured.

Sind Blitze, sind Donner in Wolken verschwunden?  
Have lightnings, has thunder vanished in the clouds?



Netherlands Bach Society

Laßt ihn, haltet, bindet nicht!  
Let him go, stop, do not bind him!  
Mond und Licht  
Moon and light  
Ist vor Schmerzen untergangen,  
have set in sorrow,  
Weil mein Jesus ist gefangen.  
Since my Jesus is captured.  
Laßt ihn, haltet, bindet nicht!  
Let him go, stop, do not bind him!  
Sie führen ihn, er ist gebunden.  
They lead him away, he is bound.

Eröffne den feurigen Abgrund, o Hölle  
Open your fiery abyss, O Hell  
Zertrümmre, verderbe, verschlinge, zerschelle  
Smash, destroy, swallow up, dashed to pieces  
Mit plötzlicher Wut  
With sudden fury  
Den falschen Verräter, das mörderische Blut!  
The false betrayer, the murderous blood!



Elliott Gardner Rendition

*Luke 2:50. But they did not understand what he said to them.*

Fortunately, I've mostly had good communication with my kids—depth and breadth. But I've been known, and called out for, trying to drill down to some kind of detailed essence that is going to explain everything.

That, has not worked so well. Listening, letting things unfold in a more natural way works much better.

In this passage from Luke where Luke first records Jesus speaking, Mary and Joseph do not understand Jesus' words to them. They have been three days not knowing where their son is. And then when they find him in the temple, Mary asks in her parental anxiety and relief, "Why have you treated us like this?" and Jesus responds not rebelliously, I think, but with a probably unnerving calm, asking why had they been searching for him in any place but the temple?

Jesus is at the age of Bar Mitzvah and is appropriately asking and answering questions of the teachers in the temple, and "all who heard him were amazed at his understanding."

But we are told his parents do not understand his answer to them: "Didn't you know I would be in my Father's house?"

Mary didn't understand, though I can almost feel her breathe in the signs of change, but she went back to Nazareth with Jesus and Joseph to continue to raise her son "who grew in wisdom." And we are told she "treasured all these things in her heart," once again trusting in God's promises.

I love Mary for holding this conversation silently in her heart with complete faith in God even in the wake of a parent's worst fear.

I have been known to ask God for a detailed understanding of the way He works in my life. What's the plan, what do you want me to do? Why did this happen?

Believe me, I'm in awe of the way God works, but I don't always or even often, especially initially, understand it. Mary shows me I can be quiet and hold the question in my heart. While continuing to study and pray, I can hold that lack of understanding in my heart—contemplate, trust, and have faith as I listen for God and continue to do the work before me.

*Psalm 130:2. If you, LORD, were to note what is done amiss, O LORD, who could stand?*

One day in January during the week we had Noah-worthy weather, while there was a brief break in the rain, I happened upon a worm in the parking lot at work. It was miles away (in worm terms) from anywhere habitable for it so I knew it was destined to die in the asphalt desert. I felt compelled, as an expression of my faith, to show this little worm some compassion, but I certainly wasn't going to pick it up with my fingers (ew!). As I was scooping it onto my bank card with a random receipt I found in my purse to put it in a nearby mulched flower bed, I began thinking about the commandment to love my neighbor and our charge to care for all living things. In that moment, this worm – my neighbor – was certainly the last, the least and the lost. I realized it would have been a sin not to save it.

This scripture acknowledges that we all sin and that none of us could be absolved of that sin without the love of God. He gave us free choice but, as fallible humans, sometimes we don't make the choices God would have preferred we made. Deacon Dan gives us about 15 seconds during the church service each week to confess our sins against God and our neighbor before we communally confess that we have sinned against God "in thought, word and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone." We then apologize to God for the sins we have committed and ask His forgiveness which He freely and graciously gives. He does not note what we have done amiss so that we can continue the work He has given us to do while remaining alert for opportunities to be kind, to be helpful and to do good in the world.

