

JOURNEY INTO LENT 2017

The word Lent comes from the Old German “Lenz”, meaning “spring.” It is related to the Anglo-Saxon “lenct,” which means “to lengthen,” referring to the lengthening of the hours of daylight in the northern hemisphere as spring approaches. Since ancient times the season has been a natural time of fasting, as winter stores become depleted, cured and dried meats are used up, and spring lambs are not yet old enough to slaughter.

The Christian tradition has used this natural time of austerity as a preparation for the new life of Easter and also as a time of catechesis for candidates for baptism. Lent is a time of intentional journey into wilderness and out again, a time of turning and returning to God, to the center, the ground, a return to needful things.

This calendar is an invitation to step into the journey of Lent with intentionality and awareness by taking on a traditional Lenten discipline: fasting for the good of the body, prayer for the good of the spirit, acts of love for the good of the neighbor. You are invited to make a covenant for the season, to take on a daily prayer time, the reading of scripture, physical and spiritual activity. You are invited to make this journey as individuals and as community, joining in worship and service and small group study. May we turn together and begin to re-orient toward the rising Sun of the Easter dawn.

"Lent calls each of us to renew our ongoing commitment to the implications of the Resurrection in our own lives here and now. But that demands both the healing of the soul and the honing of the soul, both penance and faith, both a purging of what is superfluous in our lives and the heightening, the intensifying, of what is meaningful...It is the act of beginning our spiritual life all over again refreshed and reoriented." (Joan Chittister, *The Church Year*)

A Brief Order for Matins (Morning Prayer)

To be sung or said aloud:

(Trace the sign of the cross on your lips and chant or say,)

O Lord, open `my lips,
and my mouth shall proclaim` your praise.

Psalm 108:1-4

My heart is stead`fast, O God!

I will sing and make melody with `all my being!
Awake, O `harp and lyre!

I will a`wake the dawn!
I will give thanks to you, O LORD, a`mong the peoples;
I will sing praises to you a`mong the nations.
For your steadfast love is great a`bove the heavens;
your faithfulness reaches `to the clouds.

The day's designated reading may be read aloud.

The day's reflection may be read.

Benedictus (Song of Zechariah): Luke 1:68-79

Prayer: I give thanks to you, heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ your dear Son, that you have protected me through the night from all harm and danger. I ask that you would also protect me today from sin and all evil, so that my life and actions may please you. Into your hands I commend myself: my body, my soul, and all that is mine. Let your holy angel be with me, so that the wicked foe may have no power over me. Amen

The Lord's Prayer

Almighty God, the + Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit bless
`and preserve us.

Amen.

A Brief Order for Compline (Prayer Before Sleep)

To be said or sung aloud:

(Make the sign of the cross and chant or say,)

Almighty God grant us a quiet night and peace at `the last. Amen

It is good to give thanks to `the Lord,
to sing praise to your name, O `Most High,
to herald your love in `the morning,
your truth at the close of `the day.

Psalm 91:1-6, 9-12

The day's designated reading may be read aloud.

Into your hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit.
You have redeemed me, O Lord, God of truth.
Into your hands I commend my spirit.

Guide us waking, O Lord,
and guard us sleeping,
that awake we may watch with Christ,
and asleep we may rest in peace.

Nunc Dimittis (Song of Simeon): Luke 2:29-32

Prayer: I give thanks to you, heavenly God, through Jesus Christ your dear Son, that you have graciously protected me today. I ask you to forgive me all my sins, where I have done wrong, and graciously to protect me this night. Into your hands I commend myself: my body, my soul, and all that is mine. Let your holy angels be with me, so that the wicked foe may have no power over me. Amen

The Lord's Prayer

Almighty God, the + Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, bless us and keep us. Amen

A few notes on the 2017 devotional:

Sonnets: The 2017 devotional will occasionally use sonnets by Anglican poet/priest Malcolm Guite, who has published two collections of his own sonnets for the church year (*Sounding the Seasons, Parables and Paradox*), two anthologies of essays and poems by various poets for two church seasons (*Waiting on the Word [Advent], Words in the Wilderness [Lent]*), and a collection of his own poems on diverse topics (*The Singing Bowl*), all published by Canterbury Press and available at amazon.com. Malcolm Guite generously and kindly encourages wide and not-for-profit sharing of his sonnets, with proper attribution.

Blog version: This devotional will also be available on blogspot.com, accessible through the Mount Olive website homepage. The daily reflections there are accompanied by art and photography, and the links offered in some of the devotions are more easily accessed there.

Various forms of Prayer: As the introduction notes, the spiritual practices of Lent are traditionally **prayer, fasting, and acts of love**. The devotions and activities refer to a variety of prayer forms and practices that some may wish to try over the days of Lent. More in-depth descriptions of these prayer forms are available at these sites, some in printable pdf format.

Ignatian Examen:

<http://www.ignatianspirituality.com/19076/examen-prayer-card/>

An ecological Examen:

http://www.sjweb.info/documents/sjs/docs/EcologicalExamen_ENG.pdf

Centering prayer:

<http://www.contemplativeoutreach.org/category/category/centering-prayer>

Lectio divina: See previous site, left sidebar

Orthodox Jesus Prayer: <http://www.svots.edu/saying-jesus-prayer>

Luther's Morning and Evening Prayers: <http://ctkelc.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/Martin-Luthers-Small-Catechism.pdf>

Lent - Year of Matthew

Friday-Tuesday – SHROVETIDE

- *HAVE A PARTY, MAKE DOUGHNUTS (SEE RECIPE).*

ASH WEDNESDAY, March 1, 2017

ASH WEDNESDAY

Receive this cross of ash upon your brow,
Brought from the burning of Palm Sunday's cross;
The forests of the world are burning now
And you make late repentance for the loss.
But all the trees of God would clap their hands,
The very stones themselves would shout and sing,
If you could covenant to love these lands
And recognize in Christ their lord and king.
He sees the slow destruction of those trees,
He weeps to see the ancient places burn,
And still you make what purchases you please
And still to dust and ashes you return.
But hope could rise from ashes even now,
Beginning with this sign upon your brow.
Malcolm Guite (Sounding the Seasons, p. 26)

Commemoration of George Herbert, poet/priest

IS. 58:1-12; PS.51:1-17; 2 COR. 5:20B-6:10; MATT. 6:1-6, 16-21

*"You desire truth in the inward being; therefore teach me wisdom
in my secret heart." Psalm 51:6*

In his Spiritual Exercises, St. Ignatius of Loyola directed his followers to undertake an Examen, a form of prayer, twice daily, perhaps at noon and before bed. One form has this basic movement:

1. place yourself in God's presence; give thanks for the day;
2. pray to recognize where God is working in your life;
3. review your day, moments and feelings;

4. reflect on your actions: did they lead to, or away from, God;
5. look toward tomorrow, asking for grace, give thanks.

We are entering into forty days of preparation toward renewed life, the Easter promise of a new dawn, the spring promise of new growth, of truth in our inward being. "Truth happens to the prepared mind," wrote Bernard Lonergan. Germination of seed is more likely to happen in prepared soil. And so we prepare our heart, through confession, through prayer, through study and reflection. And we begin by making the sign of the cross – with ash – to prepare ourselves to enter the land God has promised, flowing with milk and honey: a right spirit. A land where truth and wisdom reside in the secret heart.

Create in us clean hearts, O God, and renew right spirits within us. Amen

- *VEIL CROSSES WITH DEEP PURPLE CLOTH OR UNBLEACHED MUSLIN, A FAST FOR THE EYES.*
- *FOR ANOTHER FORM OF THE EXAMEN, SEE [HTTP://WWW.DIOCESE.CC/UPLOAD/IMAGES/ORIGINALS/EXAMEN_S070510A.PDF](http://www.diocese.cc/upload/images/originals/examen_s070510a.pdf)*

Thursday, March 2, 2017

Commemoration of John Wesley and Charles Wesley

Reading: Isaiah 58:1-12

"Is this not the fast I choose: to loose the bonds of injustice, to undo the thongs of the yoke? ... Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, to bring the homeless poor into your house?"

