

Just a Closer Walk with Thee



**Worship resources for the creative church
*Lent & Eastertide 2013***

Sacred Seasons, a series of worship packets with a peace and justice emphasis,
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Sacred Seasons:



Worship Tools with an Attitude—Toward Justice, Peace & Food Security for All of God's People.

These unique resource packets are available for the liturgical year, three packets a year for \$100 (\$125 for non-US subscriptions), one packet for \$50 (\$65 outside of the US).

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Statement of Purpose

Seeds of Hope, Inc., is a private, independent group of believers responding to a common burden for the poor and hungry of God's world, and acting on the strong belief that biblical mandates to feed the poor were not intended to be optional. The group intends to seek out people of faith who feel called to care for the poor; and to affirm, enable and

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empower a variety of responses to the problems of poverty.

Editorial Address

Seeds of Hope is housed by the community of faith at Seventh and James Baptist Church. The mailing address is: 602 James; Waco, TX 76706; Phone: 254/755-7745; Fax: 254/753-1909; E-mail: seedseditor@clearwire.net. Web address: www.seedspublishers.org. Copyright © 2013.

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A Word about This Packet

This worship packet comes to you with a great deal of love and prayer, as do all of our packets.

The theme for this packet, "Just a Closer Walk with Thee," was inspired by Erin Conaway's description of a visit to Preservation Hall in New Orleans (see page 4).

Almost all of the liturgy in the packet was written by our intern, Stormy Campbell, who is a professional writing student at Baylor University and plans to attend a seminary next fall. Her Lutheran background helped greatly to enhance the ecumenical spirit we strive to achieve. We hope you will enjoy her creative worship ideas.

You will find poetic writings from some of our favorite poets: Wally Christian, Ken Sehested and David Sparenberg. You will also find prayers by Burt Burleson, University Chaplain at Baylor, across the street from our offices, and Raymond Bailey, former pastor at Seventh & James Baptist Church, where Seeds is housed. We have included an interpretation of the Beatitudes by Harrison Adams, who attended Seventh as a youth and now lives in China.

Most of the art in the packet was created by Helen Siegl, who was born and raised in Vienna, Austria, and later moved to Philadelphia, PA. You will also find pieces by Susan Daily, IBVM, who is in the Sisters of Loreto Province of Australia, and Rebecca Ward, another internationally acclaimed artist now living in New York.

Rebecca first began to form a vocation in art while volunteering for Seeds as a high school student. Another piece is by Katie Moore, who was a Seeds intern some years back.

We are deeply grateful for all of you who subscribe to *Sacred Seasons*, and who make use of these gifts in your worship and work. We are also grateful for the many

people who contributed their work and ideas to this packet.

We are especially grateful to Deborah Harris (aka Slogan Queen), who serves on the Council of Stewards and proofreads almost everything that comes out of the Seeds office and goes to great lengths to keep the editor (relatively) sane.

As always, we want you to feel free to play around with these liturgies and services, and adapt them to your congregation's needs and resources. If you come up with something creative and different, we would love to hear about it.

The contents of this packet are your congregation's to use freely and share with others as the need arises. We really do pray that our materials, and this packet in particular, will help you and your congregation to observe a meaningful Lenten season and enter into Eastertide, as Erin Conaway writes, "with an Easter party that will make New Orleans seem tame."

—Gratefully,
The Seeds Staff and Council of Stewards

art by Helen Siegl



Theme Interpretation: Lessons Learned in New Orleans for Lent

by Erin Conaway

A few years ago, my wife Carmen and I went to a church meeting in Charlotte, North Carolina. We drove from Houston, where we lived, and thoroughly enjoyed our time together in the car. (This was BC time for us—before children.)

On the way back to Houston, we spent Saturday night in New Orleans. We had been to the Big Easy before, and were anxious to get back. We had thoughts of jazz in the French Quarter on Saturday night and beignets at Café Du Monde on Sunday morning.

We got there early enough Saturday night to eat and wander around the French Quarter. We were half a block from Bourbon Street when we found the place we were looking for: Preservation Hall.

The line was out the door and down the street, which was lined with Harley motorcycles, whose owners were cruising in and out of a bar topped with a buzzing neon sign. Preservation Hall is a jazz club, but it is much more than that. In fact, calling Preservation Hall a jazz club is like calling the Taj Mahal a “cute house.”

We finally trickled in like little penguins waddling in a line. The room was tiny and dark except for the lights in the front, where the musicians' chairs sat. There were a few benches, but most of the people crowded into the room, standing shoulder to shoulder.

This was in the summer. New Orleans is hot in the summer. I looked around at the walls. They were covered with a peg-board that looked like it had been recycled from 1940s dorm rooms. Water stains crept towards the ceiling and descended from the darkness toward the floor. The saints of Jazz hung on the wall in oil and acrylic, boxed in with dingy frames.

It was perfect.

A raspy-voiced man limped to the middle chair and made a pronouncement in a voice so soft it was almost hard to believe he was really talking. “No flash photographs, no drinking” he said, and, gesturing to the bass player, he added, “and by special order from Slim’s doctor, no smoking.” Then he sat down and they started to play.

We were in heaven for two hours, soaked with sweat and engulfed by the smell of alcohol that poured from peoples’ mouths like exhaust fumes on a highway. The ceiling fans were too tired to turn fast enough to move the thick air. The raspy-voiced man told us they were going to play a funeral song, “Just a Closer Walk with Thee.”

They started, smooth and slow. The bass player become one with his instrument and his whole body seemed to thump and moan with lament. The words were haunting my head:

*When my feeble life is o’er,
Time for me will be no more;
Guide me, gently, safely o’er;
Let it be, dear Lord, let it be....*

A drop of sweat broke free and ran down my forehead, between my eyes, and on the side of my nose—and I thought to myself as I swayed back and forth, “This is New Orleans.”

The man had told us before the song started that, during a funeral, on the way to the cemetery, as the people walk with the casket through the streets, they play the dirge softly and gently. Then, on the way back, it’s an all-out New Orleans party.

They played like men in the presence of a funeral body as they neared the part of the song that says, “To thy kingdom’s shore, to thy shore.” And then they broke loose. The bass player’s mouth turned up, just in the corners. The trombone player was lifted, involuntarily, from his chair by the music. The whole room lit up with a sense of victory.

Tears joined the sweat streaming down my face, and I thought to myself, as I danced in place, “This is the gospel.”

As we move into the season of Lent together, may we walk this dirge softly and gently as we approach Holy Week, hopeful that, when our observation is over, we will break loose in an Easter party that will make New Orleans seem tame.

—Erin Conaway is pastor of Seventh & James Baptist Church, where the Seeds ministry is housed. The art on this page was adapted by Hermano Leon of the Franciscanos de Cruzblanca from a photograph from the movie *Brother Sun, Sister Moon*.

New Easter Clothes

by Susan McCarter

*Is not this what I require of you as a fast:
To loose the fetters of injustice,
To untie the knots of the yoke,
To snap every yoke
And set free those who have been crushed?
Is it not sharing your food with the hungry,
Taking the homeless poor into your house,
Clothing the naked when you meet them
And never evading a duty to your kinsfolk?
(Isa. 58:6-7)*

What does Lent have to do with world hunger? Lent, the 40 days before Easter, was originally a period of fasting and penitence for new converts preparing for baptism on Easter Eve. In the fourth century, when Christianity became the state religion of Rome, the Lenten fast and practices of self-renunciation became requirements for all Christians. For many years American Protestants thought of Lent, with its meatless Fridays and “giving up” as “something Catholics do.”

All of us, though, need a time for reassessment—a time to look at life and assess how to implement personally the values of peace, community and equality of all before God. Lent is our chance to do just this. For many people, it’s a time of Bible study, prayer, wrestling with theological questions and self-sacrifice in preparation for the resurrection of Easter Sunday.

What would happen to us if we approached this time of reorientation with the reality of hunger in mind? What if we asked God to take this time to flood our spirit with compassion and hope for the hungry?

What if we came to Lent with the expectation that God was going to speak a new word to our hearts that would change what we wanted to do with our lives? What if we opened our spirit and sought the holy collision between the brutal reality of hunger and the all-powerful grace of God?

We would be different.

Reflection is a special time to be sought and cherished. But Isaiah 58 suggests that the fast God seeks goes further. Lent can be a time to become actively involved, if we’re not already, in living out the good news of sharing our food, taking in the homeless poor and clothing the naked.

Imagine what would happen if all American Christians sought Isaiah’s notion of a proper Lenten fast! Think of it! Instead of churches filled with people sitting in stiff new clothes fresh from the store, everyone is wearing the same old dresses and suits. The money went to buy clothes for someone on social assistance.

Instead of people not seen since last year, there are poor people we’ve never even known before. The members called the local welfare office and got the name of families and took a bountiful Easter dinner to them. And the relationship carries a commitment beyond a one-day feast, too. No more of the “one-meal-a-year-for-the-poor” syndrome.