Our sins are only for us to suffer because God forgives them all. If He were noting our sins, only very few truly innocent could stand.

Kathy Bolles

*2 Corinthians 3:18. And all of us, with unveiled faces, seeing the glory of the Lord as though reflected in a mirror, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another; for this comes from the Lord, the Spirit.*

Paul's second letter to the Corinthians covers a lot of ground, and in Chapter 3 he speaks to the differences between the law of the Old Testament, and the new law of Love of the New Testament. The laws of the Old Testament plainly speak of sin, and God's fearsome wrath against sinners. In Exodus, when Moses sees the burning bush, he is afraid to look upon the face of God, turning away because he feels frightened and unworthy.

Later, the book of Exodus relays the account of Moses coming down from Mt. Sinai after forty days and nights with God. Moses's skin shines, reflecting the glory of God, and he wears a veil over his face because the people of Israel are afraid of this glow. Some even posit that Moses continues to use the veil to hide the fading brightness of his face due to the passage of time and his separation from God.

Paul employs this story to remind us of the contrast between the Old Testament covenant that God had with the Israelites versus the New Testament covenant God has with us.

Because of Christ's death and resurrection, the veil between us and God is gone. Instead of the wrath of God, we experience his grace and forgiveness. And with this understanding, we begin the process of the Holy Spirit remaking us into the image of Christ. This gives us a new relationship with God, changing us because we have turned to Christ, developing and deepening our commitment and fellowship with him.

We can directly see the glory of God and not hide, and instead be changed.

This is the faith journey we are called to, to be transformed into the image of Christ—with no veil between us and the love of God.

Rebecca & Michael Ditmore

*Exodus 9:13. Then the LORD said to Moses, “Rise up early in the morning and present yourself before Pharaoh, and say to him, ‘Thus says the LORD, the God of the Hebrews: Let my people go, so that they may worship me.’”*

...and Pharaoh said “Sure!” and released the Israelites from bondage and they all lived happily ever after. The End.

If only! As we all know, Pharaoh refused to acknowledge the authority of the God of the Hebrews and release the Israelites. Consequently God sent a plague to show Pharaoh who he was dealing with. Pharaoh was unmoved. The cycle continued as Pharaoh refused again and again as more plagues punished the land of Egypt and its people. These were unimaginable plagues of flies, boils, frogs, rivers turning to blood, death of livestock, tremendous hail, the death of every first born in the land (including Pharaoh's), and three days of darkness so thick it could be felt. I can't begin to imagine it. Through it all God honored his promises and Pharaoh went back on his. What suffering because of stubbornness and a hard heart! How much more did Pharaoh have to see to convince him of God's authority? How much more did the Egyptian people have to endure?

It's difficult to get inside the mind and motivations of an ancient pharaoh in an ancient story but with a little insight it's not hard to see ourselves. How often do we stubbornly dig in our heels to our own detriment, or the detriment of others? How often do we ourselves turn a blind eye toward the obvious or ignore it because of pride, or ego, or old habit?

Let us not have hardened hearts! Let our hearts be open and malleable, and most importantly, let's recognize and acknowledge God when he's right in front of us, wanting to be seen.

Angie Bickerton



## SATURDAY, MARCH 23

*2 Corinthians 4:15. Yes, everything is for your sake, so that grace, as it extends to more and more people, may increase thanksgiving, to the glory of God.*

There's so much going on in this chapter. I love the imagery of human bodies as clay vessels, carrying the beauty and eternal nature of the Gospel in the face of temporary troubles. Taken in isolation, though, this verse dances cheek-to-cheek with my own cosmology.

Everything is for our sake, our benefit. And by "our," I mean every human being throughout time, and far beyond that—all interconnected life. And by "everything," I mean every leaf on every tree that feeds on carbon dioxide and give us oxygen in return, the blueness of the sky, music, water in all its startling states, food and the fertile earth, astounding creatures, giggling babies, smiles and hugs, planets, twinkling stars and galaxies: beauty wherever we look.