(Isaiah 58:6a, 7a)

Earlier this week, we took the palms from the previous Palm Sunday, burned them, mixed them with olive oil, and anointed ourselves with the humility and compassion of Christ. As Lent begins, we mark ourselves with a cross as people moving toward

Easter. And, so that we can create an empty space where newness can take root, we begin with confession and forgiveness, emptying ourselves of life-draining guilt, bitterness and regret. God wants to do a new thing, but a full cup does not have room for newness. And so we speak aloud to God our failures and wrongs, we let go of those things that in silence are causing us to waste away. And, open and emptied, we step into the wilderness path with Christ at our side.

Plant in our hearts, O God, the sure trust in your forgiveness and mercy. Amen

- *MAKE AN ALTAR, A PLACE FOR PRAYER.*

Friday, March 3, 2017

Reading: 2 Corinthians 5:20b—6:10

*“See, now is the acceptable time; see, now is the day of salvation.”
(2 Cor. 6:2b)*

Procrastination takes a toll on our spirits and on our bodies. All the “should do” ‘s, all the “wish I could” ‘s pile up inside us like a cluttered room, hemming us in, hampering our movement, sapping our will. In the Chinese system of healing, procrastination actually causes illness, by barricading the free flow of energy to the organs. *Now*, Paul writes. *Now*. “*Now* is the acceptable time.” *Now* is the time for repentance. *Now* is the time for forgiveness. *Now* is the time for transformation. *Now* is the time for newness. Lent offers us an opportunity to stop procrastinating, both as individuals and as a community. Lent’s forty days bid us step onto the path to newness in Christ, reading scripture – now, connecting to God through prayer – now, doing acts of love – now. Now is the acceptable time.

Teach us, O God, in the way you would have us go. Amen

- *START A LENTEN JOURNAL; WRITE EVEN JUST A SENTENCE, A THOUGHT, OR A PARAGRAPH EACH DAY.*

Saturday, March 4, 2017

Reading: Genesis 2:15-17, 3:1-7

"Now the serpent was more crafty than any other wild animal that the LORD God had made ... then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked." Genesis 3:1, 7a

The Hebrew scriptures are full of wordplay, ambiguity, and multiple meanings, and here in the garden story of Genesis we see an interesting example: the serpent was *arum* – clever, sly or crafty, and Adam and Eve saw that they were *arum* – naked. Or did they indeed discover that they, like the serpent, were crafty? Or, crafty and naked? The *Berakhot Sanhedrin* says every word of Torah splits into 70 languages – as many interpretations as there are people. Imagine the challenge to the translator, especially considering that written biblical Hebrew has no vowels! So - what do you think? Are we naked or crafty?

*Open our hearts to your word, O God, and give us understanding.
Amen*

- *INVITE FRIENDS OR FAMILY TO BAKE PRETZELS (SEE RECIPE).*

FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT

March 5, 2017

EUCCHARIST: 8:00 AM AND 10:45 AM

LENTEN PROCESSIONAL 4:00 PM

Gen. 2:15-17; 3:1-7; Ps. 32, 9-16; Rom.5:12-19; Matt. 4:1-11

O God, with hope I enter in
And call to mind your desert grace:
To wayworn people you have been

A presence in the wilderness. +

+*The stanzas for each Sunday are from the hymn "O God with hope I enter in". * It is based on St. Ignatius Loyola's Examen described in the Ash Wednesday meditation.*

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DAVE BRUBECK WROTE HIS FIRST LARGE-SCALE JAZZ CHORAL WORK, [A LIGHT IN THE WILDERNESS](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LsEJJiMVXfU&index=4&list=PLxFVkd_OKHa2iLzH7mkJEALCLNITM7YIO), IN 1968, TO ADDRESS THE CLIMATE OF RACIAL EXCLUSION AND INTOLERANCE IN THE UNITED STATES AT THE TIME. IT BEGINS WITH JESUS' TEMPTATIONS AND WANDERING IN THE DESERT, AND CLIMAXES WITH THE MOVEMENT, "LOVE YOUR ENEMIES".

PROGRAM NOTES:

[HTTPS://MASTERWORKSCHORALE.WORDPRESS.COM/2014/05/14/THE-LIGHT-IN-THE-WILDERNESS-CONCERT-NOTES/](https://masterworkschorale.wordpress.com/2014/05/14/the-light-in-the-wilderness-concert-notes/)

Monday, March 6, 2017

Reading: Psalm 32

"While I kept silence, my body wasted away." Psalm 32:3

The rubrics for morning and evening prayer in this devotional instruct us to chant aloud, to pray aloud, to read aloud. Speaking or singing words out into the physical universe is a powerful act. Speaking aloud our faults, our shortcomings, our failings brings mere idea out into the body, into the world of space and time, where change can happen. Brain researchers estimate that more than 80% of our thoughts are old, repeated day after day. Getting the negative thoughts that are rattling around and around in our brain out into the physical world frees the mind, readies the heart. For repentance, for confession, for transformation, speak aloud - to a pastor, to a therapist, to a loving friend, to the trees, to an empty room, to God. "I acknowledged my sin...and you forgave." (32:5)

Let all who are faithful offer prayer to you, O God, for you surround us with glad cries of deliverance. Amen

- *READ PSALM 32 ALOUD.*

Tuesday, March 7, 2017

Commemoration of Perpetua and Felicity

Reading: Romans 5:12-19

“Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man and death through sin, and so death spread to all because all have sinned...” Romans 5:12

A look at the fossils embedded in limestone quarries shows that thousands of species of animals lived, died, and became extinct before humans ever developed in the Great Rift Valley of east Africa. Stars that are 10 million light-years from earth need 10 million years for their light to reach us, in which time they may have died, far before humans ever walked the savannahs. Everything in creation comes into being, lives, and dies – mountains, deserts, brachiosaurs, galaxies, humans. It is a part of the great becoming of the universe. So what do we do with a statement like Paul’s, who alone among Biblical writers seems to regard death as the result of human sin? Better, perhaps, to focus in on what Thomas Long calls “big ‘D’ Death,” rather than “little ‘d’ death”: that is, death as spiritual separation from all that gives us life and wholeness and joy.

Surround us with your steadfast love, O God, that we may be glad and rejoice. Amen

- *CREATE A SMALL LENTEN GROUP TO STUDY TOGETHER:
PERHAPS ONE BOOK OF THE BIBLE, A NOVEL, A DEVOTIONAL ...*

Wednesday, March 8, 2017

NOON EUCHARIST WITH SOUP LUNCH FOLLOWING

6:00 PM SOUP SUPPER: 7:00 PM EVENING PRAYER

Reading: Matthew 4:1-11

“Then the devil took [Jesus] to the holy city and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple, saying to him, ‘If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down...’” Matt.4:5-6a

Jesus fasted for forty days, and the tempter tried to entice him to turn stones into bread. Then the tempter tried to entice Jesus to throw himself down from a height of fourteen stories and defy gravity and death. Jesus wandered humbly without possessions, and the tempter tried to entice him with great wealth and power. All of these temptations were attempts to lure Jesus away from his true identity: that of embodied compassion. For compassion suffers with (“cum” – “patior”). If Jesus were truly to live as humans live, he would at some time suffer hunger, thirst, alienation, disappointment, pain, loneliness, death. To opt out of any of these experiences would lessen his capacity to be the Compassionate One. Compassion suffers with. It is experienced from a state of equality, not from a superior position of pity, but from a position of equals. Christ suffered, died, and rose anew, his brokenness left behind, and with compassion in his eyes, he reaches to us and bids us rise to the compassionate life he lived.

As you sent the Christ, O God, to show your compassion for all creation, may our lives be transformed into his image. Amen

- *IDENTIFY SOMETHING THAT LURES YOU AWAY FROM YOUR TRUE IDENTITY AS A BAPTIZED PERSON. PRAY ABOUT IT.*

Thursday, March 9, 2017

Reading: Genesis 12:1-4a

“YHWH said to Avram: Go-you-forth from your land, from your kindred ... to the land that I will let you see.”

Genesis 12:1(Schocken Bible, Everett Fox, tr.)

Righteousness.

What was the personal benefit to Abram that he left his land, the land of his father, the land of his ancestors to step out on the journey God offered him? What would Abram get out of the journey he was about to undertake at God's bidding at the age of 75? Abram was leaving all that he knew, giving up rights to the land of his birth. All we are told is that Abram was given a promise by God. Abram trusted and accepted the summons and left for Canaan.