Lent has set loose a revolution that shows up in concrete compassion for a poor family once a month, all year, instead of “giving up” something once a year. No more hiding from the poor we can’t see, either. The money saved by having meatless Fridays or giving up a favorite treat helps support our denominational hunger fund.

What if the body of Christ tried on the garments of compassion for Lent this year? We might like the fit.

—Susan McCarter was the assistant *Seeds* editor in the early 1980s. This editorial was first printed in the January 1984 edition of *Sprouts*, the supplement to *Seeds Magazine*.



art by Selen Siegl

Liturgy for Ash Wednesday

by Stormy Campbell

Opening Hymn

"Come and Find the Quiet Center"

Words: Shirley Erena Murray, 1989

Music: Traditional American melody; arr. Jack Schrader

Tune: BEACH SPRING

Chalice Hymnal #575

Opening Activity

Have the following laid out on three different tables: clay, water and ashes. After the opening hymn, members can go to each table and read the reflection, then do the activity listed there. Each station focuses on an aspect of humanity's relation to God, and is a way for the congregation to mentally prepare themselves for the following worship service.

1. Clay

Scripture: Isaiah 64: 8

Yet you, LORD, are our Creator.

We are the clay, you are the potter;

We are all the work of your hand.

Reflection: Sometimes, the idea that we are like clay and God is the potter is not always appealing to us. At first, it can seem like God is interacting with us only from a distance. However, if you've ever seen a potter spin clay, you've seen that it's a hands-on process. When making an object, a potter may become elbow-deep in clay, and this is the metaphor that is often used for God's relationship to us.

Action: Take a piece of clay. Work with it until it becomes malleable. Use the clay to create something you think is representative of where your relationship with God is at the moment.

2. Water

Scripture: Matthew 3: 13-17

Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to be baptized by John. But John tried to deter him, saying, "I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?"

Jesus replied, "Let it be so now; it is proper for us to do this to fulfill all righteousness." Then John consented. As soon as Jesus was baptized, he came up out of the water. At that moment, heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.

Reflection: Water has always been important to people of faith. It symbolizes a cleaning much deeper than simply removing dirt from skin. We are baptized in water for this reason, and we know that God's overflowing love and grace go much deeper than the depths of any pool. Take a few minutes to explore how deep God's love for you truly is. Think about the times you've been overwhelmed with love.

Action: The act of washing each other's feet in Christianity has long been an important one, as we remember how Christ washed the disciple's feet. It is a sign of love and vulnerability, an acceptance of being revealed. Now take some time to consider your hands; how much you interact with the world

through them every day, and yet how vulnerable your palms really are. Find a neighbor and wash his or her hands as a symbol of the community of faith and as a reminder of God's love.

3. Ashes

Scripture: Psalm 32:1-5

Blessed is the one
Whose transgressions
are forgiven,
whose sins are covered.
Blessed is the one
Whose sin the LORD does



art by Helen Siegl

not count against them
And in whose spirit is no deceit.
When I kept silent,
my bones wasted away
through my groaning all day long:

For day and night
your hand was heavy on me;
my strength was sapped
as in the heat of summer.

Then I acknowledged my sin to you
and did not cover up my iniquity.
I said, "I will confess my
transgressions to the LORD."
And you forgave the guilt of my sin.

Reflection: So often, we try to run away from our sins and mistakes and hide them from God. As the author of this psalm found, God forgives our transgressions, but sometimes we like to hold on to the guilt even after we've been forgiven.

Action: Take a small handful of the ashes and hold them in your hand. Later, you will receive this same element on your forehead as a symbol of repentance. As you hold the ashes, think of all the things in your life, past mistakes or failures, that you would like to leave behind. As you think about these things, picture yourself holding your mistakes in your hand and imagine purging those things until they become the ashes you hold. Leave the ashes and your sins here.

Reading from the Hebrew Scriptures

Joel 2:1-2, 12-17

Blow the trumpet in Zion; sound the alarm on my holy mountain! Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble, for the day of the LORD is coming, it is near: a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and thick darkness! Like blackness spread upon the mountains a great and powerful army comes; their like has never been from of old, nor will be again after them in ages to come.

Yet even now, says the LORD, return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning; rend your hearts and not your clothing. Return to the LORD, your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, and relents from punishing.

Who knows whether he will not turn and relent, and leave a blessing behind him, a grain offering

and a drink offering for the LORD, your God?

Blow the trumpet in Zion; sanctify a fast; call a solemn assembly; gather the people. Sanctify the congregation; assemble the aged; gather the children, even infants at the breast. Let the bridegroom leave his room, and the bride her canopy.

Between the vestibule and the altar let the priests, the ministers of the LORD, weep. Let them say, "Spare your people, O LORD, and do not make your heritage a mockery, a byword among the nations. Why should it be said among the peoples, 'Where is their God?'"

Responsive Reading

ONE: Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions.

MANY: Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. Against you, you alone, have I sinned, and done what is evil in your sight, so that you are justified in your sentence and blameless when you pass judgment.

ONE: Indeed, I was born guilty, a sinner when my mother conceived me. You desire truth in the inward being; therefore teach me wisdom in my secret heart. Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

MANY: Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones that you have crushed rejoice. Hide your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me.

ONE: Do not cast me away from your presence, and do not take your holy spirit from me.

MANY: Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and sustain in me a willing spirit.

ONE: Then I will teach transgressors your ways, and sinners will return to you. Deliver me from bloodshed, O God, O God of my salvation, and my tongue will sing aloud of your deliverance.

MANY: O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth will declare your praise.

ONE: For you have no delight in sacrifice; if I were to give a burnt offering, you would not be pleased.

MANY: The sacrifice acceptable to God is a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.

—From Psalm 51:1-17

Epistle Reading

2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10

We entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. As we work together with him, we urge you also not to accept the grace of God in vain.

For he says, "At an acceptable time I have listened to you, and on a day of salvation I have helped you." See, now is the acceptable time; see, now is the day of salvation!

We are putting no obstacle in anyone's way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry, but as servants of God we have commended ourselves in every way: through great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, beatings, imprisonments, riots, labors, sleepless nights, hunger; by purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, holiness of spirit, genuine love, truthful speech and the power of God; with the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left; in honor and dishonor, in ill repute and good repute.

We are treated as impostors, and yet are true; as unknown, and yet are well known; as dying, and see--we are alive; as punished, and yet not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing everything.

Gospel Reading

Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

"Beware of practicing your piety before others in order to be seen by them; for then you have no reward from your Father in heaven.

"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.

"But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your alms may be done in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

"And whenever you pray, do not be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, so that they may be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But whenever you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your

Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

"And whenever you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces so as to show others that they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that your fasting may be seen not by others but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

"Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal; but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."

Confession and Ashes

During this time of confession, ask all the participants to stand and face in different directions, away from the cross. Instruct the participants that as they pray and repent, their physical orientation should be a manifestation of their spiritual orientation. They begin by facing away from the cross, and by the end will face the cross. Allow time for silent prayer. Then, when most of the congregation is once again facing the cross, proceed.

ONE: We have not loved you with all our heart, and soul, and mind, and strength. We have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We have not forgiven others as we have been forgiven. Lord have mercy.
MANY: Lord have mercy.

ONE: We have been deaf to your call to serve. We have been unfaithful, proud and hypocritical. Christ have mercy.
MANY: Christ have mercy.

ONE: We have been self-centered, and have taken advantage of others. Lord have mercy.
MANY: Lord have mercy.

ONE: We have been envious of those more fortunate than ourselves. Christ have mercy.
MANY: Christ have mercy.

ONE: We have loved worldly goods and comforts too much. We have been dishonest in daily life and work. Lord have mercy.
MANY: Lord have mercy.

ONE: We have neglected prayer and worship, and have failed to commend the faith that is in us. Christ have mercy.

MANY: Christ have mercy.

ONE: We have been blind to human need and suffering, and indifferent to injustice and cruelty. Lord have mercy.

MANY: Lord have mercy.

ONE: We have thought uncharitably about others, and we have been prejudiced towards those who differ from us. Christ have mercy.

MANY: Christ have mercy.

ONE: We have wasted and polluted your creation, and lacked concern for those who come after us; Lord have mercy.

MANY: Lord have mercy.

ALL: *Merciful God, we have sinned in what we have thought and said, in the wrong we have done and in the good we have not done. We have sinned in ignorance; we have sinned in weakness; we have sinned through our own deliberate fault. We are truly sorry. We repent and turn to you. Forgive us, for our Savior Christ's sake, and renew our lives to the glory of your name. Amen*

ONE: Loving God, you create us from the dust of the earth; may these ashes be for us a sign of our penitence and our mortality, and a reminder that only by the cross do we receive eternal life in Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

Those who desire to receive ashes come forward. The sign of the cross in ash is applied to the forehead of each person while saying the following:

Remember you are dust, and to dust you shall return. Turn away from sin and be faithful to Christ. Repent and believe the Good News: God longs for you to be whole.