Oh, dear. What is she talking about?

I believe when we talk about God, we are talking about the power of love in its purest, most universal form.

God the Father is the origin of love, the power that initiated the Big Bang, the creative force that flung galaxies across what had been nothingness, a void. Love's creative energy is eternal and ubiquitous.

God the Son, our Savior Jesus, is pure love in human form. He came to live among us and be one of us to show us what is possible and necessary to create Heaven on Earth. If we hold love as the ultimate principle, highest rule of life, value in the face of all of our worldly circumstances, paradise will be the result.

God the Holy Spirit is the stunningly powerful supreme love that connects us all, gives us tender hearts and phenomenal strength, and calls us to work for good in the world.

Three in One.

And yet ugliness, pain, suffering, and evil exist. These are jagged tears in the fabric, places where self-centeredness, power, or money are worshipped over love. Where insecurity and darkness cause people to envy, fear, lash out, take, abuse. Violence begets violence, even when it appears to be righteous.

Love is the creative power that can heal these afflictions. "Darkness cannot drive out darkness: only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate: only love can do that." (Martin Luther King, Jr.) If we let God work in our hearts, recognizing all the blessings that have been freely given to us, and extend that Grace to more and more people, gratitude will increase until it overflows. And just think how beautiful it would be if we filled everyone's little clay vessels with love.

Barbara Bolles

*2 Corinthians 4:15. Yes, everything is for your sake, so that grace, as it extends to more and more people, may increase thanksgiving, to the glory of God.*

The letter we call Second Corinthians is actually snippets of as many as five letters Paul wrote to the church in Corinth. But in all his correspondence he makes clear that the new has come. A cross has been driven into the old order. A rood has separated strength from power, testifying that the power to bestow grace belongs to God alone.

We sometimes mistakenly equate testifying with the statement of a personal relationship with Jesus, an altar call whose subject is me and Jesus, domesticating rather than revering the Holy. But testimony is a technical term for “written solemn duties [or] official commands”<sup>1</sup> of God. We merely witness that testimony and then, possessed of grace, turn to proclamation.

Why talk about power on a Sunday in which triumph descends to suffering? How is it that strength can be separated from power? These two attributes are not identical. To say one is powerless does not mean one is not strong. Power is control, dominion, and command. Human power is most often exercised by those who seek prestige and to whom prerogatives have been granted. Strength, on the other hand, is toughness, fortitude, and integrity. Human strength is most often exercised by those able to withstand stress without breaking, those possessed of moral courage.

If moral courage begins with recognition of and resonance with the good, moral courage in action is the capacity to hold fast in the face of the storms of life. Moral courage on the part of those committed to Christ is the ability to affirm that God’s creative authority gives birth to new life, that even human strength is a gift of God’s grace, and that God’s power is made perfect in human weakness. God’s author-ity is the capacity to author identity and values in those who follow Him.

In 2 Corinthians St. Paul witnesses to the reality that as God’s grace advances, we respond in faith with thanksgiving for the glorious power of God. As Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury, wrote: “God is that than which nothing greater can be thought.” The grace that we witness on Palm Sunday is the glory of God.

(The Rev.) Judith M. McDaniel, Ph.D.

1. Stephen L. Cook, *Conversations with Scripture: 2 Isaiah* (New York: Morehouse Publishing, 2008), 26.

*John 12:3. Mary took a pound of costly perfume made of pure nard, anointed Jesus's feet, and wiped them with her hair. The house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume.*

This story takes place after Jesus raised Mary's brother Lazarus to life, a profound miracle, and the subsequent expressed intention of the chief priests and Pharisees to arrest Jesus.

We are taken from the beautiful image of Mary's gift in verse 3, to criticism of the gift from Judas Iscariot in verse 4; then the statement by Jesus relating this perfume to the day of his own burial in verse 7.