Martin Luther wrote in *Two Kinds of Righteousness*, that the first righteousness is a gift of God "instilled in us without our works by grace alone," from which develops our "proper" righteousness, a life lived "soberly with self, justly with neighbor, devoutly toward God.... Therefore, through the first righteousness arises the voice of the bridegroom who says to the soul, 'I am yours,' but through the second comes the voice of the bride who answers, 'I am yours.'"

So Abram went.

O God of love and promise, may we always answer, "I am yours." Amen

- *PLANT A BULB IN A POT. BEGIN TO WATER IT; PLACE IT IN A SUNNY WINDOW.*
- *LISTEN TO THE SOPRANO (SOUL) AND BASS (CHRIST) DUET, "MEIN FREUND IST MEIN" FROM J. S. BACH CANTATA 140*
[HTTPS://WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/WATCH?V=LQHXIGC07FU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LQHXIGC07FU)

Friday, March 10, 2017

Commemoration of Harriet Tubman and Sojourner Truth*
(see last pages)

Reading: Genesis 12:1-4a

"Be a blessing!" Genesis 12:2b

Each person is a unique, never-to-be-repeated event in the universe. No person has the same fingerprint, voice print, or retinal pattern as another. No one's DNA, cell memory, and life experience are exactly the same as another's. All of us have different songs, different wounds, different joys vibrating in our bones. God has given each person talents and abilities that are unique, and the universe needs us to develop and use these gifts. God said, "I will give you blessing ... be a blessing!" Rabbi Zusya said, "In the world to come, I shall not be asked, "Why were you not Moses?" I shall be asked, "Why were you not Zusya?"

*God, rich in blessing, may we be complete, as you are complete.
Amen*

- *FAST SECRETLY FOR ONE MEAL. SET ASIDE THE MONEY SAVED FOR AN ACT OF LOVE.*

Saturday, March 11, 2017

FULL MOON: LAKOTA, "MOON OF SNOW BLINDNESS"

Reading: Psalm 121

"The LORD is your keeper; the LORD is your shade at your right hand" Psalm 121:5

The Ignatian Examen that was described in the Ash Wednesday reflection begins and ends with gratitude. Our days begin with "O LORD, open my lips and my mouth shall proclaim your praise," (Matins) and end with "Let us bless the LORD; thanks be to God." (Compline)

When life leads us into the wilderness, gratitude helps us recall that we have a shelter from the sun and wind, a refuge from predators. Meister Eckhart, 14th century Rhineland mystic, wrote "The one most needful prayer is: thank you." Gratitude cultivates an approach to life that is life-giving and healing. Gratitude provides a

deep well to sustain us in dry desert times, days of wandering and uncertainty, days of wilderness.

*O Lord, thou hast given so much to me;
Grant one thing more: a grateful heart.” (George Herbert)
Amen*

- GO TO <http://gratefulness.org/resource/a-good-day/> TO VIEW THE VIDEO “A GOOD DAY.”

SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT

March 12, 2017

EUCARIST: 8:00 AM AND 10:45 AM

Gen. 12:1-4a; Ps.121; Rom. 4:1-5, 13-17; John 3:1-17

Commemoration of Gregory the Great

PURIM

But far from Sinai have I roamed
And bear the hidden wounds of strife;
Away and worn, I yearn for home;
Athirst, desire the spring of life.

- LISTEN TO ERNST PEPPING'S MOTET, "JESUS UND NIKODEMUS"
[HTTPS://WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/WATCH?V= AGFZU6KRIC](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AGFZU6KRIC)

Monday, March 13, 2017

Reading: Romans 4:1-5, 13-17

"[Abraham] is the father of all of us, as it is written, 'I have made you the father of many nations'..." Romans 4:16b-17a

In his "Preface to the Epistle of St. Paul to the Romans", Martin Luther wrote: "Faith...is a divine work in us which changes us and makes us to be born anew of God...Faith is a living, daring confidence in God's grace, so sure and certain that the believer would stake his life on it a thousand times. The knowledge of and confidence in God's grace make us glad and bold and happy in dealing with God and with all creatures." We are descendants of Abraham in faith, writes Paul, and thus we are confident and bold to go where love of God leads us. We are born anew in the Spirit, as Christ explains to Nicodemus in the darkness, and thus we are free to live in sure confidence of God's love, "glad and bold and happy in dealing with God and all creatures."

Loving God, make us glad and bold and happy in the sure confidence of your grace. Amen

- *MAKE THE SIGN OF THE CROSS ON YOUR FOREHEAD AND REMIND YOURSELF OF YOUR NEW LIFE IN CHRIST WITH THE WORDS, "I AM BAPTIZED INTO CHRIST."*

Tuesday, March 14, 2017

Reading: John 3:1-17

"What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit." John 3:6

Life in Christ is a journey into transformation, into newness. It asks for the giving up of things of the flesh, that is, self-centered, self-absorbed, worldly gain, the *incurvatus in se*, being turned in toward self, that Luther calls sin. We would often rather, like Jonah, sell our donkey, so we don't have to take this journey, but Christ is whispering in our ear "I am yours" awaiting our "I am yours." And when the two come together – fire! wind!

Abba Joseph, a desert father, was approached by Abba Lot, who informed him that he had kept his rule of prayer, fasted, purified his thoughts, and lived peaceably – what more could he do? Abba Joseph held out his hands toward heaven, fingers extended, and said, “You can become fire.” Each fingertip blazed like a candle.

*May we become fire, O God, and live as your light in the world.
Amen*

- *GIVE SOMETHING UP – A BAD HABIT, A GRUDGE, DESPAIR ...*

Wednesday, March 15, 2017

NOON EUCHARIST WITH SOUP LUNCH FOLLOWING

6:00 PM SOUP SUPPER: 7:00 PM EVENING PRAYER

Reading: John 3:1-17

"God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish, but have eternal life." John 3:16

The Ignatian Examen instructs us, after giving thanks, to examine and name the ways in which we have moved away from God. What is the old garment we need to remove before we can be renewed in the waters? What attitude, what despair is blocking us off from living a resurrected life? Perhaps we are so angry that we have become hard like stone. Perhaps we are so afraid of being hurt that we have let ourselves become numb. Perhaps we have felt so unloved that we have put ourselves first above everything. Naming our incompleteness is not easy. It takes silence, it takes honesty, it takes vulnerability. But Christ already has become vulnerable before us. And God has already loved us, in spite our waywardness. “God so loved the world...” When we open ourselves up to God, it will not be to storm and wrath, but to loving embrace.

All-loving God, we place in your care our hearts, our wills, our lives. Amen

- *TAKE SOMETHING ON – DAILY PRAYER, A NEW ATTITUDE, HELPING A NEIGHBOR...*

Thursday, March 16, 2017

Reading: Romans 5:1-11

"Suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us." Romans 5:4-5

When hardship comes to us, as it always will, we often want to flee, and quickly. But quite often, as years pass, we discover that hardship has taught us important lessons: trust in God, trust in our own mysterious inner strength, compassion toward others, release of fear and anxiety, gratitude, wonder. Help does not always come in the form we momentarily desire. What may come may simply be an increased capacity for endurance. But God pleads with us not to harden our hearts - to remain hopeful, God-trusting, open, and loving. God wills for us abundant life.

Hear our voices when we call, O God, and strengthen us to release all that keeps us from abundant life in you. Amen

- *EAT ONLY COOKED RICE FOR ONE MEAL; SET ASIDE THE MONEY SAVED FOR AN ACT OF LOVE.*

Friday, March 17, 2017

Commemoration of Patrick, missionary to Ireland (see last pages)

Reading: Exodus 17:1-7

“The people thirsted for water there, and the people grumbled against Moshe and said: ‘For what reason then did you bring us up from Egypt, to bring death ... by thirst?’” Exodus 17:3

In April 2010, National Geographic devoted an entire issue to the theme of “Water,” and included in the issue one of those grand National Geographic maps, this one a mapping of every river system of the world. One need only a quick glance to see that between the Nile in Egypt and the Tigris and Euphrates in Iraq there is Not Much. Not even taking into account the Jordan and its few tributaries. Not much at all. It is brown on the map. No perennial rivers or lakes. And it is through this land that Moses and the Israelites are traveling. Water is life. Water is the life-blood of the green earth, like capillaries and arteries in our own bodies. The Israelites looked around and as far as they could see – only desert. Only wilderness. Only dry rock. But underneath their feet, out of sight, unknown, was blessing – the fossil water of the Nubian Sandstone Aquifer. They saw only despair, hopelessness. But they were surrounded by blessing: water, life. Unseen, under their very feet, was blessing.