(From the Anglican Church of New Zealand)

Closing Hymn

"There's a Wideness in God's Mercy"

Words: Frederick W. Faber, 1854

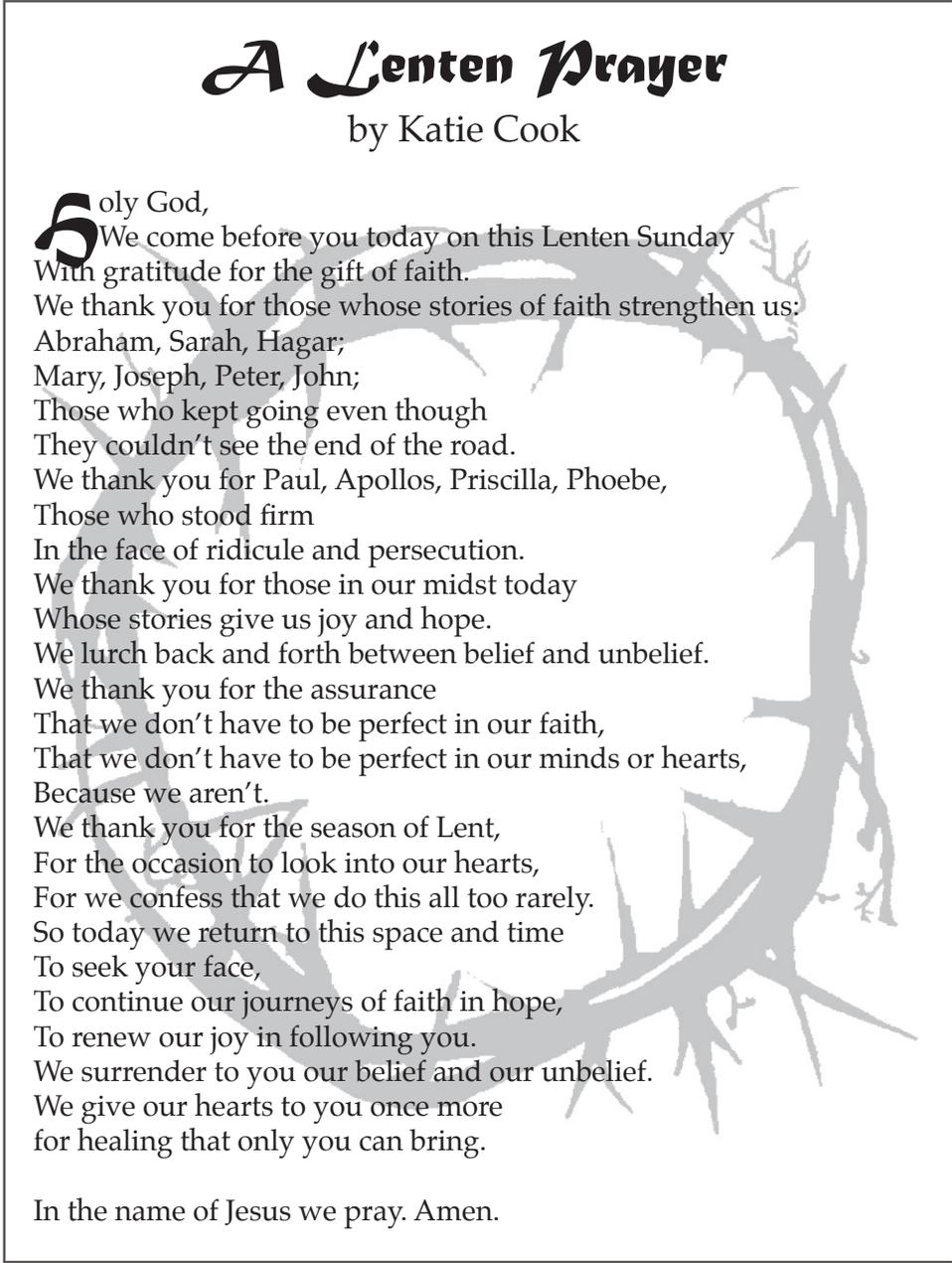
Music: Lizzie S. Tourjee, 1877

Tune: WELLESLEY

Celebrating Grace Hymnal #41

A Lenten Prayer

by Katie Cook



Soly God,
We come before you today on this Lenten Sunday
With gratitude for the gift of faith.
We thank you for those whose stories of faith strengthen us:
Abraham, Sarah, Hagar;
Mary, Joseph, Peter, John;
Those who kept going even though
They couldn't see the end of the road.
We thank you for Paul, Apollos, Priscilla, Phoebe,
Those who stood firm
In the face of ridicule and persecution.
We thank you for those in our midst today
Whose stories give us joy and hope.
We lurch back and forth between belief and unbelief.
We thank you for the assurance
That we don't have to be perfect in our faith,
That we don't have to be perfect in our minds or hearts,
Because we aren't.
We thank you for the season of Lent,
For the occasion to look into our hearts,
For we confess that we do this all too rarely.
So today we return to this space and time
To seek your face,
To continue our journeys of faith in hope,
To renew our joy in following you.
We surrender to you our belief and our unbelief.
We give our hearts to you once more
for healing that only you can bring.

In the name of Jesus we pray. Amen.

Earth 's the Lord's

by David Sparenberg



If this is yours Lord, then hear our pleading—cries that walk in the wind as tears fall from eyes and spill from the curvatures of our fingers.

If this is yours Lord, then hear and help those who would heal and defend the aliveness of this life-place we share now with you, and all else that moves and feels.

For see—we are few among many and are weak and fragile, flawed and aging. Yet urgent is our need to have inside and to be more than the sum of who and what we are. Give to us of your presence and nurture us in becoming new.

Do not keep your back toward what is yours, or your head turned away from those who are. For if we must perish, let us perish in your embrace.

If this is yours Lord, was and still is so—even from the depths of withering disappointment—dare to draw near to us once more, and tenderly. For

we are in our deeds sorry for our indifference, our tolerances of injustice, our indulgence with destruction and the proud usurpation of power, before that which we have not done in person, or have not yet committed ourselves to do, but with which we are fearfully familiar. Lord, we are accustomed to what is human and have grown both broken and twisted.

More than your mercy, now Lord, God of mercy, give to our crippled feet the strength to walk upright through wastelands formed between us; let us leave in our footsteps forests of renewal—regenerating the clearcuts of deception and betrayal—and at our backs (for we are facing here this day and after in your direction) dreams of diversity and your prophecy of peace.

*The Earth is the Lords, and all that is in it, the world, and those who live in it...** Such is my prayer and the prayer-shape of my God, in whom I trust, and I am opening my heart and sharing my prayer with you.

* From Psalm 24

—David Sparenberg—a playwright, poet, storyteller, stage director, Shakespearean actor and novelist—works in Seattle. He uses his craft to help people cope with life-threatening illness and loss.

Elegy for an Ash

by Ken Sehested

I confess I complained more than I should, of your small branches falling in my yard, having to stop the mower to toss them to the side, for later bundling at the curb for the city's yard debris pickup. And for your prodigious leaf rain each fall. I suspect, though, you were pleased to know your petals fed my compost. Did your sensors recognize parts of your own genome sequence in my cherry tomatoes?

I did not genuflect in your direction nearly enough. For that I sorrowfully repent. Now, that side of the house feels naked. More so, since finally, two years ago, I took an ax to the ivy vines blanketing your height. Some growths, however pleasing to the eye, are malignant and voraciously suffocate all other life relying on photosynthetic access.

Earlier this fall I called an arborist to assess your health. The large limb that split from your side four years ago, covering our side yard, took me most of a day to cut up and fueled our fireplace for a couple years. But the wound at your first fork would not heal.

Cutting wood, as they say, warms twice: first in the cutting; then again by the fire itself. Yet that thermal equation neglects to mention the hypnotic beauty of your flame.

You were an awesome plant, home no doubt to countless fowl, now reduced by powered saws to fireplace-length sections and a stump. I hope you forgave the loggers for not removing their steel-toed boots in your presence. I trust the birds said their proper goodbyes.

I didn't get to watch you coming down. And I am sorry for that—well, maybe not sorry, for despite my curiosity at the nimbleness and skill of the harvesters, I think I might have cried. As it happens, my sister is dying—the growth on her organs, though not as comely as ivy, is more deadly—and I'm being forced to ration my grief.

I shall remember your dying when I remember that of my sister. I wanted to be with you both.

To honor your passing I will take my maul to your remains, splitting—stroke by strenuous stroke—to uncover the beautiful grain you patiently produced,

continued on page 12



from a seedling at least as old as my grandparents, withstanding countless storms and freezing moisture, heat, drought and flooding waters, anchored deep within the soil, witness to countless dawns and sunsets, wars and rumors of wars, human folly beyond imagination, as well as laughter from outdoor parties in the patio over which you reigned, your massive limbs and awesome girth finally felled by small worms and mountain air clogged by emissions from coal-burning power generators—something for which the fossilized carbon is not to blame—at levels far beyond your capacity to sequester.