Susan Hylen, a New Testament scholar, writes about Mary's role in this passage: "The story of Mary's anointing stands in contrast to the idea of many Christians today that what matters most is belief in Jesus—and by belief we mean conscious, doctrinal understanding of Jesus. Mary's faithful action is different. John does not tell us what she believes, and it seems beyond human comprehension that she could understand all that will happen to Jesus, and all that her actions evoke. Yet we see her enact a faith that resonates deeply with what we know of Jesus' kingship and his death."<sup>1</sup>

When we see verse 3 as a powerful testament to faith, that concept may call us to pause and reflect on our own faith during this season of Lent. In a recent sermon, Rev. Karen again recommended times of quiet and rest to listen to what God is saying to us.

I appreciate the worship practices from the Taizé community, including the role of silence. One thought especially touches my heart and may touch yours as well: "Often God's voice comes in a whisper, in a breath of silence. Remaining in silence in God's presence, open to the Spirit, is already prayer."<sup>2</sup>

Laura Carroll

*Isaiah 49:5. And now the LORD says, who formed me in the womb to be his servant, to bring Jacob back to him, and that Israel might be gathered to him, for I am honored in the sight of the LORD, and my God has become my strength.*

Too many Christians believe that Jesus primarily went to the cross so we could be “saved” and go to heaven when we die. Now heaven is not irrelevant to our salvation, but it is, as this passage from Isaiah suggests, a bit more complicated than many of us believe. Most scholars agree that the Suffering Servant passages from Isaiah, which were originally intended to apply to the Jewish people collectively, were reinterpreted by Jesus to apply to himself. That is, he personally accepted the mission of the Suffering Servant to reform, recast, or regather the exiled “Jacob” – the Jewish people – and thereby fulfil the promise made to Abraham to make his descendants a blessing to all the earth. This was a promise that Jesus believed would be fulfilled when God’s kingdom fully arrived and God’s will was done “on earth as in heaven.” So, salvation for Jesus was less about us getting to heaven and more about heaven coming to earth. This means that his salvation isn’t just about us individually, but about all humans and even, as St. Paul argues, about all of creation itself. Jesus’ vision of our salvation was extraordinarily vast in its scope, and we have barely begun to grasp its expansiveness.

Jan C. Heller

*Psalm 70:1b. O LORD, make haste to help me.*

I invite you to read this meditation slowly, while walking. Imagine Jesus pondering, thinking aloud, and praying while slowly ambling on dusty brown hills outside Jerusalem. He appears to be having a conversation with someone.

Speaking firmly and clearly, Jesus says, “Father, we were one—you in me and I in you. You showed me your will for our people and I learned to walk in your ways and to follow your will. The poor, the sick and the suffering respond to your love for them. I know the priests and political leaders also recognize you as a reconciling and transforming Creator. I know they understand, but they choose to continue their familiar ways of worship. They cling to power. They want the crowds dispersed and civil unrest stopped. Eliminating me will eliminate the crowds. I wonder if they plan to kill me.

“O Lord make haste to help me.”

“Merciful Father, I am all alone. I have no family, no wife, no children. If they kill me there are no daughters to prepare my body for burial, no sons to say the prayers over my body. If they kill me, the line of the house of David will also die. Is that your will?

“O Lord make haste to help me.”

“River of Justice, I hear the cries of your people. So many are suffering. What am I to do? I am weary. I feel abandoned, alone. My friends, the men and women who have been with me, are still in Jerusalem, eating and drinking. They are celebrating the crowds, the procession and waving of palms. They are also celebrating our fierce rebuke of those in the Temple who boldly thought they could buy and sell relationships with you, Almighty One.

