

# Restore the Joy of Our Salvation

Worship Resources for the Creative Church - Lent/Eastertide 2018

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



## Worship Tools for the Creative Church

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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

# Restore the Joy of Our Salvation

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optional. Since 1991, the group has sought out people of faith who feel called to care for the poor; and to affirm, enable and empower a variety of responses to the problems of hunger and poverty.

### Editorial Address

The Seeds of Hope ministry is housed by the community of faith at Seventh & James Baptist Church. The mailing address is: 602 James; Waco, TX 76706; Phone: 254/755-7745; Fax: 254/753-1909; E-mail: seedseditor1@gmail.com. Web address: [www.seedspublishers.org](http://www.seedspublishers.org). Copyright © 2018.

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# A Word about This Packet

We are indebted to a number of people for their contributions to this packet. Guilherme Almeida, a member of the Seeds Council of Stewards who is a music minister and an educator in musical theatre, met with me back in December to discern a focus and begin thinking about the 10 liturgies from Ash Wednesday to Easter Sunday. We elicited ideas from Larkin Rossiter, a retired UCC pastor in Nogales, NM and a longtime friend.

Closer to deadline, I took our unformed ideas to my pastor, Erin Conaway, for more brainstorming. He wrote the Litany of Confession on page 5 and suggested that we take one of the confessions as a theme for each Sunday in Lent. Many of the ideas in the sidebar on this page are his.

Several things in this packet are taken from a Service of Lament and Hope written by my Franciscan brother, Sam Loudenslager. A couple of months ago, Sam began asking among our order if anyone knew of a service that expressed lament for our societal ills. This idea, and the subsequent correspondence between us, became a major inspiration for our 2018 Lenten theme.

Just as we began working on these liturgies, Sam sent me the service he had written.

Sam has vowed to pray this service every Friday for 2018 at St. Michael's Episcopal Church in Little Rock, AR, where he lives. He said that he chose Fridays because that is a traditional day of penance in many faith traditions. So, any time you see Sam's name in this packet, know that these are pieces from his service. If you would like to have a copy of the full service, please let us know.

We have tried to emphasize more confession from the community and the corporate sins of our society, rather than so much of what Larkin referred to as "naval gazing." It is true that we must go inward for personal growth and sustenance, but we often forget that we must then go forth and serve the children of God who are in need.

We are including a sermon by Laura Mayo, the pastor of the Covenant Church in Houston, TX, a church that served as a point of hope during the devastating flood caused by Hurricane Harvey in that city. Watch for more of Laura's sermons in the Seeds publications.

We are, as always, deeply grateful for all of you who subscribe to *Sacred Seasons*, and who make use of these gifts in your worship and work. We want you to feel free to play around with these materials, and adapt them to your congregation's needs and resources. We would love to hear about how you used them. The *Sacred Seasons* readers are some of the most creative people we know.

As always the contents of this packet are your congregation's to use freely and we want you to share them with others. May we journey during this Lent and Eastertide from lament and confession into commitment and great courage.

—Gratefully,  
Katie Cook, on behalf of the Seeds staff  
and Council of Stewards

## From the Liturgical Team

Three themes emerged as we were preparing this year's Lent/Eastertide packet: lament, confession and commitment.

### Lament

We prepare to enter into Lent this year with a particularly heightened sense of loss. It seems to be so every year, but this year it seems more poignant. We sit in the ashes of our dreams and weep. We feel impotent in the present societal climate and we fear for the vulnerable people among us.

### Confession

We had such high hopes, we had made so many good resolutions. We now smear the palm branches from last year on our foreheads in a sign of our own vulnerability, our own sense of failure. As a society, we have messed up everything.

### Commitment

This year, we promise to do it better, with God's help. We make our resolutions, not on New Year's Day, not on the first day of Advent, but on Ash Wednesday. We prepare ourselves for Easter and for the work that goes beyond Easter. We are commanded in the Gospel of John to take courage, because Christ has overcome the world. We are commanded to take courage and get to work.

—Erin Conaway, Katie Cook & Guilherme Almeida

# Theme Interpretation: Restore the Joy of Our Salvation

by Deborah E. Harris

We pause *now* to listen to the stirrings deep within us.

To listen for your voice, O God, as you call us  
out of the darkness of this wayward world—  
the darkness that would, but for your grace,  
make its home in our hearts and minds.

We long for your voice, O God.

We long for your light.

Day after day, we are tempted to partake  
of the poisonous doctrine  
of greed and fear and hate and indifference.

Break through the lies with your truth, O Creator,  
and remind us of our mission to be co-creators with you—  
to love sacrificially as we have been loved.

We long for your truth, O God.

We long for your purpose.

When we tremble with pain,  
when we grow weary and forget who we are meant to be,

*let your mercy transform us, O Christ,*  
and give us grateful hearts.

Birth in us the healing hope of your faithfulness  
and a deepening compassion for all your children.

We long for your mercy, O God.

We long for your hope.

O God, restore to us *the joy of our salvation*  
and renew a right spirit within us.

Let us be your servants and ambassadors,  
for you have made us for yourself,  
and you are the joy of all our longing hearts.

*We long for your joy, O God. We long for you.*

—Deborah Harris, a freelance lyricist in Waco, was corresponding secretary for the Seeds Council of Stewards, a member of the Sacred Seasons liturgical team, our copy editor, our resident lyricist and our Slogan Queen.

Although she died in November 2017 of mesothelioma, we are still blessed  
(as you see here) by the abundant gift of her writings.

Art by Susan Daily, IBVM

# A Liturgy for Ash Wednesday

by Erin Conaway, Katie Cook & Guilherme Almeida

## Prelude

### Call to Confession

ONE: As we embark upon this Lenten journey, we give thanks to God, who receives us in love, again and again, to begin our covenants again and again.

MANY: *God's mercy endures forever.*

ONE: God creates our hearts afresh, and returns our spirits to the right place.

MANY: *God's mercy endures forever.*

ONE: God restores the joy of our salvation, and makes each of us a new creation.

MANY: *God's mercy endures forever.*

ONE: Bless the Lord, who will guide us from this place to newness of life.

MANY: *Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me.*

### Meditation of Confession

We have made money our god and called it the "good life." We have trained our children to go for jobs that bring the quickest corporate advancements at the highest financial levels. We have taught them careerism but not ministry and wonder why ministers are going out of fashion. We fear coddling the poor with food stamps while we call tax breaks for the rich "business incentives." We make human community the responsibility of government while homelessness, hunger and drugs seep from the centers of our cities like poison from open sores, for which we do not seek either the cause or the cure. We have created a bare and sterile world of strangers where exploitation is a necessary virtue. We have reduced life to the lowest of values so that the people who have much will not face the prospect of having less.