You will also be pleased to know, I think, that your smaller sibling, standing yards to the north, will surely prosper from the increased southerly sun exposure. I promise to keep the vines cut back. And to genuflect more often.

Ash to ashes, all creaturely life to dust. Who can surmise what next is to be blessed with our remains?

—Ken Sehested is co-pastor of Circle of Mercy in Asheville, NC, and author of *In the Land of the Living: Prayers Personal and Public*.

I am weak but thou art strong;

Jesus, keep me from all wrong;
I'll be satisfied as long as I walk,
Let me walk close to thee.

Refrain:

*Just a closer walk with thee,
grant it, Jesus, is my plea,
daily walking close to thee:
let it be, dear Lord, let it be.*

Through this world of toil and snares,
if I falter, Lord, who cares?
Who with me my burden shares?
None but thee, dear Lord, none but thee.

Repeat Refrain

When my feeble life is o'er,
time for me will be no more;
guide me gently, safely, o'er
to thy shore, dear Lord, to thy shore.

Repeat Refrain

Words and Music: Anonymous

Tune: CLOSER WALK

 Chalice Hymnal #557

art by *Rebecca S. Ward*

Liturgy for Palm Sunday

by Stormy Campbell

Procession of Palms

During the procession, all hold branches in their hands, and appropriate hymns, psalms (such as Psalm 118:19-29), or anthems are sung.

Opening Hymns

"With Waving Palms and Shouts of Praise"

Words: Ian McGuire, 2008

Music: English Folk Song

Arrangement: Ralph Vaughan Williams, 1906

Tune: FOREST GREEN

Celebrating Grace Hymnal #176

"The King of Glory Comes"

Words: Stuart Townsend, 1995

Music: Stuart Townsend, 1995

Arrangement: Bruce Greer, 2008

Tune: PROMISED ONE

Celebrating Grace Hymnal #177

"All Glory, Laud, and Honor"

Words: Theodulph of Orleans, c. 821

Translation: John Mason Neale, 154, lt.

Music: Melchior escher, 161

Harmony: William Henry Monk, 1861

Descant: O.I. Cricket Harrison, 1994

Tune: ST. THEODULPH

Chalice Hymnal #192

Reading from the Psalms

Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29

O give thanks to the Lord, for God is good; God's steadfast love endures forever! Let Israel say, "God's steadfast love endures forever." Open to me the gates of righteousness, that I may enter through them and give thanks to the Lord. This is the gate of the Lord; the righteous shall enter through it.

I thank you that you have answered me and have become my salvation. The stone that the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone. This is the Lord's doing; it is marvelous in our eyes.

This is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it. Save us, we beseech you, O Lord! O Lord, we beseech you, give us success!

Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord. We bless you from the house of the Lord. The Lord is God, and he has given us light. Bind the festal procession with branches, up to the horns of the altar.



art by Selen Siegl

You are my God, and I will give thanks to you; you are my God, I will extol you.

O give thanks to the Lord, for God is good, for God's steadfast love endures forever.

Responsive Call

(May be used instead of the reading above)

ONE: O give thanks to the Lord, for God is good; God's steadfast love endures forever! Let Israel say, "God's steadfast love endures forever.

MANY: Open to me the gates of righteousness, that I may enter through them and give thanks to the Lord.

ONE: This is the gate of the Lord; the righteous shall enter through it.

MANY: I thank you that you have answered me and have become my salvation.

ONE: The stone that the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone.

MANY: This is the Lord's doing; it is marvelous in our eyes. This is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.

ONE: Save us, we beseech you, O Lord! O Lord, we beseech you, give us success!

MANY: Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord. We bless you from the house of the Lord. The Lord is God, and he has given us light.

ONE: Bind the festal procession with branches, up to the horns of the altar.

MANY: You are my God, and I will give thanks to you; you are my God, I will extol you.

All: O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever.

Gospel Reading

Luke 19:28-40

After he had said this, he went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem. When he had come near Bethphage and Bethany, at the place called the Mount of Olives, he sent two of the disciples, saying,

"Go into the village ahead of you, and as you enter it you will find tied there a colt that has never been ridden. Untie it and bring it here. If anyone asks you, 'Why are you untying it?' just say this, 'The Lord needs it.'"

So those who were sent departed and found it as he had told them. As they were untying the colt, its owners asked them, "Why are you untying the colt?"

continued on page 15

Invocation for Palm Sunday

by Burt Burleson

Come, Lord Jesus, come now into our midst and hear our hosannas.

Hear the confident hosannas offered this day...

from bright and peaceful places,
from mountain tops and green pastures.

From these places where vision is clear
and presence is known,

hear our quiet but joyful praise.

And hear the hesitant hosannas offered this day.

Hear them too...

from dark and unsettled places,
beneath looming mountains,
in shadowed valleys.

From these places where direction is uncertain
and longing is real,

hear our quiet but hopeful praise.

—Burt Burleson is the Chaplain at Baylor University in Waco, TX.

art by Selen Siegl



They said, "The Lord needs it."

Then they brought it to Jesus; and after throwing their cloaks on the colt, they set Jesus on it. As he rode along, people kept spreading their cloaks on the road.

As he was now approaching the path down from the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to praise God joyfully with a loud voice for all the deeds of power that they had seen, saying, "Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven, and glory in the highest heaven!"

Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to him, "Teacher, order your disciples to stop." He answered, "I tell you, if these were silent, the stones would shout out."

Hymn

"Jesus, Thou Joy of Loving Hearts"

Words: Latin (12th century)

Translation: Ray Palmer, 1858, alt.

Music: Henry Baker, 1854

Tune: QUEBEC

Chalice Hymnal #101

Invitation to Prayer

Caught between joy and despair,
We yearn for the fulfillment
of God's desire
Beyond the brokenness
and neediness of this life.
We offer thanksgiving
for God's presence with us,
And petitions for the transformation
of the church and the world.

Prayers of the People

Life-giver, Pain-bearer, Love-maker,
Day by day you sustain the weary
with your word
And gently encourage us
to place our trust in you.
Awaken us to the suffering
of those around us;
Save us from hiding in denials
or taunts that deepen the hurt,

Give us grace to share one another's burdens in
humble service. Amen.

Hosanna!

Closing Hymn

"Near to the Heart of God"

Words: Cleland B. McAfee, 1903

Music: Cleland B. McAfee, 1903

Tune: MCAFEE

Celebrating Grace Hymnal #383

art by *Selen Siegl*



Beatitudes (version 2.0)

by Harrison John Adams

Blessed are the poor in spirit.

For when our spirits seem empty,
The Holy Spirit becomes our spirit.

Blessed are those who mourn.

For even when we have no joy,
The joy of finding the tomb empty becomes our joy.

Blessed are the meek.

For even when we have no courage,
The courage of facing the cross becomes our courage.

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst
for righteousness.

For when there is no justice,
The justice we uphold becomes our own justice.

Blessed are the merciful.

For when the world is full of suffering,
The mercy we show others becomes the mercy
shown to us.

Blessed are the pure in heart and the peacemakers.

For even in death,
The incarnation of God becomes their transcendence.
The mortality of Christ becomes their immortality.
The humanity of Spirit becomes their divinity.

*—Harrison Adams is a former Seeds volunteer. He now lives in
China, where he teaches English and translates for travelers.*

Quotes, Poems & Pithy Sayings

We no longer have to ask ourselves if we are approaching a state of emergency. We are in the midst of it, right here and now, and we expect the future to mirror the past.... It is in the midst of this dark world that we are invited to live and radiate hope. Is it possible? Can we become light, salt, and leaven to our brothers and sisters in the human family? Can we offer hope, courage, and confidence to the people of this era? Do we dare break through our paralyzing fear? Will people be able to say of us, 'See how they love each other, how they serve their neighbor, and how they pray to their Lord?' Or do we have to confess that at this juncture of history we just do not have the needed strength or the generosity? How can we live in hope so as to give hope? And how do we find true joy?

—Henri J. M. Nouwen, *Clowning in Rome*

In the face of death, live humanly. In the middle of chaos, celebrate the Word. Amidst babel, I repeat, speak the truth. Confront the noise and verbiage and falsehood of death with the truth and potency and efficacy of the Word of God. Know the Word, teach the Word, nurture the Word, preach the Word, defend the Word, incarnate the Word, do the Word, live the Word. And more than that, in the Word of God, expose death and all death's works and wiles, rebuke lies, cast out demons, exorcise, cleanse the possessed, raise those who are dead in mind and conscience.

—William Stringfellow, *An Ethic for Christians and Other Aliens in a Strange Land*

Here's what I've decided: the very least you can do in your life is figure out what you hope for. And the most you can do is live inside that hope. Not admire it from a distance but live right in it, under its roof. What I want is so simple

art by *Katie Moore*

I almost can't say it: elementary kindness. Enough to eat, enough to go around. The possibility that kids might one day grow up to be neither the destroyers nor the destroyed. That's about it. Right now I'm living in that hope, running down its hallways and touching the walls on both sides. I can't tell you how good it feels.