“My friends look back at the many healings, the feeding of thousands, the teaching, the Love. Perhaps they believe our community is about to become more powerful. They refuse to look forward to the inevitable future. Even Peter denies the rulers want to rid themselves of me. I think one of my friends is about to betray me. I don’t know what you want Father. Are we to take up weapons, fight for our lives and defend our way? Am I to be silent, let events unfold as they will and bear whatever I must bear? **WHAT DO YOU WANT OF ME?**

“O Lord make haste to help me.”

“I am afraid. I am no longer confident I know your will. I trust you are with me always, but I do not hear your voice. I do not sense your presence. Father, I walk in fear and anguish. It’s Jesus, your beloved son, and I am crying out to you. I wail. I scream my frustration.

**“O Lord make haste to help me.”**

“O Lord make haste to help me.”

“O Lord make haste.....”

“ O Lord . . . . .

*John 13:7. Jesus answered, "You do not know now what I am doing, but later you will understand."*

In this turbulent world we live in today, WHO CAN YOU TRUST.

I received a letter yesterday from the Social Security Administration telling me to finish setting up my online account. The letter went on to say that if you did not request an online account with Social Security, please contact us immediately. I had not requested an online account and in talking to the Social Security office they advise me that someone was trying to divert my funds to their bank. The Social Security fraud officer told me I could trust her to fix the account to prevent fraudulent access.

Trust comes up a lot these days when dealing with doctors, lawyers, politicians and others in our daily lives. The money we use every day has "In God We Trust" imprinted on all our currency. Maybe this is a reminder as to who to trust.

Our Maundy Thursday passage, John 13:7, is a lesson about trust and surrendering to God. In this passage we find Jesus and His disciples gathered in the upper room for the Last Supper. Jesus, knowing His time on earth was coming to an end, He sought to teach His disciples important lessons before His crucifixion. As an act of humility and servanthood, Jesus began to wash His disciples' feet. Jesus told his disciples, "You do not realize now what I am doing, but later you will understand." Just as the disciples did not fully comprehend Jesus' actions at that moment, we are called to trust in God's timing and have faith that He is always at work, even when we cannot see or understand.

When faced with challenges, uncertainties, or trials, we can find strength and hope by trusting in God. Even if we cannot see the bigger picture, we can have confidence that God is in control. Often, we try to control every aspect of our lives, but true freedom comes when we surrender our plans to God and allow God to guide us. Letting go of control and trusting in Him can bring about blessings and transformations we never could have imagined. Just as Jesus reassured His disciples, we can also encourage and support others who may be struggling to understand what is going on in their own lives. We can remind them of the faithfulness of God and the assurance that understanding will come in His perfect timing.

Deacon Dan Fowler

*Psalm 22:28. To him alone all who sleep in the earth bow down in worship; all who go down to the dust fall before him*

Forty Days and Forty Nights—it's been a long journey to get to this culmination of the work of the Lenten season. In truth this is the work of our lives as followers of Jesus. We began our Lenten journey with a special kind of blessing. "You are dust and to dust you shall return." The priest places ashes in the form of a cross on our foreheads—on the very spot where we were anointed at baptism—anointed for this particular journey, a journey of life that resolutely leads to death and ashes. We will, as the psalmist says, go down to the dust and fall before the One who created us, calls us, and brings us home. The pattern of Jesus' life showed us that death is the gate—the gate to true and abiding life. And the material substance of that gate is love.

The Sufis (of Islam) have a saying: "Die before you die." In other words, become the love that moves the stars and the sun and the earth now by dying to the things, the circumstances, the myriad of accretions of our lives which separate us from wholeness, and live today in love—not just in feelings, but also in actions and attitudes and desires. By dying before we physically die we practice death, and we are changed more and more into the kind of human being that Jesus was. And the world around us is changed. That is what Lent is all about. And even though the official season of the church is ending, the journey is not. It is a lifelong journey—one that we can continue to live intentionally through our Christian practices and abundant sharing of love.