—Joan Chittister, OSB

### Hymn

"Lord, Who Throughout These Forty Days"

#180, *Chalice Hymnal*

WORDS: Claudia F. Hernaman

MUSIC: Adapt. from John Day's  
*English Psalter*, 1562)

TUNE: ST. FLAVIAN

### Reading from the Hebrew Scriptures

Joel 2:1-2, 12-17

or Isaiah 58:1-12

### Reading from the Psalms

Psalms 51:1-17

### Hymn

"Create in Me"

CCLI Song No. 106855

WORDS & MUSIC: Mary Rice Hopkins

### Reading from the Epistles

2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10

### Hymn

"Jesus Walked This Lonesome Valley"

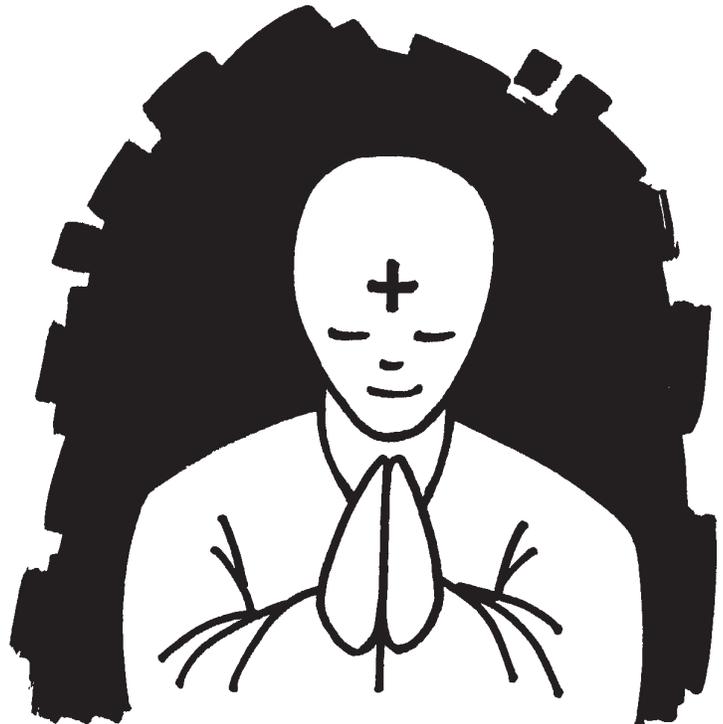
#2112, *The Faith We Sing*

WORDS and MUSIC: American Folk Hymn

TUNE: LONESOME VALLEY

### Gospel Reading

Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21



Art by Peter Yuichi Clark

## Litany of Corporate Confession

by Erin Conaway

(Below, right)

### Meditation of

### Preparation

O great Chief, light a candle within my heart that I may see what is therein and sweep the rubbish from your dwelling place.

—“Prayer of an African Girl”  
from the Chalice Hymnal

### Imposition of Ashes

LEADER: Almighty God, you have created us out of the dust of the earth; grant that these ashes may be to us a sign of our dependence on you, that we may remember that by your gracious love we are given everlasting life; through Jesus Christ, who became dust like us. Amen.

*(The congregation forms one or two lines. The ministers begin by making a sign of the cross in ashes on the forehead of the first person in line, who then turns and does the same for the person behind him or her. In this way, the participants are priests to each other. As each person imposes the ashes on a fellow worshipper, he or she says:*

By the wearing of these ashes, we offer our suffering and brokenness to God.

### Benediction

We pray to you almighty God, in this time of lament. You are our refuge and our strength, a very present help in time of trouble. Do not let us fail in the face of the events of this world. Uphold us with your love, and give us the strength we need. Help us in our confusion and guide our actions. Heal the hurt, console the bereaved and afflicted, protect the innocent and helpless, and deliver any who are still in peril; for the sake of your great mercy in Jesus

Christ our Lord. Amen,

—Sam Loudenslager

### Postlude

## Litany of Corporate Confession

by Erin Conaway

ONE: Holy One, we too often limit our awareness and conviction of sin to those which occur in us as individuals, and, in doing so, we neglect the societal sin of which we are all a part.

MANY: *Incline your ear to our corporate confession:*

ONE: We bury the land in our not-so-necessary stuff; we fill the oceans with plastic convenience; we forget we are living together with this world and wipe our feet on its face.

MANY: *O Lord, forgive us...*

ONE: We divide up into color groups that we have created, like lied-to children, we claw and shove to fit into a kiddie pool sitting beside the ocean. We cling to our lesser likenesses and ignore the Image of God in us all.

MANY: *O Lord, forgive us...*

ONE: We look to one another and trade beautiful love for hideous lust, relationships for dogma, and covenant for convenience. We wield our power to use our sisters and brothers as playthings—violating their personhood and our souls as the rest of us remain silent, skeptical, and willfully ignorant.

MANY: *O Lord, forgive us...*

ONE: We tsk-tsk with temporary regret after every mass shooting, but change nothing. We tear down our foes with words like bullets flying from the safety of our keyboards. We stopped looking for and working towards peace on the horizon.

MANY: *O Lord, forgive us...*

ONE: We continue to sit on mountains of abundance, sharing snacks while others curl in hunger pangs.

MANY: *O Lord, forgive us...*

ONE: We stopped welcoming the stranger...afraid they might not like us and share our values. Our actions say we value the illusion of safety more than the reality of suffering. The greatest refugee crisis since our last world war is being met not with innovation and compassion, but with walls and camps and silence.

MANY: *O Lord, forgive us...*

—Erin Conaway, a native of Midland, TX, is the pastor of Seventh & James Baptist Church, where the Seeds offices are housed. He is a frequent contributor to Sacred Seasons and a member of the Seeds liturgical team.

Art by Rebecca S. Ward

# A Liturgy for the First Sunday in Lent

by Erin Conaway, Katie Cook & Guilherme Almeida

## A Call to Environmental Justice

### Prelude

#### Call to Confession

ONE: We bury the land in our not-so-necessary stuff; we fill the oceans with plastic convenience; we forget we are living together with this world and wipe our feet on its face.

MANY: O Lord, forgive us...

#### Meditation of Preparation

To live, we must daily break the body and shed the blood of creation.

When we do it knowingly, lovingly, skillfully, reverently, it is a sacrament.

When we do it ignorantly, greedily, destructively, it is a desecration.

—Wendell Berry, "The Gift of Good Land"

### Hymn

"To the Unnamed Light"

*Let the Peoples Sing*, vol. 3

WORDS: from *Fireflies*

by Rabindranath Tagore Bengali

(1861–1941)

MUSIC: Francisco F. Feliciano,  
Philippines (b. 1941)

#### Reading from the Hebrew Scriptures

Genesis 9:8-17

#### Reading from the Psalms

Psalms 25:1-10

### Hymn

"O God, You Planted a Garden"

#59, *Hosanna! Ecumenical Songs for  
Justice and Peace*

WORDS and MUSIC: Andrew Donaldson, Canada

#### Reading from the Epistles

I Peter 3:18-22

#### Gospel Reading

Mark 1:9-15

### Sermon

#### Meditation of Commitment

Environmental degradation, warfare and poverty are all part of a sinful pathology that sees us as separate beings. Salvation is never just about our own personal, individual salvation; it's about the salvation of us all. It's about saving the world and being a part of the solution.

—Doug Donley, "Children of the Earth"

#### Hymn of Commitment

"When I Survey the Wondrous Cross"

#186, *Celebrating Grace Hymnal*

WORDS: Isaac Watts, 1707 (Gal. 6:14)

MUSIC: Lowell Mason, 1824

TUNE: HAMBURG, LM

### Benediction

God—where your earth is violated, desecrated, destroyed and defamed, give us the strength, the will, the heart to go there, physically, mentally, spiritually and prayerfully to help mend what is broken. Make our hands and feet the bearers of good news, the messengers of beauty, the restorers of peace.