God of life, so dwell in us that our trust in you may never be shaken. Amen

- *BECOME AWARE TODAY OF ALL THE WAYS WATER COMES INTO OUR LIVES. PLACE A SMALL BOWL OF WATER ON YOUR ALTAR. MAKE THE SIGN OF THE CROSS WITH IT.*

Saturday, March 18, 2017

Commemoration of Cyril of Jerusalem

Reading: Exodus 17:1-7

“YHWH said to Moshe: Here I stand before you there on the Rock at Horev, you are to strike the rock and water shall come out of it, and the people shall drink. Moshe did thus, before the eyes of the elders of Israel.” Exodus 17:6

Lent as a period of preparation for Easter was already common in the church by the year 330 CE. During these days catechumens (candidates for baptism) were being instructed for their baptism at the Vigil of Easter, and the community as a whole used the time as a reminder and renewal of their baptism. The woman at the well, the man born blind, and the raising of Lazarus were all scripture lessons used in this instruction, pointing toward new life, the new sight given by the waters of baptism. Water flows in the desert, thirst is quenched in the wilderness. Hope is offered to those in despair. Water flows from the rock. Let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation.

*Blessed are you, O God, for you bring water flowing from the rock.
Amen*

- *LIGHT A CANDLE AT YOUR ALTAR TO GIVE THANKS FOR YOUR BAPTISM.*

THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT

March 19, 2017

EUCCHARIST: 8:00 AM AND 10:45 AM

Ex. 17:1-7; Ps.95; Rom. 5:1-11; John 4:5-42

Commemoration of Joseph, Guardian of Jesus

O break the rock, let water flow
And wash the dust and drought from me;
I taste your peace, your presence know,
And drinking deep, am healed and free.

- *LISTEN TO C.P.E. BACH'S ORATORIO, DIE ISRAELITEN IN DER WÜSTE (THE ISRAELITES IN THE WILDERNESS).
[HTTPS://WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/WATCH?V=DUMIRMIEyX8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DUMIRMIEyX8) All of PART I DEALS WITH THE ISRAELITES' THIRST, MISTRUST, AND DISMAY, AND ENDS WITH MOSES' ENTREATY TO GOD TO FIND WATER, AND THE ISRAELITES' JOYFUL RETURN TO TRUST IN*

GOD. TEXT AT:

<FILE://LOCALHOST/USERS/SUSANCHERWIEN/DOWNLOADS/LIBRETOS-LIBRETTO-IV-1-TRANSLATION.PDF>

Monday, March 20, 2017

SPRING EQUINOX, 5:28 AM

Reading: Psalm 95

"Do not harden your hearts, as at Meribah, when your ancestors tested me." Psalm 95:8

Pray with your lips, so that you may pray with your mind, so that you may pray with your heart. This is an aim of prayer, of fasting, of acts of love - to engage the heart, to encounter the changing power of God. "Create in me a clean heart" we sing on Ash Wednesday and all through the Sundays in Lent. In *A Simple Way To Pray*, Martin Luther wrote that we should pray the scriptures and the creeds daily "and use them as flint and steel to kindle a flame in the heart." The heart is where the whole person comes together - body, mind, and spirit. It is where change takes place, where transformation happens. As St. Makarius the Egyptian wrote: "The heart is a small vessel; and yet dragons and lions are there, and there poisonous creatures and all the treasures of wickedness; rough uneven paths are there, and gaping chasms. There likewise is God, there are angels, the heavenly cities and the treasuries of grace; all things are there." (*Homilies* 43:7)

*Pour your love into our hearts, O God, through your Holy Spirit.
Amen*

- *DRINK WATER INSTEAD OF A CUP OF COFFEE TODAY. SET ASIDE THE MONEY SAVED FOR AN ACT OF LOVE.*

Tuesday, March 21, 2017

Commemoration of Thomas Cranmer

Reading: John 4:5-42

“Jacob’s well was there, and Jesus, tired out by his journey, was sitting by the well.” John 4:6

Sitting by the well, Jesus speaks to the woman of Samaria about “living water” or “running water” according to the writer of John, who frequently uses double or triple meanings. In one icon of this story the well is shaped like a Greek cross: the living water flows from faith. In an early Christian mosaic, it is shaped like an eight-sided baptismal font: the well of living water is baptism. In one catacomb painting, Jesus himself stands in the well: Christ is the living water. German theologian Oscar Cullman argues that this story was intended to continue Nicodemus’ discussion with Jesus about being born anew (or “from above,” – another double meaning!). Which is it? Perhaps the answer is, “yes.” The power of story is that we can enter it from many different directions, many different levels. Each person can enter and find meaning at different points in life.

So - another story: The disciples asked the master, “Why do you tell us stories and stories and do not tell us what they mean?” The master replied, “How would you like it if I offered you a piece of fruit and chewed it first?”

God of life, lead us always to the flowing water where we will find life. Amen

- *Listen to The Pilgrim Travelers sing "Jesus Met the Woman at the Well" at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FnwcTUUjSGc>*

Wednesday, March 22, 2017

NOON EUCHARIST WITH SOUP LUNCH FOLLOWING

6:00 PM SOUP SUPPER: 7:00 PM EVENING PRAYER

Commemoration of Jonathan Edwards

Reading: John 4:5-42

“Sir, give me this water so that I may never be thirsty.” John 4:15

If you look at Orthodox icons of Jesus and the woman at the well, you see that the woman is occasionally shown with a nimbus, the gold circle around the head which is a sign of holiness and divine energy. In the Eastern Orthodox church, the Samaritan woman at the well has been given a name, Saint Photini, the “enlightened one,” and is “equal to the apostles”, because she believed and went to tell others about the Christ she had encountered. Her story continues. It is said she was baptized along with her five sisters and two sons, traveled to Carthage to share the story of Jesus Christ, and eventually traveled to Rome, where she was martyred by the emperor Nero. Her feast day is February 26, and a church dedicated to her has stood for centuries at Nablus in the West Bank, traditional site of Jacob’s well.

“By the well of Jacob, O holy one,
Thou didst find the Water of eternal and blessed life;
And having partaken thereof, O wise Photini,
Thou wentest forth proclaiming Christ, the Anointed One.”
(Megalyrnarion for St. Photini)

*Living God, give us the Living Water that we may never thirst.
Amen*

- *PLACE AN ICON ON YOUR ALTAR AND MEDITATE ON IT.*

Thursday, March 23, 2017

Reading: I Samuel 16:1-13

*“... the LORD does not see as mortals see; they look on the outward appearance, but the LORD looks on the heart.”
1 Samuel 16:7*

“Create in me a clean heart, O God,” we sing as the season of Lent begins. “Create in me a clean heart, O God,” we sing in the liturgy

at the Great Entrance of the Eucharist. A clean heart. The heart is where the whole person comes together – body, spirit, mind. What is intended by the mind takes up residence in the body and spirit. What is done with the body takes residence in the spirit and the mind. All are interwoven. In the teachings of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount, heard through this Epiphany season, Jesus spoke over and over again about intention. How crucial are the intentions of the heart! Other people see our actions which may seem just, but God sees the motivations, the intentions, the energy behind our acts. In T.S. Eliot's play, *Murder in the Cathedral*, Archbishop of Canterbury, Thomas Becket struggles with the possibility of martyrdom, and whether he might actually be desiring the glory that comes with it:

“Now is my way clear, now is the meaning plain:
Temptation shall not come in this kind again.
The last temptation is the greatest treason:
To do the right deed for the wrong reason.”

God of light, awaken us to see the glory of life in you. Amen

- *PLACE ON YOUR ALTAR A PICTURE OF SOMEONE EXPERIENCING HARDSHIP. PRAY FOR THEM.*

Friday, March 24, 2017

Commemoration of Oscar Romero* (see last pages)

Reading: I Samuel 16:1-13

“So Shemu’el (Samuel) took the horn of oil and anointed David amid his brothers. And the spirit of YHWH surged upon David from that day onward.” 1 Samuel 16:13 (Everett Fox, tr.)