Good Friday is the pre-eminent day of Love. During this past year I painted an icon of the disciples taking Jesus down from the cross. While there is much sadness and grief, there is even more love flowing from that moment as his mother takes him in her arms, as Joseph of Arimathea lowers him, as beloved John provides presence and Longinus, the centurion, gently removes the nails that are holding his feet. His strife is over and he is at peace. May we all have such support in our lives as we journey to become more and more like Jesus. Let us become the Love which transforms the world.



*Lamentations 3:22-23. God's kindnesses have not ended, nor have the divine mercies been exhausted. They are renewed every morning. How great is Your faithfulness!*

The Book of Lamentations, a poetic response to the ruthless conquest of Jerusalem by Babylon (586 B.C.E.), has been part of Holy Week liturgies since the Middle Ages. Its anguished lament for human suffering gives us the words we need when the Passion of Christ strikes us dumb.

“My soul is bereft of peace; I have forgotten what happiness is; so I say, ‘Gone is my glory, and all that I had hoped for from the Lord’” (3:17-18). At some time in our lives, each of us must stand in the place of lamentation, where all we had hoped for seems dead and gone. The lifeless body of our Lord, “sealed in a stone-cold tomb,” is the ultimate icon of profound loss. That’s why it’s such a rare subject in art. Hans Holbein’s hyperreal painting, *The Dead Christ*, made Dostoevsky shudder to see “a great and priceless being” crushed by death, drained of all life and beauty. He thought it could make you lose your faith.

But then the text of Lamentations takes an unexpected turn: “But this I call to mind, and so recover hope: God’s kindnesses have not ended, nor have the divine mercies been exhausted.” This is a sudden and startling rupture in the recitation. Nothing in the book’s dismal catalog of afflictions has led us to suspect such an affirmation of renewal and possibility. The invocation of hope comes as a complete surprise: a resurrection.

The Resurrection of Christ was not a predictable consequence of his dying, as if his body in the tomb were like a seed in winter soil or a hibernating bear, engaged in a naturally unfolding process of continuing life. When the body of Jesus was laid in the tomb, his earthly existence as a creature in time was in fact over. Like every other human being, he perished with his last breath. In the tomb, his “I” was finished (“I must nothing be,” as Shakespeare’s Richard II put it in contemplating his own imminent no-thingness). In the grave’s awful silence, Jesus was no longer a communicating subject. He was no-thing, no-where.

However, the submission of the “fully human, fully divine” Person to nothingness was not a failure of the Incarnation, but its completion. When God chose to share fully in the human condition, that meant all of it, from the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes to the corpse wrapped in a shroud. Yet even when the body of Jesus lay in the tomb, God’s kindnesses were not over, nor were the divine mercies exhausted. In Jesus’ surrender to mortal extinction, human perishability became subsumed into the divine nature and thereby deprived of its finality. No longer a terminus, death became a passage, by God’s grace. In the lifeless silence of the tomb, the God of life spoke a new and invincible word, and the human future was born anew.

Tonight, when we light the New Fire and welcome resurrection with story, song, and luminous rituals, we will remember and recover the Easter hope: The God who made the universe out of nothing, who raised Christ from the nothingness of death, will rescue us all from the nothingness of our own tombs and gather us into the divine life forever.



*John 20:15b. Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away.*

As Mary stood weeping on that first Easter morning, she bent down to look into the tomb. It was the second time she had come that morning. She came alone the first time, and very early. When she found that the stone that sealed Jesus' tomb had been rolled away, she ran quickly to tell Simon Peter and the beloved disciple what she had seen. It was the first time she said the Lord had been taken from the tomb and she did not know where they had laid him.

Curious, and wanting to see for themselves, Simon Peter and the beloved disciple went back to the tomb with Mary. And after investigating the situation, the two men returned home. But not Mary. Mary stood weeping, looking into the empty tomb. The angels who were there asked her why she was weeping, and for the second time, she said "They have taken away my Lord and I don't know where they have laid him." And then she must have heard something behind her because we're told she turned round to see a man, likely the gardener, who asked her the same question – "Woman, why are you weeping?" And Mary, fully absorbed in finding the body of her dead Lord said those same words again - 'Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away.'