—Claire McKeever Burgett,  
"Prayer to the Creator"

### Postlude



# A Liturgy for the Second Sunday in Lent

by Erin Conaway, Katie Cook & Guilherme Almeida

## A Call to Racial Justice

### Prelude

### Call to Confession

ONE: We divide up into color groups that we have created, like lied-to children, we claw and shove to fit into a kiddie pool sitting beside the ocean. We cling to our lesser likenesses and ignore the Image of God in us all.

MANY: *O Lord, forgive us...*

### Meditation of Preparation

Let the rain come and wash away the ancient grudges, the bitter hatreds held and nurtured over generations. Let the rain wash away the memory of the hurt, the neglect. Then let the sun come out and fill the sky with rainbows. Let the warmth of the sun heal us wherever we are broken. Let it burn away the fog so that we can see each other clearly. So that we can see beyond labels, beyond accents, gender or skin color. Let the warmth and brightness of the sun melt our selfishness, so that we can share the joys and feel the sorrows of our neighbors. And let the light of the sun be so strong that we will see all people as our neighbors. Let the earth, nourished by rain, bring forth flowers to surround us with beauty. And let the mountains teach our hearts to reach upward to heaven.

—Rabbi Harold Kushner

### Hymn

“Tryin’ to Get Home”

#73, *Hosanna! Ecumenical Songs for Justice and Peace*

WORDS and MUSIC: African American Traditional

### Reading from the Hebrew Scriptures

Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16

### Reading from the Psalms

Psalms 22:23-31

### Hymn

“Jesu, Jesu, Fill Us with Your Love”

#656, *Celebrating Grace Hymnal*

WORDS: Tom Colvin, 1968

MUSIC: Ghana Folk Song,  
arr. Charles H. Webb (1989)

TUNE: CHEREPONI, 7.7.9 with refrain

### Reading from the Epistles

Romans 4:13-25

### Gospel Reading

Mark 8:31-38 or Mark 9:2-9

### Sermon

### Meditation of Commitment

The hardest spiritual work in the world is to love the neighbor as the self—to encounter another human being not as someone you can use, change, fix, help, save, enroll, convince or control, but simply as someone who can spring you from the prison of yourself, if you will allow it.

—Barbara Brown Taylor, *An Altar in the World*

### Hymn of Commitment

“Wounded World that Cries for Healing”

#2177, *The Faith We Sing*

WORDS: Shirley Erena Murray

MUSIC: Hal H. Hopson

TUNE: HEALING SPIRIT, 8.7.8.7.D

### Benediction

### Postlude

# A Liturgy for the Third Sunday in Lent

by Erin Katie Cook & Guilherme Almeida

*A Call to the Healing of Sexual Exclusion and Exploitation*

## Prelude

## Call to Confession

ONE: We look to one another and trade beautiful love for hideous lust, relationships for dogma, and covenant for convenience. We wield our power to use our sisters and brothers as playthings—violating their personhood and our souls as the rest of us remain silent, skeptical and willfully ignorant. MANY: O Lord, forgive us...

## Meditation of Preparation

We become more human as we discover we are able to love people. And when I say ‘love people,’ I mean to see their value and their beauty, to love people who have been pushed aside, humiliated, seen as having no value. Then we see that they are gradually being changed. At the same time, sharing our lives in community with the weak and the poor, we come in touch with our own limits, pain, and brokenness. We realize that we, too, have our handicaps which are often around our need for power and the feeling that our value lies in being powerful—a power that frequently involves crushing other people. So we’re confronted by two visions of society: a vision of a pyramid, where you have to have more and more power in order to get to the top, or a vision of a *body* where every person has a place.

—Jean Vanier

## Гимн

“My Life Flows On (How Can I Keep from Singing?)”

#2212, *The Faith We Sing*

WORDS and MUSIC: Robert Lowry

TUNE: HOW CAN I KEEP FROM SINGING, 8.7.8.7.

with refrain

## Reading from the Hebrew Scriptures

Exodus 20:1-17

## Reading from the Psalms

Psalms 19

## Гимн

“Sacred the Body”

#2228, *The Faith We Sing*

WORDS: Ruth Duck (1 Cor. 3:16; 13:4-7)

MUSIC: W. Daniel Landes

TUNE: RUDDLE, 10.10.10.10.

## Reading from the Epistles

I Corinthians 1:18-25

## Gospel Reading

John 2:13-22

## Sermon

## Meditation of Commitment

Whatever else the true preaching of the word would need to include, it at least would have to be a word that speaks from the perspective of those who have been crushed and marginalized in our society. It would need to be a word of solidarity, healing and love in situations of brokenness and despair and a disturbing and troubling word of justice to those who wish to protect their privilege by exclusion.

—Letty M. Russell, *Church in the Round*

## Гимн of Commitment

“For Everyone Born”

#71, *Hosanna! Ecumenical Songs*

for Justice and Peace

WORDS: Shirley Erena Murray

MUSIC: Brian Mann

## Benediction

## Postlude

# Quotes, Poems & Pithy Sayings

The resurrection is not a denial of the past. It is a sacrament of tears shed, pain sustained, and death remembered.... To celebrate the sacrament of life in the face of death is an act of faith. To believe in life resurrected from the ruins of human conflict comes from God who is the power of transformation. And to work toward change in the human condition is a calling in response to the vision of God's reign.

—C. S. Song

Risking to go where Jesus went, risking life and limb in the name of Christ, is a calculated risk that reflects the best of radical Christianity. So is protesting the death penalty, resisting the payment of war taxes, and joining a Christian Peacemaker Team. We believe that God saves us from our enemies, by his grace, the same way God saves us from our sins. And so we take what we sing, what we pray, and what we believe seriously. It's a matter of life and resurrection.

—Jim Amstutz, *Threatened with Resurrection*

Jesus encourages his followers to bring light to a dark and broken world. The light is the light of the gospel, and it draws all people to its warmth and radiance. This mission has been primary, from the very beginning, throughout every age. Archbishop William Temple is often quoted as saying, "The church is the only organization on earth that exists for those who are not its members." In order for the light to be seen, we must be willing to go where the darkness exists, to engage and walk through it, so that, in time, the light can overcome it.

—Charles James Cook, *"Pastoral Perspective,"* *Feasting on the Word*

Worship is dangerous. It is not a retreat from reality, but a direct engagement with ultimate reality: God. Genuine worship is a response to God and what God has done; in it we make ourselves vulnerable to the story of Israel and Jesus. Sham worship attempts to manipulate and transform God, but true worship praises God as God is and calls Christians to risk the transformation of themselves and the world.

—Robert Webber and Rodney Clapp, *People of the Truth*

If you dare, take the hand of Jesus and go with him to Jerusalem. Along the way, visit friends and challenge power, turn water into wine and be extravagant with praise, for Jesus bids us live a dangerous love—and, in love, he leads us along the way.

—Amy Mears and April Baker

Art courtesy of the Franciscanos de la Cruzblanca.



I always wondered why  
it took "three days"

for significant things to happen in the Bible—

Jonah spent three days in the belly of the whale, Jesus spent three days in the tomb, Paul spent three days blind in Damascus

—and now I know.

From earliest times, people learned  
that was how long  
they had to wait in the dark  
before the sliver of the new moon  
appeared in the sky.

For three days every month,  
they practiced resurrection.