The books of First and Second Samuel are books about power, about the corruption of power and about personal responsibility, and in this story beginning the longest continuous narrative in the Bible, we meet the shepherd-boy who will become king, David.

Here, the prophet Samuel anoints David, the youngest son of Jesse, for kingship, after rejecting David's seven older brothers. David was anointed for kingship. Prophets were anointed, high priests were anointed. Anointing was for healing, for hospitality, for burial. We anoint the ears and eyes of catechumens. The Revised Standard Version (RSV) of the Bible says, then, in John 9:6 that Jesus "anointed" (*epechrisen*) the blind man's eyes with mud. (The New Revised – NRSV – says "spread." What a loss.) Christ means the Anointed One. How did David use his power as the anointed king? How did Jesus use his power as the Anointed One?

God of glory, fill us with your spirit and anoint us for your work in the world. Amen

- *TAKE BIT OF PURE OLIVE OIL. ANOINT YOUR HANDS, YOUR EYES, YOUR LIPS, YOUR EARS, YOUR FEET, YOUR HEART.*

Saturday, March 25, 2017

FEAST OF THE ANNUNCIATION

Reading: Psalm 23

"You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows." Psalm 23:5

If we have eyes to see it, ears to hear it, senses to feel it, all around us our cup is overflowing. To take that first deep breath in the morning is a blessing. To feel the softness of slippers. To smell coffee. Perhaps to hear a loving voice. Blessing. The Babylonian Talmud instructs the pious Jew to bless God one hundred times each day. Blessed are you, O God, for the light blue snow at sunset. Blessed are you, O God, for the crescent moon. Blessed are you, O God, for the eyes of that child. Blessed are you, O God, for the song of the wind. For these amazing fingers. For lentils. For wool. Imagine a life lived, steeped in blessing. My cup overflows.

God the Good Shepherd, lead us beside still waters, that we may see your many blessings and bless you. Amen

- *GIVE THANKS 100 TIMES TODAY.*

FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT

March 26, 2017

EUCARIST: 8:00 AM AND 10:45 AM

I Sam. 16:1-13; Ps.23; Eph. 58-14; John 9:1-41

How shall my days your grace proclaim;
How shall my deeds your healing prove?
An open heart will praise your name;
My grateful life will sing your love.

- *LISTEN TO EDWARD ELGAR'S ORATORIO ON THE MAN BORN BLIND: "THE LIGHT OF LIFE" (1896)*
[HTTPS://WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/WATCH?V=OWFUWT3k0CG](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OWFUWT3k0CG).
SCORE AT:
[HTTP://IMSLP.ORG/WIKI/THE LIGHT OF LIFE, OP.29 \(ELGAR, EDWARD\)](http://imslp.org/wiki/The_Light_of_Life,_Op.29_(Elgar,_Edward))

Monday, March 27, 2017

Reading: Ephesians 5:8-14

"Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give you light." Ephesians 5:14

Here is one of those lovely, unexpected hymn fragments that are woven into letters and other books in the New Testament. Just a little fragment, possibly of a baptismal hymn, already in existence and being sung by the early Christians by the time Paul wrote this letter to the church at Ephesus. Imagine the song in the night: river water may be rushing nearby, or waves splashing from the sea. The smell of chrism is in the air, and the smoke from fire. The renunciation toward the west, and then the turning toward the

east, the direction of the rising sun, where Cyril of Jerusalem says, “God’s Paradise opens before you, that Eden ... The place of light, that garden which God planted in the east.” And voices chanting in the dark, “Awake, O sleeper...”

Awaken me, O God, raise me up from the dead, and grant me the light of Christ. Amen

- *MEMORIZE A HYMN.*

Tuesday, March 28, 2017

NEW MOON

Reading: John 9:1-41

“As he passed by, he saw a man blind from his birth.” John 9:1

According to many New Testament scholars, the writer of the Gospel of John (probably writing about 90-100 CE) originally ended the gospel immediately after the story of Thomas and the Risen Christ in Chapter 20, and concluded with these words, “Now Jesus did many other things in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that you may have life in his name” (John 20:30-31). Seeing and believing. Seeing and believing. The disciples at the Cana wedding, the woman at the well, the people who were fed by the five loaves, and now the man born blind. St. Augustine writes in one sermon that the world is the blind man. Seeing and believing. What are we not seeing? To what are we blind? Is Christ truly our light? How does the light of Christ change how we see?

O God of light, open our eyes that we may see ourselves, the world, and you, more clearly. Amen

- *TAKE A WALK. NOTICE SHADOWS, GIVE THANKS.*

- [GO TO HTTP://GRATEFULNESS.ORG/BLOG/DELIGHTED-SHARE-NEW-VIDEO-STOP-LOOK-GO/TO SEE THE VIDEO](http://gratefulness.org/blog/delighted-share-new-video-stop-look-go/to-see-the-video)
"STOP.LOOK.GO."

Wednesday, March 29, 2017

NOON EUCHARIST WITH SOUP LUNCH FOLLOWING

6:00 PM SOUP SUPPER: 7:00 PM EVENING PRAYER

Commemoration of Hans Nils Hauge

Reading: John 9:1-41

"[The man who was born blind] answered: "... one thing I know, that though I was blind, now I see." John 9:25

In one of her visions, Hildegard von Bingen (1098-1160) saw a golden Christ figure pouring out divinity from himself. The golden stream of the divine flowed down to a figure in white baptismal garments; another veiled figure stood below Christ, the garments covered with open eyes. Hildegard called Christ, "the One Who Gives Eyes" - eyes to see wisdom, eyes to see justice. Perhaps eyes to see Christ in the faces of others? Eyes to see the pain in the world? Eyes to see God at work in the universe?

*Oh, Holy Jesus,
most merciful Redeemer,
Friend and Brother,
may we know you more clearly,
love you more dearly,
and follow you more nearly. Amen
(Prayer of Richard of Chichester)*

- *CALL OR WRITE A RELATIVE YOU HAVEN'T SPOKEN TO IN AGES.
IF THEY HAVE DIED, PLACE THE LETTER ON YOUR ALTAR.*

Thursday, March 30, 2017

Reading: Ezekiel 37:1-14

"Can these dry bones then live?" Ezekiel 37:3

After the fall of Jerusalem to the Roman army in 70 CE, a group of extreme Zealots (Sicarii) overtook the Roman garrison at Masada, a tabletop mountain overlooking the Dead Sea, where Herod the Great had built a fortified palace complex including a synagogue. Besieged by the Roman troops, the Sicarii and families watched as, bucketful by bucketful, stone and dirt were used to build a ramp up the west flank of the mount. (Imagine building a dirt ramp up the side of Devil's Tower in Wyoming...) When the Roman army breached the walls on April 16, 73 CE, they found every one dead, except a few hiding women and children. Among the artifacts excavated from under the synagogue at Masada is a scroll fragment: Ezekiel's vision of the Valley of Dry Bones. Overlooking the wilderness around the Dead Sea, we hear these words again, "Can these bones then live?" One could wonder: what was the new life for Israel the prophet had declared? What is the new life God desires for each one of us?

Breathe your Spirit upon these dry bones, O God, and make us new. Amen

- *START MAKING UKRAINIAN EGGS FOR YOUR EASTER CELEBRATION.*

Friday, March 31, 2017

Commemoration of John Donne

Reading: Ezekiel 37:1-14

"O dry bones, hear the word of the LORD." Ezekiel 37:4

Master Calligrapher Donald Jackson designed a two-page illumination for Ezekiel's vision of the Valley of the Dry Bones for the handwritten Saint John's Bible. Whereas Jackson frequently traveled to the British Museum to view examples of Near Eastern

ornaments and motifs for the book's illuminations, in this case he went to internet archives of documentary photos, extracting images of piles of bones from massacres in Rwanda, Bosnia, Iraq and other places to create the lower half of the illumination page. These he interposed with piles of glass shards reminiscent of terrorist attacks and piles of eyeglasses from the Holocaust to create a bleak collage of the dry bones of human suffering and spiritual death. Across the top of the page, in contrast, is a collage of rainbow fragments and menorahs, signs of covenant and promise. All across the page, the small gold-leaf squares of divine presence shine even in the darkness of the valley. Even in death and dryness, God is present. Even in the seemingly hopeless, God's promise shines.