—Barbara Kingsolver, *Animal Dreams*

The true rule of poverty consists in giving up those things which enchain the spirit, divide its interests, and deflect it on its road to God—whether these things be riches, habits, religious observances, friends, interests, distastes, or desires—not in mere outward destitution for its own sake. It is attitude, not act, that matters; self-denudation would be unnecessary were it not for our inveterate tendency to attribute false value to things the moment they become our own.

Evelyn Underhill, *Mysticism*

I would like to buy \$3 worth of God, please, not enough to explode my soul or disturb my sleep, but just enough to equal a cup of warm milk or a snooze in the sunshine. I want ecstasy, not transformation; I want warmth of the womb, not a new birth. I want a pound of the Eternal in a paper sack. I would like to buy \$3 worth of God, please.

Wilbur Rees, *Leadership, Vol. 4, No. 1*

Jesus does not romanticize his way of life. He is homeless, so his followers, too, can expect to wander the earth as pilgrims on a mission to proclaim God's nonviolent reign.... Jesus insists that his mission has a life-and-death urgency. The end of the old world is at hand—and so is God's reign. Get with it, stay with it, and don't give up.
—John Dear, *Jesus the Rebel*

A Liturgy & Tenebrae for Maundy Thursday

by Stormy Campbell

Opening Hymn

"Go to Dark Gethsemane"

Words: James Montgomery, 1825, alt.

Music: Richard Redhead, 1853

Tune: REDHEAD 76

Chalice Hymnal #196

Reading from the Epistles

1 Corinthians 11:23-26

For I received from the Lord what I also handed on to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." In the same way he took the cup also, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes."

Communion Hymns

"Bread of the World, in Mercy Broken"

Words: Reginald Heber, 1827

Music: John S.B. Hodges, 1868

Tune: EUCHARISTIC HYMN

Chalice Hymnal #387

"He Never Said a Mumbalin' Word"

Words: African-American Spiritual

Music: African-American spiritual; arr.

Floyd Knight, Jr.

Tune: MUMBALIN' WORD

Chalice Hymnal #208

Tenebrae: Service of Shadows

After communion, dim the lights in the worship area as much as possible. Have 10 lit candles at the front of the sanctuary. One of these candles should be a Christ candle, which is placed in the middle of the other nine candles.

Have pre-appointed readers to come and each read a passage of scripture. After each passage is read, one of the candles (not the Christ candle), should be extinguished, until only the Christ candle remains.

First Reading

Matthew 26:20-25

When it was evening, he took his place with the twelve; and while they were eating, he said, "Truly I tell you, one of you will betray me." And they became greatly distressed and began to say to him one after another, "Surely not I, Lord?" He answered, "The one who has dipped his hand into the bowl with me will betray me. The Son of Man goes as it is written of him, but woe to that one by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been better for that one not to have been born." Judas, who betrayed him, said, "Surely not I, Rabbi?" He replied, "You have said so."

At this time, the reader extinguishes the first candle.

Second Reading

Matthew 26:31-35

Then Jesus said to them, "You will all become

art by Helen Siegl



deserters because of me this night; for it is written, 'I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered.' But after I am raised up, I will go ahead of you to Galilee." Peter said to him, "Though all become deserters because of you, I will never desert you." Jesus said to him, "Truly I tell you, this very night, before the cock crows, you will deny me three times." Peter said to him, "Even though I must die with you, I will not deny you." And so said all the disciples.

The reader extinguishes the second candle.

Third Reading

Mark 14:32-41

They went to a place called Gethsemane; and he said to his disciples, "Sit here while I pray." He took with him Peter and James and John, and began to be distressed and agitated. And he said to them, "I am deeply grieved, even to death; remain here, and keep awake." And going a little farther, he threw himself on the ground and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him. He said, "Abba, Father, for you all things are possible; remove this cup from me; yet, not what I want, but what you want." He came and found them sleeping; and he said to Peter, "Simon, are you asleep? Could you not keep awake one hour? Keep awake and pray that you may not come into the time of trial; the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." And again he went away and prayed, saying the same words. And once more he came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were very heavy, and they did not know what to say to him. He came a third time and said to them, "Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? Enough! The hour has come; the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners.

The reader extinguishes the third candle.

Fourth Reading

Matthew 26:47-52

While he was still speaking, Judas, one of the twelve, arrived; with him was a large crowd with swords and clubs, from the chief priests and the elders of the people. Now the betrayer had given them a sign, saying, "The one I will kiss is the man; arrest him." At once he came up to Jesus and said, "Greetings, Rabbi!" and kissed him. Jesus said to him, "Friend, do what you are here to do." Then they came and laid hands on Jesus and arrested him. Suddenly, one of those with Jesus put his hands on his sword, drew

it, and struck the slave of the high priest, cutting off his ear. Then Jesus said to him, "Put your sword back into its place; for all who take the sword will perish by the sword."

The reader extinguishes the fourth candle.

Fifth Reading

Luke 22:54-62

Then they seized him and led him away, bringing him into the high priest's house. But Peter was following at a distance. When they had kindled a fire in the middle of the courtyard and sat down together, Peter sat among them. Then a servant-girl, seeing him in the firelight, stared at him and said, "This man also was with him." But he denied it, saying, "Woman, I do not know him." A little later someone else, on seeing him, said, "You also are one of them." But Peter said, "Man, I am not!" Then about an hour later still another kept insisting, "Surely this man also was with him; for he is a Galilean." But Peter said, "Man, I do not know what you are talking about!" At that moment, while he was still speaking, the cock crowed. The Lord turned and looked at Peter. Then Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said to him, "Before the cock crows today, you will deny me three times." And he went out and wept bitterly.

The reader extinguishes the fifth candle.

Sixth Reading

John 18:33-38a

Then Pilate entered the headquarters again, summoned Jesus, and asked him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" Jesus answered, "Do you ask this on your own, or did others tell you about me?" Pilate replied, "I am not a Jew, am I? Your own nation and the chief priests have handed you over to me. What have you done?" Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not from this world. If my kingdom were from this world, my followers would be fighting to keep me from being handed over to the Jews. But as it is, my kingdom is not from here." Pilate asked him, "So you are a king?" Jesus answered, "You say that I am a king. For this I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice." Pilate asked him, "What is truth?" After he had said this, he went out to the Jews again and told them, "I find no case against him."

The reader extinguishes the sixth candle.

Seventh Reading

Matthew 27: 20-26

Now the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowds to ask for Barabbas and to have Jesus killed. The governor again said to them, "Which of the two do you want me to release for you?" And they said, "Barabbas." Pilate said to them, "Then what should I do with Jesus who is called the Messiah?" All of them said, "Let him be crucified!" Then he asked, "Why, what evil has he done?" But they shouted all the more, "Let him be crucified!" So when Pilate saw that a riot was beginning, he took some water and washed his hands before the crowd, saying, "I am innocent of this man's blood; see to it yourselves." Then the people as a whole answered, "His blood be on us and on our children!" So he released Barabbas for them; and after flogging Jesus, he handed him over to be crucified.

The reader extinguishes the seventh candle.

Eighth Reading

Mark 15:16-20

Then the soldiers led him into the courtyard of the palace (that is, the governor's headquarters); and they called together the whole cohort. And they clothed him in a purple cloak; and after twisting some thorns into a crown, they put it on him. And they began saluting him, "Hail, King of the Jews!" They struck his head with a reed, spat upon him, and knelt down in homage to him. After mocking him, they stripped him of the purple cloak and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him out to crucify him.

The reader extinguishes the eighth candle.

Ninth Reading

Matthew 27:32-44

As they went out, they came upon a man from Cyrene named Simon; they compelled this man to carry his cross.

And when they came to a place called Golgotha (which means Place of a Skull), they offered him wine to drink, mixed with gall; but when he tasted it, he would not drink it. And when they had crucified him, they divided his clothes among themselves by casting lots; then they sat down there and kept watch over him. Over his head they put the charge against him, which read, "This is Jesus, the King of the Jews."

Then two bandits were crucified with him, one on his right and one on his left. Those who passed by

derided him, shaking their hands and saying, "You who would destroy the temple and build it in three days, save yourself! If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross." In the same way the chief priest also, along with the scribes and elders, were mocking him, saying, "He saved others; he cannot save himself. He is the King of Israel; let him come down from the cross now, and we will believe in him. He trusts in God; let God deliver him now, if he wants to; for he said, 'I am God's Son'." The bandits who were crucified with him also taunted him in the same way.

The reader extinguishes the ninth candle.