—Barbara Brown Taylor,  
*Learning to Walk in the Dark*

# A Liturgy for the Fourth Sunday in Lent

by Erin Conaway, Katie Cook & Guilherme Almeida

*A Call to Overcome a Culture of Violence*

## Prelude

## Call to Confession

ONE: We tsk-tsk with temporary regret after every mass shooting, but change nothing. We tear down our foes with words like bullets flying from the safety of our keyboards. We stopped looking for and working towards peace on the horizon.

*MANY: O Lord, forgive us...*

## Meditation of Preparation

We can see Spirit made visible when people are kind to one another, especially when it's a really busy person, like you, taking care of a needy, annoying, neurotic person, like you. In fact, that's often when we see Spirit most brightly.

—Anne Lamott, *Plan B: Further Thoughts on Faith*

## Hymn

“God Is Our Refuge and Our Strength”  
#432, *Lift Up Your Hearts: Psalms, Hymns,  
and Spiritual Songs*

WORDS: Scottish Psalter, 1650, alt.

MUSIC: English Folk Song,

adapt. Arthur S. Sullivan, 1874

TUNE: GERARD/NOEL, 8.6.8.6.D

## Reading from the Hebrew Scriptures

Numbers 21:4-9

## Reading from the Psalms

Psalms 107:1-3, 17-22

## Hymn

“Peace Must Be Dared”

#53, *Hosanna! Ecumenical Songs  
for Justice and Peace*

WORDS: Shirley Erena Murray

*(based on a quotation*

*from Dietrich Bonhoeffer)*

MUSIC: Per Harling

## Reading from the Epistles

Ephesians 2:1-10

## Gospel Reading

John 3:14-21

## Sermon

## Meditation of Commitment

Peace will come when what we want for our neighbors is more than what we demand for ourselves.

—Erin Conaway, from a Sunday morning benediction

## Hymn of Commitment

“The Servant Song”

#2222, *The Faith We Sing*

WORDS and MUSIC: Richard Gillard

(Matthew 20:26)

TUNE: THE SERVANT SONG, 8.7.8.7.

## Benediction

What more can we say, God, that you don't already know? You long for justice for all people, but it is washed away by the flood of violence in our world. You hope that righteousness will walk with us, but you hear the clear cries of those we mistreat. You ask us to speak up for those in need, but we shut our mouths and turn away. Forgive us, God. Have mercy on us.”

—From a worship guide at Lake Shore Baptist Church, Waco, TX

## Postlude

# A Liturgy for the Fifth Sunday in Lent

by Erin Conaway, Katie Cook & Guilherme Almeida

*A Call to Overcome a Culture of Greed*

## Prelude

### Call to Confession

ONE: We continue to sit on mountains of abundant food, sharing snacks while others curl in hunger pangs.

MANY: O Lord, forgive us...

### Meditation of Preparation

So how do we feed and nourish our spirit, and the spirit of others? First find a path, and a little light to see by. Then push up your sleeves and start helping. Every single spiritual tradition says that you must take care of the poor, or you are so doomed that not even Jesus or the Buddha can help you.

—Anne Lamott, *Plan B: Further Thoughts on Faith*

### Hymn

“Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing”

#295, *Celebrating Grace Hymnal*

WORDS: Robert Robinson, 1758 (I Sam. 7:12)

MUSIC: Wyeth’s Repository of Sacred Music,  
Part Second, 1813

TUNE: NETTLETON, 8.7.8.7.D

### Reading from the Hebrew Scriptures

Jeremiah 31:31-34

### Reading from the Psalms

Psalms 51:1-12 or Psalm 119:9-16

### Hymn

“Freedom Is Coming”

#2192, *The Faith We Sing*

WORDS and MUSIC: Traditional South African

TUNE: FREEDOM IS COMING, Irregular Meter

### Reading from the Epistles

Hebrews 5:5-10

## Gospel Reading

John 12:20-33

## Sermon

### Meditation of Commitment

Let us not forget: we are a pilgrim church, subject to misunderstanding, to persecution, but a church that walks serene because it bears the force of love.... The Christian religion does not have a merely horizontal meaning, or a merely spiritualized meaning that overlooks the wretchedness that surrounds it. It is a looking at God, and from God at one’s neighbor as a brother or sister, and an awareness that “whatever you did to one of these, you did to me.”

—Archbishop Oscar Romero, *The Violence of Love*

### Hymn of Commitment

“We Are Called”

#2172, *The Faith We Sing*

WORDS and MUSIC: David Haas (Mic. 6:8)

TUNE: WE ARE CALLED, Irregular with Refrain

## Benediction

## Postlude

# A Liturgy for Palm Sunday

by Erin Conaway, Katie Cook & Guilherme Almeida

*Welcoming the Stranger, Welcoming the Christ*

## Prelude

### Call to Worship

ONE: Lord, open our lips, and our mouths shall proclaim your praise:

MANY: *"Blessed are you forever, who come in the name of the Lord."*

ONE: May our hosannas be true.

MANY: *May our songs for you never fail.*

### Hymn

*"All Glory, Laud, and Honor"*

#175, *Celebrating Grace Hymnal*

WORDS: Theodulph of Orleans, ca. 821;

tr. John Mason Neale, 1854, alt.

(Matt. 21:8-9; Mark 11:8-10;

Luke 19:36-38)

MUSIC: Melchior Teschner, 1615

TUNE: ST THEODULPH, 7.6.7.6.D

### Call to Confession

ONE: We welcome you, but we have stopped welcoming the stranger... afraid they might not like us and share our values. Our actions say we value the illusion of safety more than the reality of suffering. The greatest refugee crisis since our last world war is being met not with innovation and compassion, but with walls and camps and silence.

MANY: O Lord, forgive us...

### Meditation of Preparation

In the Genesis creation stories, cosmic hospitality was God's first act. God created a world that was good and filled with all the things we need to get along and live well. God's hospitality includes not only giving us abundantly all we need, but also God's gracious acceptance of us and generosity toward us in loving and

forgiving us when we don't deserve it. When we extend hospitality to others, it is a reflection of gratitude to and trust in a generous God.

—from *The Tao of Christ*

### Reading from the Hebrew Scriptures

Isaiah 50:4-9a

### Hymn

*"An Outcast among Outcasts"*

#2104, *The Faith We Sing*

WORDS: Richard D. Leach

(Matt. 27:38-44; Mark 15:27-32; Luke 17:11-19)



Art. courtesy of the Franciscanos de la Cruzblanca.

MUSIC: Welsh Melody; harm. David Evans  
TUNE: LLANGLOFFAN, 7.6.7.6.D

*Reading from the Epistles*  
Philippians 2:5-11

*Gospel Reading*  
Mark 11:1-11 or John 12:12-16

*Sermon*

*Meditation of Commitment*

God is a compassionate God...who has chosen to be God-with-us.... Here we see what compassion means. It is not a bending toward the underprivileged from a privileged position; it is not a reaching out from on high to those who are less fortunate below; it is not a gesture of sympathy or pity for those who

fail to make it in the upward pull. On the contrary, compassion means going directly to those people and places where suffering is most acute and building a home there.

—Donald P. McNeill, Douglas A. Morrison, Henri J.M. Nouwen,  
*Compassion: a Reflection on the Christian Life*

*Hymn of Commitment*

“Prayer for Justice”

*Let the Peoples Sing, Volume Three*

WORDS: Amos 5:24

MUSIC: M. Thomas Thangaraj, India (b. 1942)

*Benediction*

*Postlude*

*A deep inner sickness has taken over* when we can't feel the suffering of those who are enduring structural violence every hour. We are in the psychological and spiritual condition of Dives who couldn't see Lazarus on his doorstep, with his wounds and sores being licked by the dogs. He went through his whole life, never seeing this person at his doorstep.