Your Word, O God, is life and light; open our hearts that we may hear your word and live. Amen

- *PLACE ON YOUR ALTAR A PICTURE OF SOMEONE WHO HAS WRONGED YOU. PRAY TO FORGIVE.*

Saturday, April 1, 2017

Commemoration of Amalie Sieveking

Mercury at greatest elongation; visible in west after sunset

Reading: John 11:1-45

"Lazarus, come out!" John 11:43

In the Saint John's Bible illumination for the raising of Lazarus, the viewer stands behind Lazarus in the rocky tomb, looking out through a circular tunnel where the bright gold figure of Christ stands calling Lazarus out of the tomb. It is almost like the pupil of an eye. Against the inner darkness of the tomb are the gold leaf words of Christ: "I am the resurrection and the life." One vividly senses the loving call to come out of the tomb, and since we, as viewers, are also in the tomb with Lazarus, the call of Christ is also directed at us: "Lazarus, come out!" From all the dark places of

hurt where we have walled ourselves off, Christ calls us to come out. From the dead places of hatred and bitterness, Christ calls us to arise. From the tomb of self-loathing, Christ's loving voice bids us come forth. To golden light. To life.

Out of the depths have we cried to you, O God; O God, hear our voice. Amen

- *TAKE A GRATEFULNESS WALK. GATHER SOMETHING FOR YOUR ALTAR.*

FIFTH SUNDAY IN LENT

April 2, 2017

EUCCHARIST: 8:00 AM AND 10:45 AM

Ez. 37:1-14; Ps. 130; Rom. 8:6-11; John 11:1-45

O God, with joy I enter in,
Restored and precious in your sight,
For in your grace I live again
In lands of honey and delight.

- *Listen to Franz Schubert's oratorio "Lazarus" at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PaIVgWnCzY>. Score at [http://imslp.org/wiki/Lazarus,_D.689_\(Schubert,_Franz\)](http://imslp.org/wiki/Lazarus,_D.689_(Schubert,_Franz))*

Monday, April 3, 2017

Reading: Romans 8:6-11

"To set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the spirit is life and peace." Romans 8:6

Today let Martin Luther speak, again from his "Preface to the Epistle of St. Paul to the Romans":

"Flesh and spirit you must not understand as though flesh is only that which has to do with unchastity and spirit is only that which has to do with what is inwardly in the heart. Rather, like Christ in John 3:6, Paul calls everything 'flesh' that is born of the flesh - the whole person, with body and soul, mind and senses - because everything about [that person] longs for the flesh...From the 'works of the flesh' in Galatians 5[:19-21], you can learn that Paul calls heresy and hatred 'works of the flesh'.

On the contrary, you should call [the person] 'spiritual' who is occupied with the most external kind of works as Christ was when he washed the disciples' feet... Thus 'the flesh' is [one] who lives and works, inwardly and outwardly, in the service of the flesh's gain and of this temporal life. 'The spirit' is the [one] who lives and works, inwardly and outwardly, in the service of the Spirit and of the future life."

*Put your Spirit in us, O God, to unite all that we are with your will.
Amen*

- *DO SOMETHING TODAY TO NOURISH YOUR SPIRITUAL BODY AND YOUR BODILY SPIRIT.*

Tuesday, April 4, 2017

Commemoration of Benedict the African

Reading: John 11:1-45

"Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?" John 11:37

Like the people mourning with Mary, sister of Lazarus, we often have very specific ways we want to see God at work in the world. Why doesn't God just intervene and stop war? We pray and pray and a friend dies of cancer anyway. Why didn't God just heal her and let her live? A poem by Dorothy Sayers, friend and colleague of J.R.R. Tolkien and C.S. Lewis:

"...Hard it is, very hard,

To travel up the slow and stony road
To Calvary, to redeem mankind; far better
To make but one sceptered miracle,
Lean through the cloud, lift the right hand of power
And with a sudden lightning smite the world perfect.
Yet this was not God's way, who had the power,
But set it by, choosing the cross, the thorn,
The sorrowful wounds. Something there is, perhaps,
That power destroys in passing, something supreme,
To whose great value in the eyes of God
That cross, that thorn, and those five wounds bear
witness."

(The Devil To Pay)

*Most loving God, your ways are not our ways; calm our hearts and
soothe our questing minds with your wisdom, Amen*

- *MEMORIZE A SCRIPTURE VERSE.*

Wednesday, April 5, 2017

NOON EUCHARIST WITH SOUP LUNCH FOLLOWING

6:00 SOUP SUPPER: 7:00PM EVENING PRAYER

Reading: Psalm 130

*"My soul waits for the LORD more than those who watch for the
morning, more than those who watch for the morning." Ps. 130:6*

In the midst of night, floors creak, twigs brush, heart pounds. All that distresses seems nearer, larger, more fearsome. If only the light would break, if only dawn would come. Who will call us out of this marauding night? Earl Schwartz teaches us to watch for repeated words and phrases in Hebrew scripture: "more than those that watch for the morning, more than those that watch for the morning." Twice. The soul's desire for God is stronger than even the desire for the dawn. The heart's desire for Light, for new Life, is even stronger than the yearning to leave that midnight darkness.

The soul desires the presence of God, and when God is found, "my soul is peaceful as a child sleeping in its mother's arms." (Ps. 131:2)

- *GET UP BEFORE SUNRISE TOMORROW AND WATCH THE DAWN.*

Thursday, April 6, 2017

Commemoration of Albrecht Dürer and Lucas Cranach

Reading: Matthew 21:1-11

"Most of the crowd spread their garments on the road."

Matthew 21:8

The worn, rutted footpaths and roads in Israel were rocky and treacherous, and it was customary for townspeople to "prepare the way" when someone important was approaching, making the ruts level and removing rocks. It was also customary to lay down one's cloak, the outer garment, before a king, as the servants of Ahab did before Jehu in 2 Kings 9:13. What kind of king were the people expecting? What kind of ruler were they hoping for? One who would "smite the world perfect", as Dorothy Sayers wrote? Since we cannot know the thoughts and motivations of the 1st c. Judaeans along the road to Jerusalem, perhaps we should at least return to our own 21st century lives and ask, how do we prepare the way for the coming of Christ into the Jerusalem of our hearts?

*Then cleansed be every life from sin,
Make straight the way for God within,
And let us all our hearts prepare
For Christ to come and enter there. Amen
(Charles Coffin, "On Jordan's Banks")*

- *MAKE A DRAWING, PAINTING, OR POEM IN YOUR JOURNAL.*

Friday, April 7, 2017

Jupiter at closest approach to earth; visible all night

Reading: Isaiah 50:4-9a

"The LORD God has opened my ear, and I was not rebellious, I turned not backward." Isaiah 50:5

Martin Luther described sin as a person's being "curved in on itself", *incurvatus in se*, concerned only with one's own needs, desires, one's own puny little world. As Jesus approaches Jerusalem, where reaction to his world-upturning teachings and life is building to a deathly confrontation, we see clearly how absolutely faithful he is to his identity as the Compassionate One, open and vulnerable to the world. He set his face "like a flint" (Is. 50:7) and turned not backward. How simple it would have been to disappear into the wilderness ravines east of the city. How difficult, to ignore the deep human instinct toward self-preservation and to continue on the road, in spite of risk, in spite of threat.

Merciful God, may we never turn backward from our calling as people of your heart. Amen

- *EAT NO MEAT OR OIL TODAY.*

Saturday, April 8, 2017

Reading: Philippians 2:5-11

Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who... emptied himself, taking the form of a servant." Phil. 2:5,7

Out of the womb of wondrous love
came the person Jesus
wondrous love from
wondrous love.

All that came to him
that was hurt,

all that was shame,
all that was cruelty
all that was spite, -
all that came to him
he took into himself.
All the energy
of scorn, of fright
of worthlessness, of envy
all the energy of hate
that came to him
he took into himself
and did not lash out
to return it.
All that came to him
that was unlovely
he took into himself
and transformed it,
transformed
by the wonder of God's love.
Wondrous love from
wondrous love.