We know how it turns out, how Jesus who was not the gardener spoke her name and how she recognized him as her Rabbouni, her teacher. And we know how the bigger story turns out too. We can't help but see Jesus through the lens of his resurrection. But that wasn't true for Mary and the rest of those early disciples. No matter how many times Jesus told them he would suffer at the hands of men, be killed and three days later rise again, that wasn't what they were looking for. Even Mary, the apostle to the apostles wasn't looking for a resurrected Jesus on that third day... she was looking for his dead body.

How often do we miss God's presence when God is right in front of us? God is present in so many unexpected ways. In the beautiful things, yes, but also in places we would not necessarily expect - in the words of a seemingly mad street preacher, in the face of an exhausted mother, in the face of someone whose skin color is not our own, or someone whose politics are not our own, in the face of one who is dying. How often do we miss God's presence because we are looking for something that isn't there, because we aren't looking at what is there, because all we can see is our ready-made interpretation of how things are, or ought to be? Look again!

Alleluia! Christ is Risen! And because he is risen, we have the opportunity to see all things anew! I pray that your Eastertide is filled with the experiences of seeing God's beautiful, broken and beloved world through God's eyes, through the eyes of love. Easter blessings on you all!

Reverend Karen

# HOLY WEEK & EASTER

AT ST. BARNABAS EPISCOPAL CHURCH

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Holy Week is a time to reflect on the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. During this sacred time, we remember Jesus' actions, reflect on his teachings, and recommit to living as his disciples here on Earth.

We hope this schedule serves as a tool in helping you to plan your observance of these holy days, both on your own and with your church family here at St. Barnabas. May you have a blessed Holy Week and Easter.

## SUNDAY OF THE PASSION, PALM SUNDAY, MARCH 24

8:00 a.m. Liturgy of the Palms & Holy Eucharist, Rite I

10:00 a.m. Liturgy of the Palms & Holy Eucharist, Rite II

7:30 p.m. Tenebrae

## TUESDAY IN HOLY WEEK, MARCH 26

6:00 p.m. Private Confession

7:00 p.m. Holy Eucharist for Healing & Reconciliation

## MAUNDY THURSDAY, MARCH 28

6:00 p.m. Dinner in Parish Hall, followed by Holy Eucharist with Foot Washing & Stripping of the Altar

## GOOD FRIDAY, MARCH 29

Noon Good Friday Liturgy with Communion

7:00 p.m. Good Friday Liturgy with Communion

## HOLY SATURDAY, MARCH 30

7:30 p.m. The Great Vigil of Easter

## EASTER SUNDAY, MARCH 31

9:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist, Rite II

10:00 a.m. Easter Egg Hunt, Hot Cross Buns, Coffee & Mimosa Hour

11:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist, Rite II



TURN THE PAGE FOR DETAILED DESCRIPTIONS

# HOLY WEEK & EASTER OFFERINGS



## PALM SUNDAY | SUNDAY, MARCH 24 | 8:00 & 10:00 A.M.

Holy Week begins with a liturgical “overture,” summarizing the major themes of Jesus’ last week in a powerful blend of ritual, hymns, and story. The Triumphal Entry with palms, a dramatic reading of the Passion Gospel, and the eucharistic meal initiate our “contemplation of those mighty acts” by which Christ has redeemed the world, preparing us for the great three-day journey of Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and the Easter Vigil. Bring an open and joyous heart.

## TENEBRAE | SUNDAY, MARCH 24 | 7:30 P.M.

The ancient monastic liturgy of Tenebrae (“Shadows”) is a sequence of chanted Psalms, readings, and prayers offering a contemplative meditation on Christ’s Passion. Throughout this unique Holy Week service, candles and other church lights are gradually extinguished until a single candle, symbolizing Jesus, remains. This candle is then hidden from view, as if the Light of the world were extinguished by darkness and death. But then a great noise is made—the earthquake of resurrection—and the Christ candle reappears. As it burns with hope on the altar, the people depart in silence. Bring an open and quiet heart.