How do we awaken? First, by claiming our sickness. “God, I'm sick. I can't feel the pain of another human being created in the image of the same ultimate reality that brought me into being.” Something is very wrong with a mother who can't hear the crying of her baby in the night. And something is very wrong with me when I can't hear the crying of the babies and their parents in Iraq and Sudan, and when I can't hear the cries of the babies in my city when 49 percent of them are living in poverty.

God, I'm sick. I need a savior, a deliverer from the inner cancer eating away, not just at my emotions, but at my very soul. Claiming my sickness is the first part of awakening.

—Gordon Cosby



# A Liturgy for Maundy Thursday

by Erin Conaway, Katie Cook & Guilherme Almeida

## Prelude

### Call to Worship

ONE: Jesus said, "Do not let your hearts be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in me."

MANY: *We believe and recommit ourselves to the love of God in Christ our Lord.*

ONE: Jesus said, "I give you a new commandment, that you love one another, just as I have loved you."

MANY: *Tonight, we recommit ourselves to love one another as a community of faith.*

ONE: In our gathering this night, we witness the overpowering love of Jesus for all the world.

MANY: *As we worship tonight, we recommit ourselves to love those who live outside our walls.*

—Inspired by John 13:34-35; 14:1

### Meditation of Preparation

Jesus' ministry was clearly defined, and the alternatives to the illusion and temptations of the desert were spelled out. A choice was made—life abundant, full and free for all. Make no mistake about it, the day that choice was made, Jesus became suspect. That day in the temple he sealed the fate already prepared for him. How was the world to understand one who rejected an offer of power and control?

—Joan B. Campbell

## Hymn

"Live in Charity (Ubi Caritas)"

#205, *Glory to God: the Presbyterian Hymnal*

WORDS: Latin, 8<sup>th</sup> Century;

English transl. Taizé Community, 1991

MUSIC: Jacques Berthier, 1979

### Reading from the Hebrew Scriptures

Exodus 12:1-4, 5-10, 11-14

### Reading from the Psalms

Psalms 116:1-2, 12-19

## Hymn

"Let Us Break Bread Together"

#461, *Celebrating Grace Hymnal*

WORDS and MUSIC: African American Spiritual, arr. Carlton Young, 1964

TUNE: BREAK BREAD, Irregular with Refrain

### Reading from the Epistles

I Corinthians 11:23-26

### Gospel Reading

John 13:1-17, 31b-35

## Sermon

### Meditation of Commitment

We live in a time of struggle between truth and lies, between sincerity, which almost no one believes in still, and hypocrisy and intrigue. Let's not be afraid, brothers and sisters, let's try to be sincere, to love truth, let's try to model ourselves on Christ Jesus. It is time for us to have a great sense of selection, of discernment.

—Archbishop Oscar Romero

### Hymn of Commitment

"They'll Know We Are Christians"



Art by René Boldt

#494, *Chalice Hymnal*  
WORDS & MUSIC: Peter Scholtes  
TUNE: ST. BRENDAN'S

### Benediction

Where charity and love prevail there God  
is ever found;  
Brought there together by Christ's love,  
by love are we thus bound.  
Forgive we now each other's faults  
as we our faults confess,

And let us love each other well  
in Christian holiness.  
Let us recall that in our midst  
dwells God's begotten Son;  
As members of his body joined,  
we are in Him made one.  
—*This is written for the tune of UBI CARITAS,  
and was paraphrased by Omer Westendorf*

### Postlude

# Scriptures of Lament & Hope

Compiled by Sam Loudenslager, n/OEF

**M**y God, my God, why have you forsaken me?  
Why are you so far from the words of my  
distress? Psalm 22:1

Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I am in trouble;  
my eye is consumed with my life is wasted with  
grief, and my years with sighing; my strength  
fails of affliction, and my bones are consumed.  
Psalm 31:9-10

O Lord, I cry to you for help; in the morning  
my prayer comes before you. have you rejected  
me? Why have you hidden your face from me?  
Darkness is my only companion. Psalm 88:14-15,  
3-5, 19a

Out of the depths have I called to you, O Lord;  
Lord, hear my voice. My spirit faints within me;  
my heart within me is desolate. O Lord, answer  
me; my spirit fails me. Psalm 143:4, 7a

For these things I weep; my eyes flow with  
tears, for a comforter is far from me to revive  
my courage. Lamentations 1:16a

They that wait on the Lord shall renew their  
strength. They shall mount wings like eagles.  
They shall run and not be weary. They shall walk  
and faint. Isaiah 40:31

Come unto me all your who are weary and  
heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Matthew  
11:28

O Lord, my God, I cried out to you, and you  
restored me to health. Weeping spends the night,  
but joy comes in the morning. Psalm 30:2, 6

Be strong and let your heart take courage, all you  
who wait for the Lord. The righteous cry, and  
the Lord hears them, and delivers them from all  
troubles. Psalm 34:17

The Lord is near to the brokenhearted, and will  
save those whose spirits are crushed. Psalm 34:18

I lift up my eyes to the hills; from where is my help  
to come? My help comes the Lord, the maker of  
heaven and earth. Psalm 121:1-2



*Note: These verses are adapted from the Episcopal Book of Occasional Services.*

# A Maundy Thursday Adventure

by Katie Cook

Here is an idea inspired by one of the first official Acts of Pope Francis of the Roman Catholic Church: On Maundy Thursday of 2013, just a few weeks after his election, the new pontiff went to a local juvenile detention center and washed the feet of several of the inmates—one of whom was

from our list of six confessions on which the Sundays in Lent are designed in this packet.

Below are some scripture passages and suggestions for songs and litanies to use along with the rituals, but the really important thing here is the excruciatingly vulnerable act of washing someone's feet and/or having your feet washed.

Some of you might not be quite ready to be so vulnerable, and there are other things you can do that might hold the same symbolism. Some provide lotion and gently rub it on the hands of their recipients. Some carry olive oil or other essential oils and anoint the recipient on the forehead with a prayer or a blessing. You could also find two ready-and-willing people (one from each group) to do the foot-washing for each other as a symbol for the assembled company.

*Below are some scripture passages and suggestions for songs and litanies to use along with the rituals, but the really important thing here is the excruciatingly vulnerable act of washing someone's feet and/or having your feet washed.*

a Muslim woman. The papal footwashing ceremony has not usually involved laity, never mind incarcerated people, women, or anyone outside of the faith.

The impact of this act of humility and the Pope's new-fangled ideas about service toward ALL people flew around the world very quickly and gave us a strong indication of the character of his papacy.

If you do something like this, you might not engender quite so much attention with your project. Indeed, you probably don't want to. But look around. There may be a group of people with whom your congregation has a relationship—mentees in local schools, recipients from the food pantry where you volunteer, residents of a long-term transitional housing program, members of a minority congregation with whom you worship.

I once saw a staff group from a small house church choose to host the weary staff of an emergency assistance program for a nice meal. The church members sat down and visited with them—even pampered them a little.