So is our beginning.
So is our ending.

Susan Palo Cherwien, copyright2010 MorningStarMusicPublishers

- *PLACE A CANDLE AT THE GRAVE OF SOMEONE YOU LOVE.
(LAZARUS SATURDAY)*

SUNDAY OF THE PASSION/PALM SUNDAY **April 9, 2017**

WORSHIP: 8:00 AM AND 10:45 AM
Mt. 21:1-11; Is. 50:4-9a; Ps. 31:9-16; Phil. 2:5-11;
Mt. 26:14—27:66

Commemoration of Dietrich Bonhoeffer* (see last pages)

PALM SUNDAY

Now to the gate of my Jerusalem,
The seething holy city of my heart,
The Saviour comes. But will I welcome him?
Oh crowds of easy feelings make a start;
They raise their hands, get caught up in the singing,
And think the battle won. Too soon they'll find
The challenge, the reversal he is bringing
Changes their tune. I know what lies behind
The surface flourish that so quickly fades;
Self-interest, and fearful guardedness,
The hardness of the heart, its barricades,
And at the core, the dreadful emptiness
Of a perverted temple. Jesus come
Break my resistance and make me your home.
Malcolm Guite (Sounding the Seasons, p. 32)

- *LISTEN TO EITHER THE MATTHÄUSPASSION OR THE JOHANNESPASSION BY JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH.*
ST. MATTHEW:
[HTTPS://WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/WATCH?V=JM1os4VzTGA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JM1os4VzTGA)
ST. JOHN:
[HTTPS://WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/WATCH?V=H1HmxBHRGQC](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H1HmxBHRGQC)

Monday, April 10, 2017

WORSHIP: NOON

Commemoration of Michael Agricola, Bishop of Turku

Reading: John 12: 1-11

THE ANOINTING AT BETHANY

Come close with Mary, Martha, Lazarus,
So close the candles flare with their soft breath,

And kindle heart and soul to flame within us,
Lit by these mysteries of life and death.
For beauty now begins the final movement,
In quietness and intimate encounter,
The alabaster jar of precious ointment
Is broken open for the world's true lover.
The whole room richly fills to feast the senses
With all the yearning such a fragrance brings,
The heart is mourning but the spirit dances,
Here at the very centre of all things,
Here at the meeting place of love and loss
We all foresee and see beyond the cross.
Malcolm Guite, (Sounding the Seasons, p. 35)

Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Amen

- *PLACE THE PALMS FROM THE PALM SUNDAY LITURGY ON YOUR ALTAR.*

Tuesday, April 11, 2017

WORSHIP: NOON

FULL MOON, LAKOTA "MOON OF FATTENING"

PESACH, PASSOVER BEGINS

Reading: John 12:20-36

GRAIN OF WHEAT

Oh let me fall as grain to the good earth
And die away from all dry separation,
Die to my sole self, and find new birth
Within that very death, a dark fruition,
Deep in this crowded underground, to learn
The earthy otherness of every other,
To know that nothing is achieved alone
But only where these other fallen gather.
If I bear fruit and break through to bright air,

Then fall upon me with your freeing flail
To shuck this husk and leave me sheer and clear
As heaven-handled Hopkins, that my fall
May be more fruitful and my autumn still
A golden evening where your barns are full.
Malcolm Guite, (Parable and Paradox, p. 68)

Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Amen

- *BUY AND EAT A FRUIT THAT HAS MANY SEEDS.*

Wednesday, April 12, 2017

WORSHIP: NOON

Reading: John 13:21-32

O ADONAI

Unsayable, you chose to speak one tongue;
Unseeable, you gave yourself away;
The Adonai, the Tetragrammaton,
Grew by a wayside in the light of day,
O you who dared to be a tribal God,
To own a language, people and a place,
Who chose to be exploited and betrayed,
If so you might be met with face to face:
Come to us here, who would not find you there,
Who chose to know the skin and not the pith,
Who heard no more than thunder in the air,
Who marked the mere events and not the myth;
Touch the bare branches of our unbelief
And blaze again like fire in every leaf.
Malcolm Guite, (Sounding the Seasons, p. 8)

Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Amen

- *TAKE A WALK. LOOK FOR SIGNS OF SPRING.*

MAUNDY THURSDAY (FROM “MANDARE” – TO COMMAND)

April 13, 2017

EUCCHARIST, 12 NOON; EUCCHARIST WITH FOOTWASHING, 7:00 PM
Ex. 12:1-14; Ps. 116:1-2, 12-19; 1 Cor. 11:23-26; John 13:1-17,
31b-35

MAUNDY THURSDAY

Here is the source of every sacrament,
The all-transforming presence of the Lord,
Replenishing our every element,
Remaking us in his creative Word.
For here the earth herself gives bread and wine,
The air delights to bear his Spirit's speech,
The fire dances where the candles shine,
The waters cleanse us with his gentle touch.
And here he shows the full extent of love
To us whose love is always incomplete,
In vain we search the heavens high above,
The God of love is kneeling at our feet.
Though we betray him, though it is the night,
He meets us here and loves us into light.
Malcolm Guite, (Sounding the Seasons, p. 36)

*Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within
me. Amen*

- *CLEAN OUT A CLOSET. GIVE AWAY WHAT YOU DON'T NEED.*

GOOD FRIDAY

April 14, 2017

(FROM “GOD’S FRIDAY”)

WAY OF THE CROSS, 12 NOON; ADORATION OF THE CROSS, 7:00 PM
Is. 52:13-53:12; Ps. 22; Heb. 10:16-25; John 18:1-19:42

CRUCIFIXION: JESUS IS NAILED TO THE CROSS

See, as they strip the robe from off his back
And spread his arms and nail them to the cross,
The dark nails pierce him and the sky turns black,
And love is firmly fastened on to loss.
But here a pure change happens. On this tree
Loss becomes gain, death opens into birth.
Here wounding heals and fastening makes free,
Earth breathes in heaven, heaven roots in earth.
And here we see the length, the breadth, the height,
Where love and hatred meet and love stays true,
Where sin meets grace and darkness turns to light,
We see what love can bear and be and do.
And here our Saviour calls us to his side,
His love is free, his arms are open wide.
Malcolm Guite, (Sounding the Seasons, p. 42)

Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Amen

- *BAKE HOT CROSS BUNS TO BREAK THE FAST (SEE RECIPE.)
LEAVE THE RADIO AND TV OFF TODAY.*

HOLY SATURDAY

April 15, 2017

VIGIL OF EASTER, 8:30 PM

Romans 6:3-11; John 20:1-18

JESUS IS LAID IN THE TOMB

Here at the centre everything is still,
Before the stir and movement of our grief
That bears its pain with rhythm, ritual,
Beautiful useless gestures of relief.
So they anoint the skin that cannot feel
And soothe his ruined flesh with tender care,

Kissing the wounds they know they cannot heal,
With incense scenting only empty air.
He blesses every love that weeps and grieves,
And makes our grief the pangs of a new birth.
The love that's poured in silence at old graves,
Renewing flowers, tending the bare earth,
Is never lost. In him all love is found
And sown with him, a seed in the rich ground.
Malcolm Guite, (Sounding the Seasons, p. 43)

Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Amen

- *VISIT SOMEONE. TAKE THEM SOME HOT CROSS BUNS FOR THEIR EASTER FEAST.*

RESURRECTION OF OUR LORD/EASTER DAY

April 16, 2017

EUCCHARISTIC LITURGIES 8:00AM, 10:45 AM

ALLELUIA! CHRIST IS RISEN! CHRIST IS RISEN INDEED! ALLELUIA!

EASTER DAWN

He blesses every love that weeps and grieves
And now he blesses hers who stood and wept
And would not be consoled, or leave her love's
Last touching place, but watched as low light crept
Up from the east. A sound behind her stirs
A scatter of bright birdsong through the air.
She turns, but cannot focus through her tears,
Or recognize the Gardener standing there.
She hardly hears his gentle question, "Why,
Why are you weeping?", or sees the play of light
That brightens as she chokes out her reply,
"They took my love away, my day and night."
And then she hears her name, she hears Love say
The Word that turns her night, and ours, to Day.