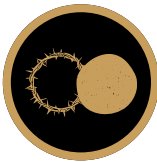
## HEALING & RECONCILIATION | TUESDAY, MARCH 26 | 7:00 P.M.

Each Sunday before we come to the altar to receive communion, we make our public confession, asking God’s forgiveness for things done and left undone. And sometimes that simply isn’t enough to restore us to peace. When we find ourselves confessing the same grievances, the same inability to forgive, the same hurts week after week, public confession may not be enough to bring us God’s peace. The Sacramental Rite of Reconciliation offers the opportunity for private confession and absolution that will give you a profound experience of God’s forgiveness, love and grace. Join us Tuesday of Holy Week for private confession (beginning at 6:00 p.m.) and a Service of Healing and Reconciliation where you will have the opportunity to make a private confession, or to spend time in quiet reflection. Whether or not you wish to make confession, you are welcome at this quiet, contemplative service. Bring an open heart and self-compassion.



## MAUNDY THURSDAY | THURSDAY, MARCH 28 | 6:00 P.M.

At the last supper with his friends, Jesus showed them (and us!) what it is to be God’s love in the world. Maundy Thursday holds within its liturgy an unspeakable tenderness that invites us into humble and vulnerable love and reflection. In the intimacy of table fellowship, we will listen to the words Jesus said on that last night, offer heartfelt prayers, share a simple supper, and receive the blessed sacrament Jesus gave to us on the night before he died. Then, after a solemn procession to the church, we will enact one of the holiest and most tender gestures Jesus ever offered as we stoop to wash each other’s feet. This deeply moving liturgy concludes with the Stripping of the Altar and prayers at the Altar of Repose.

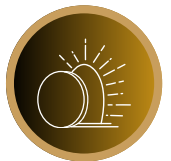


## GOOD FRIDAY | FRIDAY, MARCH 28 | NOON & 7:00 P.M.

This uniquely powerful liturgy takes us to the foot of the cross with eloquent prayers, sublime hymns, compelling rituals, and profound silences. In word, gesture, and symbol—from the Veneration of the Cross to Christ’s transformative sacrament of self-offering—we enact and embody the meaning of compassion (“suffer with”), not to glorify suffering, but to participate in the healing mystery of Love poured out for us on this “good” day—God’s Friday. Bring your worries, your wounds, your longing souls and deepest desires, and prepare to receive the immeasurable riches of the holy One who knows us all by heart.

## THE GREAT VIGIL OF EASTER | SATURDAY, MARCH 30 | 7:30 P.M.

This is a night like no other, the Christian dreamtime when we pass through darkness and mystery into the risen life! You won’t want to miss this most glorious, vibrant and essential liturgy of the entire church year—a visionary, multi-sensory, wondrous, festive, Spirit-filled evening of song, chant, story, drama, sacraments, processions, candles, bells, fire, water, prayer, praise, baptismal renewal, Holy Eucharist, abundant joy, and so much love! Bring your children! Let them wear their jammies and stay up late. This is the night when heaven and earth are joined! Experience the mystery, share the joy. Bring noisemakers, your families, and joyful hearts! *The journey is how we know.*



## EASTER SUNDAY | SUNDAY, MARCH 31 | 9:00 & 11:00 A.M.

Christ is risen! Join us to celebrate the Resurrection at 9:00 or 11:00 a.m., with an Easter Egg hunt, hot cross buns, mimosas, and coffee in between! Easter Sunday continues the great celebration begun at the Easter Vigil, with glorious music by organ, choir and brass, a gorgeous festive liturgy, and the boundless joy of resurrection! Bring your family and friends, and hearts filled with joy and gratitude!



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