If you decide to take on a project like this, you could choose your recipients or partners



Art courtesy of the Franciscanos de Cruz Blanca

The ultimate result of any of these activities should be that we are beginning to tear down some of those barriers we have been confessing in this packet. It is an act of penitence for some of the oblivious ways we accept the privilege that divides us from others. This can be one of the holiest acts you ever perform. I dare you to try it. —lkc

### Some Worship Ideas for A Maundy Thursday Adventure

Here's one thing that has worked nicely during footwashing ceremonies. Ask one or two readers to be prepared to read John 13:1-20 and Mark 14:22-25. Have a large, shallow bowl, a pitcher and several towels ready in a prominent place. Ask whoever will be the first footwasher to begin just as the first reader begins the John 13 passage. This is particularly effective when there are two footwashing participants. It usually takes about the same time to read the two passages as it does to wash two people's feet.

If more people are participating, you could have recorded music or a soloist prepared to provide a background for the activity. It should be done, as much as possible, in silence. If you want to use recorded music, here are some suggestions:

- "Down to the River to Pray"  
from the *O Brother, Where Art Thou* soundtrack
- "Non Nobis, Domine"  
from the *Henry V* soundtrack  
(the Kenneth Branagh version)
- "Kum Ba Ya/Kyrie"  
from *Prayer & Plainsong*  
by Cynthia Clawson
- "Prayer for Guidance" or  
"My God and My All"  
from *Troubadour of the Great King*  
by John Michael Talbot
- "How Can I Keep from Singing"  
from *Songs & Hymns* by DE Adams
- "Vocalise, Op. 34/14"  
from *Rachmaninoff: Greatest Hits*  
by the American Symphony Orchestra  
(the one with the solo by Anna Moffo)

If you think a litany would provide some context for the ritual, above and to the right is a litany based on the prayer that is generally associated with St. Francis of Assisi. And may God richly bless your efforts at healing the many wounds in our world. ■

### A Responsive Prayer for Peace

ONE: Lord, make me an instrument  
of Your peace

MANY: *Where there is hatred, let me sow love,*

ONE: Where there is injury, let me sow pardon,

MANY: *Where there is doubt, let me sow faith.*

ONE: Where there is despair, hope  
Where there is darkness, light;

MANY: *And where there is sadness, joy.*

ONE: O Divine Master,  
Grant that I may not so much seek  
To be consoled as to console;

MANY: *To be understood as to understand;  
To be loved as to love;*

ONE: For it is in giving that we receive;

MANY: *It is in pardoning that we are pardoned,*

ALL: And it is in dying  
That we are born to eternal life.

*By grace reborn, adopted,  
cradled, named, forgiven,  
healed, restored,  
we meet as friends of  
Christ on common ground,  
to show and tell  
how all our aching world  
can find what we have found,  
and cease to mourn, by  
grace reborn.*

—Brian Wren



# A Liturgy for Holy Friday

by Katie Cook & Guilherme Almeida

**N**ote: This liturgy includes 14 scripture passages that can be used as Stations of the Cross. We encourage you to be creative in the use of these. You could set up stations in different areas, using art, sculpture and/or photography and ask the worshippers to stand at each one as the scripture is being read.

You could have fourteen readers of various ages and stages of life. You could print the scriptures on large posters or worship guides that can be carried, and include silent periods in which the congregants move from station to station, reading the passages to themselves. You could ask people to dress in First-Century clothing and tell the events of each passage in their own words. You could have a candle at each station, to be snuffed out when that passage is read, leaving the worship area darker with each passage.

## Prelude

### Call to Worship

ONE: What has happened? Why are you here?

MANY: *We have come because they crucified our Lord.*

ONE: Who has crucified your Lord?

MANY: *The Roman soldiers, at Pilate's command, as requested by the religious leaders.*

ONE: But I heard you yell "Crucify!" in the awful silence of your souls.

MANY: *We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to our own way; and on him is laid the iniquity of us all.*

### Song of Penitence

"The Old Rugged Cross"

#548, *Chalice Hymnal*

WORDS & MUSIC:

George Bennard

TUNE:

THE OLD RUGGED CROSS

### Meditation of Preparation

Jesus was not brought down by atheism and anarchy. He was brought down by law and order allied with religion, which is always a deadly mix. Beware those who claim to know the mind of God

and who are prepared to use force, if necessary, to make others conform. Beware those who cannot tell God's will from their own. Temple police are always a bad sign. When chaplains start wearing guns and hanging out at the sheriff's office, watch out. Someone is about to have no king but Caesar. —Barbara Brown Taylor, "Truth to Tell"

### Song of Adoration

"Lamb of God"

CCLI Song No. 16787

WORDS & MUSIC: Twila Paris

### Stations of Prayer

I. Jesus Weeps For His City

Matthew 23:34-37

II. The Last Supper

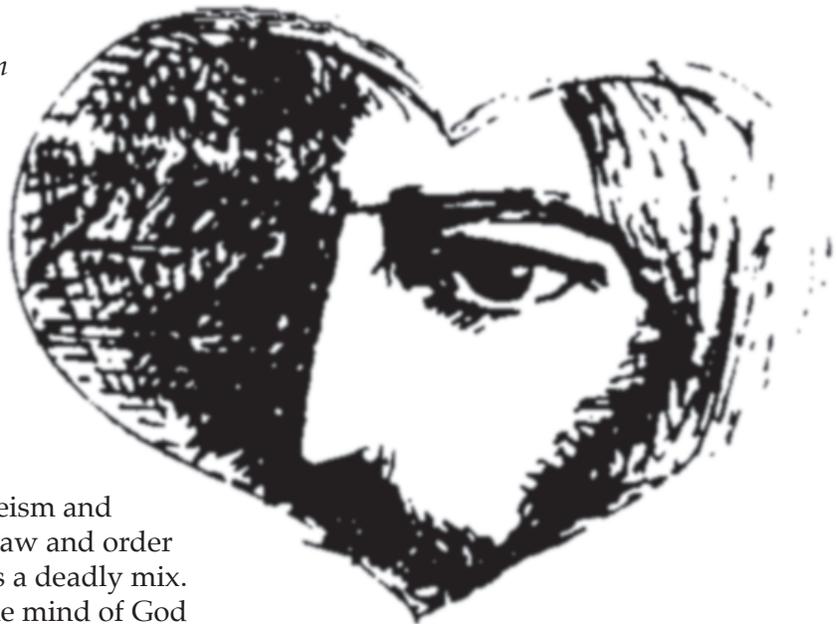
Matthew 26:26-30

III. Gethsemene

Matthew 26:36-39

IV. Betrayal

Matthew 26:27-50



Art courtesy of the Franciscanos de Cruz Blanca

V. Despised and Rejected  
Isaiah 53:2-3

VI. Man of Sorrows  
Isaiah 53:4-5, 7

VII. Forsaken  
Matthew 27:45-46

VIII. Forgiving  
Luke 23:34

IX. Submission  
Luke 23:46

### *Meditation of Commitment*

Each of us is called to prophetic agony—to speak

the Word, to do justice and righteousness. We are most truly ourselves when we live within God's insecurity, acknowledging Yahweh's sovereignty over creation, taking full responsibility as contingent creatures who yet must decide and act. Future is created out of past by those who live the present. Wherever history is unfolding, faith demands response. In the face of God-encounter, indifference does not suffice.