Tenth Reading

Matthew 27: 45-50

From noon on, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. And about three o'clock Jesus cried with a loud voice, "Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?" that is, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" When some of the bystanders heard it, they said, "This man is calling for Elijah." At once one of them ran and got a sponge, filled it with sour wine, put it on a stick, and gave it to him to drink. But the others said, "Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to save him."

The reader takes the Christ candle and hides it where the congregation cannot see it.

Final Reading

Matthew 27: 51-54

At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. The earth shook, and the rocks were split. The tombs also were opened, and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised. After his resurrection they came out of the tombs and entered the holy city and appeared to many. Now when the centurion and those with him, who were keeping watch over Jesus, saw the earthquake and what took place, they were terrified and said, "Truly this man was God's Son!"

This reader returns the Christ candle to the table, and the congregation leaves in silence.



art by *Rebecca S. Ward*

A Liturgy for Good Friday

by Stormy Campbell

Opening Hymn

“Alone in Gethsemane”

Words: William B. Patricko, 1996

Music: William B. Patricko, 1996

Tune: SOLIDAD

Celebrating Grace Hymnal #179

Reading from Hebrew Scriptures

Isaiah 52:13-53:12

See, my servant shall prosper; he shall be exalted and lifted up, and shall be very high. Just as there were many who were astonished at him—so marred was his appearance, beyond human semblance, and his form beyond that of mortals—so he shall startle many nations; kings shall shut their mouths because of him; for that which had not been told them they shall see, and that which they had not heard they shall contemplate.

Who has believed what we have heard? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed? For he grew up before him like a young plant, and like a root out of dry ground; he had no form or majesty that we should look at him, nothing in his appearance that we should desire him. He was despised and rejected by others; a man of suffering and acquainted with infirmity; and as one from whom others hide their faces he was despised, and we held him of no account.

Surely he has borne our infirmities and carried our diseases; yet we accounted him stricken, struck down by God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the punishment that made us whole, and by his bruises we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have all turned to our own way, and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth.

By a perversion of justice he was taken away. Who could have imagined his future? For he was cut off from the land of the living, stricken for the transgression of my people.

They made his grave with the wicked and his tomb with the rich, although he had done no

violence, and there was no deceit in his mouth. Yet it was the will of the LORD to crush him with pain. When you make his life an offering for sin, he shall see his offspring, and shall prolong his days; through him the will of the LORD shall prosper.

Out of his anguish he shall see light; he shall find satisfaction through his knowledge. The righteous one, my servant, shall make many righteous, and he shall bear their iniquities.

Therefore I will allot him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he poured out himself to death, and was numbered with the transgressors; yet he bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.

Epistle Reading

Hebrews 4:14-16; 5:7-9

Since, then, we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast to our confession. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who in every respect has been tested as we are, yet without sin.

Let us therefore approach the throne of grace with boldness, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need. In the days of his



art by Selen Siegl

flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to the one who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission.

Although he was a Son, he learned obedience through what he suffered; and having been made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him.

Hymn

“Were You There”

Words: African-American spiritual

Music: African-American spiritual

Adaption & Arrangement:

William Farley Smith, 1986

Tune: WERE YOU THERE

Chalice Hymnal #198

The Passion

Instructions: The following readings are taken from John 18:1-19:42. The next part of this service is encouraged to take place as a prayer walk, if your congregation has the space available to do so. (A courtyard or labyrinth would be a good place. If the weather is bad, you could place the reading stations inside, around the sanctuary or some other large space.) Before you begin, make sure your congregation knows that part of the service will include a walk. Your walk can begin at the church with the first reader reading John 18:1-9 inside the building, and end at the church with the final reader reading John 19:38-42 in the same manner. Encourage your participants to walk in silent meditation. At pre-selected points in the walk, the congregation will stop while an appointed reader reads a part of the following scripture. (As always, we encourage you to adapt these instructions to your own needs and ideas. You might consider placing art or photography at these stations, to aid the congregants in their meditation.)

First Station

(John 18:1-18:9): After Jesus had spoken these words, he went out with his disciples across the Kidron valley to a place where there was a garden, which he and his disciples entered.

Now Judas, who betrayed him, also knew the place, because Jesus often met there with his disciples. So Judas brought a detachment of soldiers together with police from the chief priests and the Pharisees, and they came there with lanterns and torches and weapons.

Then Jesus, knowing all that was to happen to

him, came forward and asked them, “Whom are you looking for?” They answered, “Jesus of Nazareth.” Jesus replied, “I am he.” Judas, who betrayed him, was standing with them.

When Jesus said to them, “I am he,” they stepped back and fell to the ground. Again he asked them, “Whom are you looking for?” And they said, “Jesus of Nazareth.” Jesus answered, “I told you that I am he. So if you are looking for me, let these men go.” This was to fulfill the word that he had spoken, “I did not lose a single one of those whom you gave me.”

Second Station

(John 18:10-18:17): Then Simon Peter, who had a sword, drew it, struck the high priest’s slave, and cut off his right ear. The slave’s name was Malchus.

Jesus said to Peter, “Put your sword back into its sheath. Am I not to drink the cup that the Father has given me?”

So the soldiers, their officer, and the Jewish police arrested Jesus and bound him. First they took him to Annas, who was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, the high priest that year. Caiaphas was the one who had advised the Jews that it was better to have one person die for the people.

Simon Peter and another disciple followed Jesus. Since that disciple was known to the high priest, he went with Jesus into the courtyard of the high priest, but Peter was standing outside at the gate. So the other disciple, who was known to the high priest, went out, spoke to the woman who guarded the gate, and brought Peter in.

The woman said to Peter, “You are not also one of this man’s disciples, are you?” He said, “I am not.”

Third Station

(John 18:18-18:24): Now the slaves and the police had made a charcoal fire because it was cold, and they were standing around it and warming themselves. Peter also was standing with them and warming himself.

Then the high priest questioned Jesus about his disciples and about his teaching.

Jesus answered, “I have spoken openly to the world; I have always taught in synagogues and in the temple, where all the Jews come together. I have said nothing in secret. Why do you ask me? Ask those who heard what I said to them; they know what I said.”

When he had said this, one of the police standing nearby struck Jesus on the face, saying, "Is that how you answer the high priest?"

Jesus answered, "If I have spoken wrongly, testify to the wrong. But if I have spoken rightly, why do you strike me?"

Then Annas sent him bound to Caiaphas the high priest.

Fourth Station

(John 18:25-18:28): Now Simon Peter was standing and warming himself. They asked him, "You are not also one of his disciples, are you?" He denied it and said, "I am not."

One of the slaves of the high priest, a relative of the man whose ear Peter had cut off, asked, "Did I not see you in the garden with him?"

Again Peter denied it, and at that moment the cock crowed.

Then they took Jesus from Caiaphas to Pilate's headquarters. It was early in the morning. They themselves did not enter the headquarters, so as to avoid ritual defilement and to be able to eat the Passover.

Fifth Station

(John 18:29-19:3): So Pilate went out to them and said, "What accusation do you bring against this man?"

They answered, "If this man were not a criminal, we would not have handed him over to you."

Pilate said to them, "Take him yourselves and

judge him according to your law." The Jews replied, "We are not permitted to put anyone to death." (This was to fulfill what Jesus had said when he indicated the kind of death he was to die.)

Then Pilate entered the headquarters again, summoned Jesus, and asked him, "Are you the King of the Jews?"

Jesus answered, "Do you ask this on your own, or did others tell you about me?"

Pilate replied, "I am not a Jew, am I? Your own nation and the chief priests have handed you over to me. What have you done?"

Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not from this world. If my kingdom were from this world, my followers would be fighting to keep me from being handed over to the Jews. But as it is, my kingdom is not from here."

Pilate asked him, "So you are a king?"

Jesus answered, "You say that I am a king. For this I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice."

Pilate asked him, "What is truth?" After he had said this, he went out to the Jews again and told them, "I find no case against him. But you have a custom that I release someone for you at the Passover. Do you want me to release for you the King of the Jews?"

They shouted in reply, "Not this man, but Barabbas!" Now Barabbas was a bandit.

Then Pilate took Jesus and had him flogged. And the soldiers wove a crown of thorns and put it on his head, and they dressed him in a purple robe.

They kept coming up to him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" and striking him on the face.

Sixth Station

(John 19:4-19:12): Pilate went out again and said to them, "Look, I am bringing him out to you to let you know that I find no case against him."

So Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, "Here is the man!"

When the chief priests and the police saw him, they shouted, "Crucify him! Crucify him!" Pilate said to them, "Take him yourselves and crucify him; I find no case against him." The Jews answered him, "We have a law, and according to that law he ought to die because he has claimed to be the Son of God."

Now when Pilate heard this, he was more afraid than ever.



art by Helen Siegl

He entered his headquarters again and asked Jesus, "Where are you from?" But Jesus gave him no answer. Pilate therefore said to him, "Do you refuse to speak to me? Do you not know that I have power to release you, and power to crucify you?"