Malcolm Guite, (Sounding the Seasons, p. 44)

Saints Days and Commemorations

March 10

Harriet Tubman and Sojourner Truth

Three traditional aspects of the discipline of Lent have been prayer, fasting, and acts of compassion. In the reading from Matthew's gospel that we heard on Ash Wednesday, Jesus emphasizes that spiritual practice should not be used to feel holier, more spiritual, superior to other people, but rather to connect to God and to our "secret heart" (Ps. 51:6) in such a way that we also connect to other people. "Is this not the fast I choose?" Today's date in the church's calendar is given to the commemoration of Harriet Tubman, an Ashanti (Ghana) American slave who escaped to freedom and returned to the slave states 13 times to lead out other slaves, and Sojourner Truth, a slave of Guinean heritage, who escaped and worked for abolition of slavery. Perhaps today is a good day to recall this African proverb: *Umntu ngamuntu ngabantu* – a person is a person because of other people.

May our fasting and prayer this season, O God, lead us into acts of compassion and justice. Amen

- *CHOOSE ONE SOCIETAL PROBLEM THAT NEEDS YOUR ADVOCACY, YOUR LETTERS, YOUR PRAYERS, YOUR ACTION.*

March 17

Saint Patrick

Reading: Romans 4:1-5, 13-17

"For the promise that he would inherit the world did not come to Abraham or to his descendants through the law, but through the righteousness of faith." Romans 4:13

On his last night as a slave to Miliucc, a chieftain “king” near present-day Ballymena, Northern Ireland, Patrick received a message. A voice said to him: “Your hungers are rewarded: you are going home. Look, your ship is ready.” The hills where Patrick tended sheep and pigs as a slave were nowhere near any port, but Patrick reports that he left and walked two hundred miles to a port, where a ship was indeed loading. He eventually made his way to a monastery in France for his theological education, and returned to Ireland after a second vision.. God said to Abram, not “Poof!,” but “Go-you-forth!” and Abram went. God said to Patrick, not “Whoosh!,” but “Your ship is ready.” And Patrick went. How many summons have we received from God? And when the next one comes, will we take that first step?

*I arise today
Through God's strength to pilot me:
God's might to uphold me,
God's wisdom to guide me,
God's eye to look before me,
God's ear to hear me,
God's word to speak for me,
God's hand to guard me ... Amen. (St. Patrick's Breastplate)*

- *TAKE THE FIRST STEP IN DOING AN ACT OF LOVE YOU HAVE PUT OFF FOR A LONG TIME.*

March 24

Archbishop Oscar Romero

Above the Great West Door at Westminster Abbey, in the gallery of 20th Century Martyrs, amid tracery stonework, a sculpted figure of a small man stands between Martin Luther King, Jr. and Dietrich Bonhoeffer. He holds a small child. The statue is of Archbishop Oscar Romero of El Salvador, assassinated while lifting the chalice at Mass on this day in 1980. Romero consistently

preached that the Christian community should work for the poor and oppressed, and not only in the care and giving of alms, but in the changing of the world systems and structures that create poverty and oppression. This he continued to do, in spite of hate mail and death threats and increasing murders and disappearances around him. He felt deeply that salvation is for *this* world, that God desires the good of all people in *this* time. He preached, "We must not seek the child Jesus in the pretty figures of our Christmas cribs, we must seek him among the undernourished children who have gone to bed at night with nothing to eat, among the poor news boys, who will sleep covered with newspapers in doorways." (Christmas Eve, 1977)

Compassionate God, give us courage to transform the suffering that comes to us and to work to alleviate the suffering that comes to others. Amen

- *LEARN ABOUT A COUNTRY WITH IMMIGRANTS IN THE AREA AROUND YOU: MEXICO, SOMALIA, LAOS (HMONG), TIBET...*

April 9

Dietrich Bonhoeffer

"My soul waits for the LORD more than those who watch for the morning, more than those who watch for the morning." Ps. 130:6

On this day in 1945, German theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer was executed by hanging at Plötzensee Prison in Berlin - just two months short of D-Day - for being associated with the plot to assassinate Adolf Hitler. An ardent pacifist, Bonhoeffer struggled greatly with the quandary of how to continue in non-violence against such an oppressive and violent evil as the Nazi machine. (Who knows? Perhaps the Sicarii faced the same quandary in the face of the Roman war machine...) At the previous Christmas, Dietrich had sent his mother a poem from prison - a poem of trust in God for each day, each year. In translation by the great British hymnist F. Pratt Green, the first stanza reads:

By gracious pow'rs so wonderfully sheltered,
And confidently waiting come what may,
We know that God is with us night and morning,
And never fails to greet us each new day. (ELW #626)

Loving God, may we always place our hope in you. Amen

Sonnets, March 1, April 9-16:

Malcolm Guite. *Parable and Paradox*. London: Canterbury Press, 2016.

Malcolm Guite. *Sounding the Seasons*. London: Canterbury Press, 2012.

Daily readings are from the Sunday Lectionary, Year of Matthew ELW, pp. 26-31.

Hymn: "O God, with hope I enter in"

TEXT: SUSAN PALO CHERWIEN TUNE: DAVID CHERWIEN

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Recipes

Shrovetide: Sour Cream Doughnuts 375° oil Makes 18
(*Mardi Gras means "Fat Tuesday" referring to the custom of using up all fat before Lent.*)

| | |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------|
| Beat together until pale and thick: | Sift together: |
| 2 large eggs | 3 cups flour |
| ¾ c. sugar | 1 t. baking soda |
| 1 t. vanilla | 1 t. baking powder |
| 1 c. sour cream | ½ t. salt |
| | ½ t. ground cardamom |

Add flour mixture to egg mixture. Stir only until combined. Roll dough out on floured wax paper until 5/8" thick. Cut into 3" rounds. Cut out ½" holes. Fry in 375° oil – in batches, about 1-1/2 minutes on each side. Remove doughnuts from oil, drain on paper bags or paper towels. Shake in powdered sugar or cinnamon sugar while still warm. Makes about 18 (plus holes!).

Lent: Pretzels 425° oven Makes 12
(*Pretzels were devised in a German monastery because they have no fat. The name comes from "Brezeln." meaning "little arms" from the shape, which is meant to portray the crossed arms of a monk in prayer.*)

| | |
|------------------|------------|
| Combine: | Stir in: |
| 1 pkg. yeast | 4 c. flour |
| 1½ c. warm water | |
| 1 T. sugar | |
| 1 t. salt | |



Knead well. Roll out to 16" x 12". Cut into 12 strips. Roll strips between palms to about 24". Shape into pretzels. Brush with 1 beaten egg white. Sprinkle with coarse salt and bake at 425° for about 15-20 minutes, until golden. Makes 12.

Holy Week: Hot Cross Buns

375° oven

about 15 buns

In a small bowl, combine:

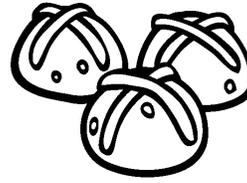
- 1 pkg. dry yeast
- ¼ c. warm water

In a small saucepan, scald:

- 1 c. milk (or soy milk)

Add:

- 1 t. salt
- ¼ c. sugar
- ¼ c. butter



Pour milk mixture into a large bowl. Let cool to lukewarm.

Stir in:

- 1 c. flour

Add:

- yeast mixture
- 1 egg, beaten
- ½ t. ground cinnamon
- ½ c. raisins or currants

Mix well. Add:

- 2½ - 3 c. flour

Knead 5 minutes on floured surface. Place in greased bowl. Cover with clean kitchen towel. Let rise in a warm place until doubled, about 1 ½ hours. Punch down. Turn out onto floured surface; let rest 10 minutes. Shape into round buns (about 2 ½" diameter), and place on greased baking sheet. Cover with towel; let rise until doubled, about 30 minutes. Bake in a preheated 375° oven for 15-20 minutes, until golden brown. Remove to racks. Cool.

Mix: (to make a moderately thick frosting)

- 1 c. powdered sugar
- 2 t. to 1 T. milk
- a few drops of vanilla

Pipe frosting through the snipped corner of a sandwich bag into the shape of a cross on each bun. Makes about 15.

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Journey Into Lent *2017*

Mount Olive Lutheran Church + Minneapolis, Minnesota