—*Martin Bell*

### *Choral Benediction*

"Jesus Walked This Lonesome Valley"

#211, *Chalice Hymnal*

WORDS & MUSIC: American Spiritual,

arr. Bill Thomas

TUNE: LONESOME VALLEY

# We Can't A Nested Meditation

by Sharon Rollins

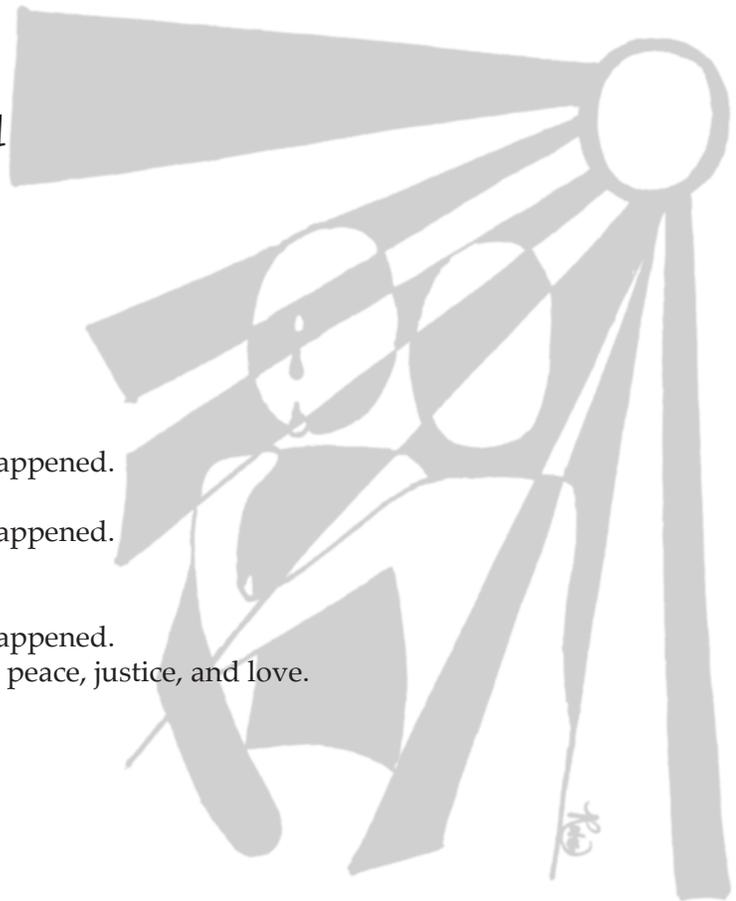
We can't.

We can't go on living.

We can't go on living as if nothing has happened.

We can't go on living as if nothing has happened.  
War, hunger, despair must be faced.

We can't go on living as if nothing has happened.  
War, hunger, despair must be faced with peace, justice, and love.



—*Sharon Rollins is a therapist and artist in Waco, Texas. She borrowed the style of "nested meditations" from Kevin Anderson's Divinity in Disguise. Art by Rebecca S. Ward.*

# A Liturgy for Easter Sunday

by Katie Cook & Guilherme Almeida

*This is the day on which God created light and saw it was good.*

*This is the day in whose early morning light we discovered the tomb was empty, the day we encountered Christ, the world's true light.*

—adapted from the New Zealand Prayer Book

## Prelude

### Responsive Call to Worship

“Christ Is Risen Indeed”

#193, *Celebrating Grace Hymnal*

### Meditation of Preparation

The proclamation of Easter Day is that all is well. Love is the victor. Death is not the end. The end is life. His life and our lives through him, in him. Existence has great depths of beauty, mystery, and benediction than the wildest visionary has ever dared to dream.

—Frederick Buechner, *The Magnificent Defeat*

## Hymn

“Christ the Lord Is Risen Today”

#216, *Chalice Hymnal*

WORDS: Charles Wesley

MUSIC: *Lyra Davidica*, 1708

TUNE: EASTER HYMN

### Reading from the Hebrew Scriptures

Isaiah 25:6-9

### Reading from the Psalms

Psalms 118:1-2, 14-24

## Hymn

“O for a Thousand Tongues”

#332, *Celebrating Grace Hymnal*

WORDS: Charles Wesley, 1739

MUSIC: Carl G. Gläser, arr. Lowell Mason, 1839

TUNE: AZMON, CM

### Reading from the Epistles

I Corinthians 15:1-11 or Acts 10:34-43

## Reading from the Gospels

John 20:1-18 or Mark 16:1-8

### Easter Pastoral Prayer

## Sermon

### Meditation of Commitment

You are risen in power and wonder. You are risen out of the shambles of death and terror and doubt and fear. You are risen to turn the world to peace and justice and freedom and well-being. You are risen with healing wings to cure our diseased hurts and our public pathologies.

—Walter Brueggemann, *Inscribing the Text*

### Hymn of Commitment

“Easter People, Raise Your Voices”

#195, *Celebrating Grace Hymnal*

WORDS: William M. James, 1979

MUSIC: Mark Edwards, 2008

TUNE: WESNATE, 8.7.8.7.8.7.

### Responsive Benediction

ONE: Let the heavens be glad,

MANY: *And let the earth rejoice.*

ONE: Let them say among the nations,

MANY: *Our Lord is risen; our Lord is King.*

ONE: Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;

MANY: *For his steadfast love endures forever.*

ONE: Let us go forth, knowing in our hearts, and showing in our lives, that Christ is risen.

MANY: *Christ is risen, indeed. May he bring resurrection to our hearts and lives. Hallelujah!*

—Adapted from I Chronicles 16:31, 34

## Postlude

Art by Susan Daily, IBVM

# Come and Have Breakfast

## A Sermon for Eastertide

by Laura Mayo

Text: John 21:4-17

It is Eastertide, and yet I keep hearing Mary's song:

*My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for God has looked with favor on the lowliness of the servant. Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed; for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is God's name. God's mercy is for those who fear God from generation to generation. God has shown strength with the arm; and has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts. God has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly; and has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty. God has helped Israel, in remembrance of God's mercy, according to the promise God made to our ancestors, to Abraham and to his descendants forever. (Luke 1: 41b-55)*

This great hymn of praise has empowered the oppressed and unnerved oppressors for millennia. Mary, pregnant with Jesus—with Emmanuel: God-with-us—sings of a God who lifts up the victims of poverty and political violence and draws them into gentle arms.

She sings of the proud sent away, of the powerful and corrupt kings who are fluent in the ways of violence and domination being deposed, of the rich, who have hoarded the creation for their own purposes, who are sent away with nothing to show for their greed.

God-with-us is not restricted to Advent and Christmas. Emmanuel—God with us—shouts from the stories of Eastertide. God with us in the garden,

*Emmanuel—God with us—shouts from the stories of Eastertide. God with us in the garden, in the locked rooms of our fears; God with us in the breaking of bread and shared meals; God with us—surprising us in the face that we at first did not recognize as Christ's.*

in the locked rooms of our fears; God with us in the breaking of bread and shared meals; God with us—surprising us in the face that we at first did not recognize as Christ's.



Art by Sally Lynn Askins

God made earthly home first in a woman's womb and then in swaddling clothes in a manger. And then among us and with us: walking and talking and eating and laughing and crying.

What does this mean? His mother tells us that the incarnation means things are going to change. Oppression will give way to justice. The high and mighty will be humbled, and a poor, unmarried

*And somehow, in the pain and the hope of that Eastertide morning, Peter begins to understand that the answer Jesus seeks from those who love him is not an answer that is spoken so much as one that is lived.*

mother will give birth to a Prince of Peace under threats of violence.