Jesus answered him, "You would have no power over me unless it had been given you from above; therefore the one who handed me over to you is guilty of a greater sin." From then on Pilate tried to release him, but the Jews cried out, "If you release this man, you are no friend of the emperor. Everyone who claims to be a king sets himself against the emperor."

Seventh Station

(John 19:13-19:25): When Pilate heard these words, he brought Jesus outside and sat on the judge's bench at a place called The Stone Pavement, or in Hebrew Gabbatha.

Now it was the day of Preparation for the Passover; and it was about noon. He said to the Jews, "Here is your King!"

They cried out, "Away with him! Away with him! Crucify him!"

Pilate asked them, "Shall I crucify your King?" The chief priests answered, "We have no king but the emperor."

Then he handed him over to them to be crucified. So they took Jesus; and carrying the cross by himself, he went out to what is called The Place of the Skull, which in Hebrew is called Golgotha. There they crucified him, and with him two others, one on either side, with Jesus between them. Pilate also had an inscription written and put on the cross. It read, "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews."

Many of the Jews read this inscription, because the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city; and it was written in Hebrew, in Latin, and in Greek. Then the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate, "Do not write, 'The King of the Jews,' but, 'This man said, I am King of the Jews.'"

Pilate answered, "What I have written I have written."

When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took his clothes and divided them into four parts, one for each soldier. They also took his tunic; now the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece from the top. So they said to one another, "Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it to see who will get it." This was to fulfill what the scripture says, "They divided my clothes among themselves, and for my clothing they cast lots."

And that is what the soldiers did. Meanwhile, standing near the cross of Jesus were his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene.

Eighth Station

(John 19:26-19:37): When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing beside her, he said to his mother, "Woman, here is your son."

Then he said to the disciple, "Here is your mother." And from that hour the disciple took her into his own home.

After this, when Jesus knew that all was now finished, he said (in order to fulfill the scripture), "I am thirsty." A jar full of sour wine was standing there. So they put a sponge full of the wine on a branch of hyssop and held it to his mouth.

When Jesus had received the wine, he said, "It is finished." Then he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

Since it was the day of Preparation, the Jews did not want the bodies left on the cross during the sabbath, especially because that sabbath was a day of great solemnity. So they asked Pilate to have the legs of the crucified men broken and the bodies removed.

Then the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first and of the other who had been crucified with him. But when they came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs.

Instead, one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once blood and water came out. (He who saw this has testified so that you also may believe. His testimony is true, and he knows that he tells the truth.) These things occurred so that the scripture might be fulfilled, "None of his bones shall be broken."

And again another passage of scripture says, "They will look on the one whom they have pierced."

Ninth Station

(John 19:38-19:42): After these things, Joseph of Arimathea, who was a disciple of Jesus, though a secret one because of his fear of the Jews, asked Pilate to let him take away the body of Jesus. Pilate gave him permission; so he came and removed his body.

Nicodemus, who had at first come to Jesus by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, weighing about a hundred pounds. They took

the body of Jesus and wrapped it with the spices in linen cloths, according to the burial custom of the Jews.

Now there was a garden in the place where he was crucified, and in the garden there was a new tomb in which no one had ever been laid. And so, because it was the Jewish day of Preparation, and the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there.

Closing

As a closing, the congregation reads Psalm 22 (below) responsively. After the reading, encourage participants to leave silently, continuing their meditation over what they have just heard. You might have an instrument playing quietly while the congregants leave.

ONE: My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from helping me, from the words of my groaning? O my God, I cry by day, but you do not answer, and by night, but find no rest.

MANY: Yet you are holy, enthroned on the praises of Israel. In you our ancestors trusted; they trusted, and you deliver them. To you they cried, and were saved, in you they trusted, and were not put to shame.

ONE: But I am a worm, and not human, scorned by others, and despised by the people. All who see me mock at me; they make mouths at me, they shake their heads; "Commit your cause to the Lord, let him deliver—let him rescue the one in whom he delights!"

MANY: Yet it was you who took me from the womb, you kept me safe on my mother's breast. On you I was cast from my birth, and since my mother bore me you have been my God. Do not be far from me, for trouble is near and there is no one to help.

ONE: Many bulls encircle me, strong bulls of Bashan surround me; they open wide their mouths at me, like a ravening and roaring lion. I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint, my heart is like wax; it is melted within my breast; my mouth is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue sticks to my jaws; you lay me in the dust of death.

MANY: For dogs are all around me, a company of evildoers encircles me. My hands and feet have shriveled; I can count all my bones.

ONE: They stare and gloat over me; they divide my clothes among themselves, and for my clothing they cast lots.

MANY: But you, O Lord, do not be far away! O my

help, come quickly to my aid! Deliver my soul from the sword, my life from the power of the dog! Save me from the mouth of the lion! From the horns of the wild oxen you have rescued me. I will tell of your name to my brothers and sisters; in the midst of the congregation I will praise you.

ONE: You who fear the Lord, praise him! All you offspring of Jacob, glorify him; stand in awe of him, all you offspring of Israel!

MANY: For he did not despise or abhor the affliction of the afflicted, he did not hide his face from me, but heard when I cried to him.

ONE: From you comes my praise in the great congregation; my vows I will pay before those who fear him.

MANY: The poor shall eat and be satisfied; those who seek him shall praise the Lord. May your hearts live forever!

ONE: All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the Lord, and all the families of the nations shall worship before him.

MANY: For dominion belongs to the Lord, and he rules over the nations.

ONE: To him, indeed, shall all who sleep in the earth bow down; before him shall bow all who go down to the dust, and I shall live for him.

MANY: Posterity will serve him, future generations will be told about the Lord, and proclaim his deliverance to a people yet unborn, saying that he has done it.



art by Helen Siegl

A Liturgy for Easter Sunday

by Stormy Campbell

Note: If possible, designate only one entrance for participants to walk into worship, preferably through a hallway. Along the hallway, have these various symbols of Lent in order as the participant reaches the worship area. Instruct participants to take their time making their way to their seats and to reflect on each symbol that they see:

1. Ashes, as a reminder of Ash Wednesday and the repentance of the Lenten season
2. Palm branches, as a reminder of Palm Sunday
3. A chalice, a loaf of bread and grapes, as a reminder of the Last Supper
4. A basin and a towel, as a reminder of Jesus washing the disciples feet
5. 30 silver coins of any kind, as a reminder of the betrayal of Judas
6. A crown of thorns, as a reminder of Jesus' suffering
7. Nails, as a reminder of the cross

Right before the participants will enter the worship area, have a torn curtain displayed as a reminder of the resurrection and the Easter celebration the participant is entering.

Opening Hymn

"That Easter Day with Joy Was Bright

Words: Latin hymn, 5th century

Musical Adaptation: Michael Praetorius,
1609

Harmony: George Woodward, 1904

Tune: PUER NOBIS NASCITUR

Chalice Hymnal #229

Easter Meditation

This is the Easter message, that awakening is possible, to the goodness of God, the sacredness of human life, the sisterhood and brotherhood of all.

—Anne Lamott

Reading from Hebrew Scriptures

Isaiah 65:17-25

For I am about to create new heavens and a new earth; the former things shall not be remembered or come to mind. But be glad and rejoice forever in what I am creating; for I am about to create Jerusalem as a joy, and its people as a delight.

I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and delight in my people; no more shall the sound of weeping be heard in it, or the cry of distress.

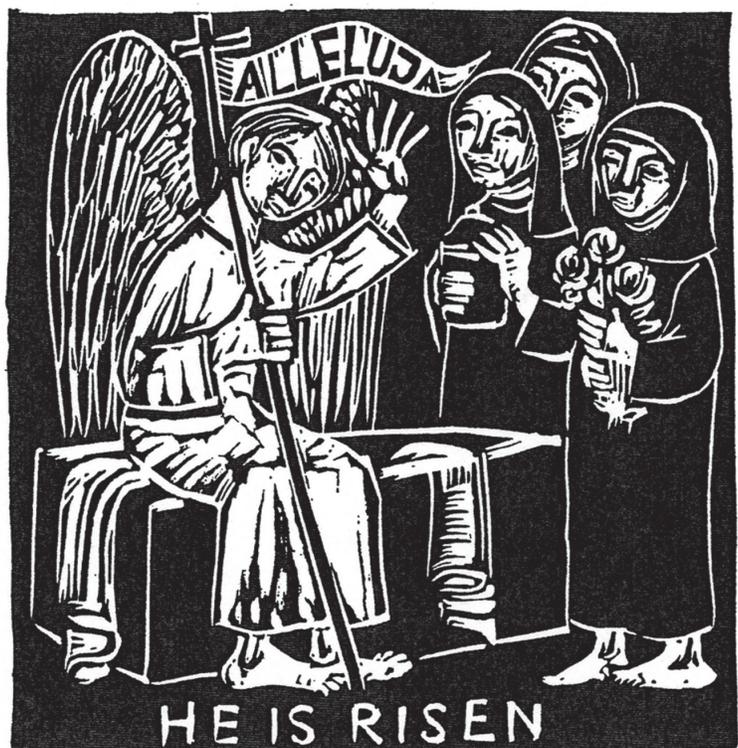
No more shall there be in it an infant that lives but a few days, or an old person who does not live out a lifetime; for one who dies at a hundred years will be considered a youth, and one who falls short of a hundred will be considered accursed.