At the time that Mary sings her revolutionary anthem, though, nothing has changed. She claims that God has brought down the powerful from their thrones—but the Roman Empire continues to dominate the Israelites in their own land. She professes that God has filled the hungry with good things—but famine still plagues the peoples of the earth.

We hear the words of Mary each Christmas as we wonder ...When? How long? How? And Easter seems to answer. When? Now. How long? Always. How? *Feed my sheep.*

*"Do you love me more than these?"*

*"Yes, Lord; you know that I love you."*

*"Feed my lambs."*

The disciples have been doing the hard work of hauling trawler nets for hours, in fact, the whole night, and Peter, at least, has stripped down for the sweaty work. And then Jesus is recognized and Peter, in his excitement, puts his clothes back on, then plunges from the boat into the water, to swim to the shore and to Jesus.

All night the nets had been empty. Their arms, backs and hearts all ached. And then a stranger called to them to try the other side of the boat. As if that could make a difference. As if they hadn't tried everything already. As if a stranger knew better than they how to fish these waters. As if emptiness were not their lot. As if their hunger could be filled.

Easter comes, not as an answer, but far more humanly than that. Easter comes to our hunger, to the hunger of the heart and of the stomach. At the inn at Emmaus, bread is broken, and Easter comes. In the upper room, when some think he is a ghost, Jesus eats a fish. And on this beach, at dawn, there's a charcoal fire, roasted fish, warm bread...and Jesus, feeding his friends.

From his birth in a town whose name, Bethlehem, means "house where bread is baked," to his last supper, where he gives them bread and says it is his life he is sharing, bread and their hunger have been part of everything he has said and done.

In his human life, he sometimes fed bread to more than 5,000 at a time. And, in his Easter life, he has fed billions. This does not stop: their hunger and his feeding. This will go on. He calls us to it: *Feed my lambs.*

In John, the resurrected Jesus has appeared to Mary, to the assembled disciples—briefly to say "Peace be with you," and to Thomas. And now he appears and cooks breakfast. In the previous meetings, Peter's joy likely won out over his shame just as it seems to in the beginning in this story. But that immediate joy, the excitement that has him jumping into the water and swimming to shore, is dashed with a question:

*"Do you love me more than these?"*

*"Yes, Lord; you know that I love you."*

*"Feed my lambs."*

"Simon son of John, do you love me?" Peter hears his words of denial reverberate in his mind. He realizes that Jesus knows, somehow he knows, what Peter has done. Peter wants to weep, but he responds: "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you."

And Jesus waits, waits until Peter looks up—waits until Peter sees the love in his eyes—and, only then, says: *Tend my sheep.*

And somehow, in the pain and the hope of that Eastertide morning, Peter begins to understand that the answer Jesus seeks from those who love him is not an answer that is spoken so much as one that is lived. He understands that the real truth about who Jesus is for each one of us shows up, not on our lips, but in our lives.

*"That's enough, Peter. I know you love me. I love you. I forgive you. Now forgive yourself and get back to work."*

When Jesus comes to us in breaking bread, or wherever love is revealed in and through us, there

is more than a divine awareness. There is a call: *Feed my sheep*. Love is loose in the world, calling each of us as we do the work that is ours to do, work of feeding and tending.

Mary—bold, questioning, human Mary—smuggled God into the world in her own body. And now it is our turn. For the Magnificat to be brought to fruition, for justice and peace to be realities on earth, we can be the mothers of God—each of us. We can welcome love into our very bodies and then share it, give it, show it...feed...tend....

This is the task of Advent, of Christmas, of Easter—the task of each moment—to put love into action, to be the hands and feet and voices of Christ, of love.

Maren Tirabassi writes:

*Come and have breakfast  
—come—from caught-  
nothing nights  
or nets stretched  
to breaking  
with responsibility  
for all the floppy-gilled  
children  
of this sweet deep world.*

*Come and have breakfast  
—you who strain for the  
creaking keel of the  
leaking church  
and you who've  
long since  
jumped out of the boat.*

*Come to this charcoal  
Eucharist—  
toasted bread on a stick,  
grilled hope.*

*Say you love me  
and it tastes like arts  
for children  
and new gun laws.*

*Say you love me  
and it tends veterans  
with PTSD  
welcomes immigrants,  
marries everyone,  
binds up the poor  
wounded earth.*

*Say you love me  
and it plates up everyone's entrée  
of food, education, and justice,  
of health care, music, and a laying down  
of weapons*

Come and have breakfast. Come and tear bread and dip it in wine or water. Come and have breakfast. Everyone is always welcome to this table of love. You, exactly as you are—you—are welcome. Come and have breakfast.

Amen.

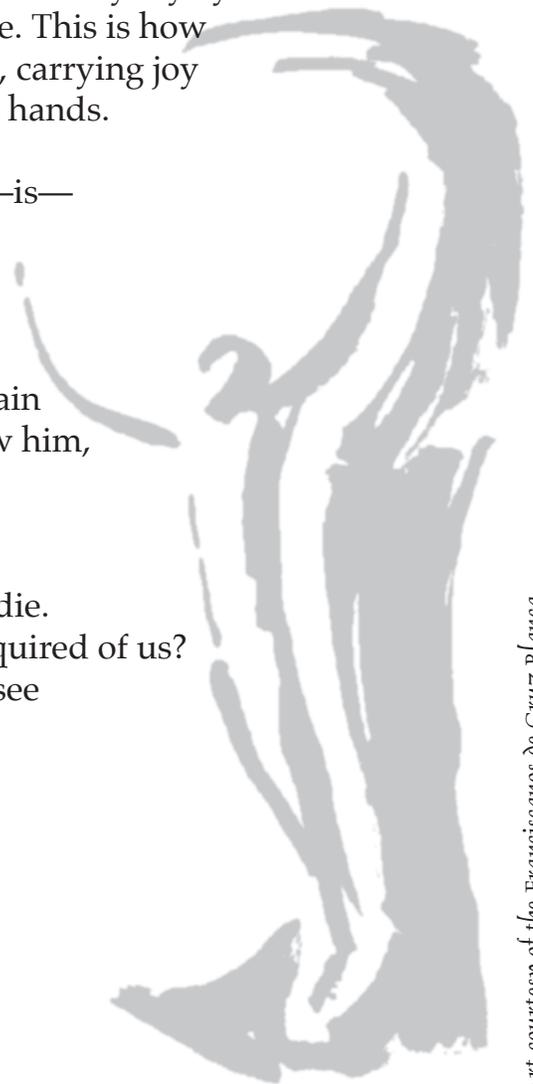
—*Laura Mayo is pastor of Covenant Church in Houston, TX.*

*Suddenly they saw him the way he was,  
the way he really was all the time,  
although they had never seen it before,  
the glory which blinds the everyday eye  
and so becomes invisible. This is how  
he was radiant, brilliant, carrying joy  
like a flaming sun in his hands.*

This is the way he was—is—  
from the beginning,  
and we cannot bear it.  
So he manned himself,  
came to manifest to us;  
and there on the mountain  
they saw him, really saw him,  
saw his light.

We all know that  
if we really see him we die.  
But isn't that what is required of us?  
Then, perhaps, we will see  
each other, too.

—*Madeleine L'Engle,  
The Irrational Season*



Art courtesy of the Franciscanos de Cruz Blanca

# Benediction



*Even in the waiting,  
God is with us.*

—Sam Loudenslager, n/OEF