They shall build houses and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit. They shall not build and another inhabit; they shall not plant and another eat; for like the days of a tree shall the days of my people be, and my chosen shall long enjoy the work of their hands.

They shall not labor in vain, or bear children for calamity; for they shall be offspring blessed by the LORD—and their descendants as well.

Before they call I will answer, while they are yet speaking I will hear.

art by Helen Siegl



The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, the lion shall eat straw like the ox; but the serpent—its food shall be dust! They shall not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain, says the LORD.

Hymn

"The Day of Resurrection!"

Words: John of Damascus, 8th cent

Translation: John Mason Neale, 1862

Music: Henry T. Smart, 1835

Tune: LANCASHIRE

Celebrating Grace Hymnal #214

Reading from the Psalms

Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24

O give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; his steadfast love endures forever! Let Israel say, "God's steadfast love endures forever."

The LORD is my strength and my might; God has become my salvation.

There are glad songs of victory in the tents of the righteous: "The right hand of the LORD does valiantly; the right hand of the LORD is exalted; the right hand of the LORD does valiantly."

I shall not die, but I shall live, and recount the deeds of the LORD.

The LORD has punished me severely, but did not give me over to death. Open to me the gates of righteousness, that I may enter through them and give thanks to the LORD.

This is the gate of the LORD; the righteous shall enter through it.

I thank you that you have answered me and have become my salvation.

The stone that the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone.

This is the Lord's doing; it is marvelous in our eyes.

This is the day that the LORD has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.

Epistle Reading

1 Corinthians 15:19-26

If for this life only we have hoped in Christ, we are of all people most to be pitied. But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have died.

For since death came through a human being, the resurrection of the dead has also come through a human being; for as all die in Adam, so all will be made alive in Christ. But each in his own order:

Christ the first fruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ.

Then comes the end, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Creator, after he has destroyed every ruler and every authority and power. For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death.

Easter Litany

ONE: Today Jesus has risen; we celebrate. This is the day that the Lord has made,

MANY: Let us rejoice and be glad in it.

ONE: Today God has appeared to the women grieving outside the tomb. This is the day that the Lord has made,

MANY: Let us rejoice and be glad in it.

ONE: Today the stone that the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone. This is the day the Lord has made,

MANY: Let us rejoice and be glad in it.

ONE: We have proclaimed Christ crucified; today we proclaim Christ risen. This is the day that the Lord has made,

MANY: Let us rejoice and be glad in it.

At this time, ask the congregation to stand and stretch. While stretching, ask them to focus on their breath and the new life being offered through the resurrection.

Gospel Reading

Luke 24:1-12

But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they came to the tomb, taking the spices that they had prepared. They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, but when they went in, they did not find the body. While they were perplexed about this, suddenly two men in dazzling clothes stood beside them.

The women were terrified and bowed their faces to the ground, but the men said to them, "Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here, but has risen. Remember how he told you, while he was still in Galilee, that the Son of Man must be handed over to sinners, and be crucified, and on the third day rise again."

Then they remembered his words, and returning from the tomb, they told all this to the eleven and to all the rest. Now it was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the other women with them who told this to the apostles.

But these words seemed to them an idle tale, and they did not believe them. But Peter got up and ran to the tomb; stooping and looking in, he saw the linen cloths by themselves; then he went home, amazed at what had happened.

Hymn

“Scatter the Darkness”

Words: Stephen P. Starke;
alt 1995

Music: French folk melody

Harmony: Shelby

Trapp, 2008

Tune: BESANÇON

Celebrating Grace Hymnal
#211

Prayer

Creator of the universe,
you made the world in
beauty,
and restore all things in
glory
through the victory of
Jesus Christ.

We pray that, wherever
your image is still
disfigured
by poverty, sickness,
selfishness, war and greed,
the new creation in Jesus
Christ may appear in
justice, love and peace,
to the glory of your name.
Amen.

Closing Meditation

The joyful news that He
is risen does not change
the contemporary world.
Still before us lie work,
discipline, sacrifice. But the
fact of Easter gives us the
spiritual power to do the
work, accept the discipline,
and make the sacrifice.

—Henry Knox Sherrill

Closing Hymn

“How Deep the Father’s Love for Us”

Words: Stuart Townsend, 1995

Music: Stuart Townsend, 1995

Arrangement: Bruce Greer, 2008

Tune: TOWNEND

Celebrating Grace Hymnal #178

We thought it was the burden of our birth,

The price we had to pay for being men
To wade knee-deep in slime upon the earth,

Trade blow for blow

and barter

sin for sin.

We took our twisted souls to be
the rule;

Whoever thought

it could be

otherwise

Where gnarled,
repulsive midgets

went to school

To stunt gnomes

of still more

shrunk size.

And we were

angry to be broken so...

Free to resent and

freer still to

blame

The ugliness we

seemed so cursed to know.

Cynics we were! Or cynics we became,
Then he came forth to our astonished eyes,

Whole, and man, and cried,

“Surprise! Surprise!”

—C. W. (Wally) Christian

art by Susan Daily

Benediction

**May the Lord bless
you and keep you.**

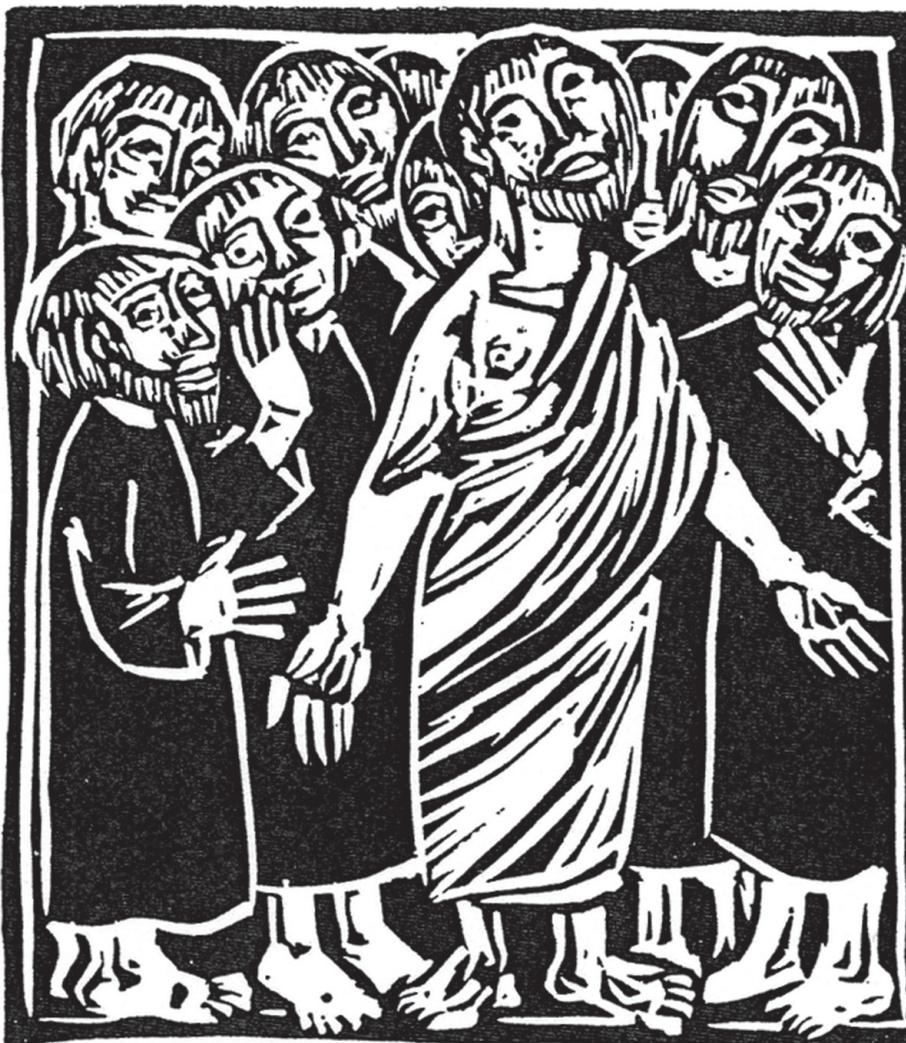
May the Lord shine the divine
countenance upon you.

May the Lord give you peace,
but may that peace be a disturbing peace,
A peace that calls you to long for the peace of
all humankind.

May you find in the blessing of God,
The blessing of sharing in the service of God
And bearing the cross of Christ.

As you go forth from this place,
Go forth in the power of the spirit of God
To make a difference in the world.

—Raymond Bailey



art by Selen Siegl