

→ LENT 2022

Boundless

God without measure, Experience the Reign.



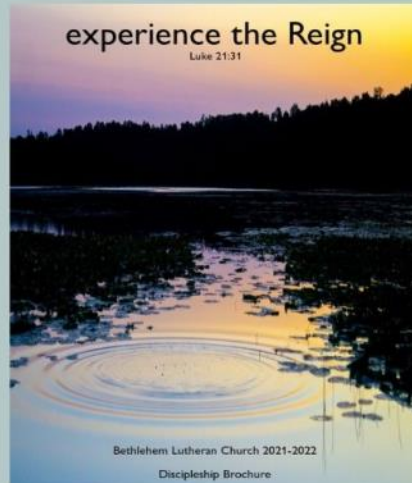
Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

BRAINERD LAKES AREA



→ LENT 2022



Experience the Reign: Lent 2022

As we enter Lent, take time daily to encounter the boundless loving and gracious Reign of God that has been revealed in and through Jesus Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit. This devotional has been written by several area clergy focusing throughout the week on God's boundless love, creation, forgiveness, invitation, and promise. On Sunday mornings your pastors will be going even deeper, as we consider the ways in which we are experiencing the Reign of God. The Sunday sermons and devotions will follow this pattern of questions for us to consider:

1. Where did you experience God's affection for you in the text/sermon?
2. What feelings of connection were you experiencing in response to God's affection for you and the world?
3. What are your thoughts about action(s) that could be put into practice?

Blessings to you through the crucified and risen Christ!

Rev. Dr. Mark Skinner Rev. Sarah Marshall

March 2, 2022

ASH WEDNESDAY



Blessing the Dust A Blessing for Ash Wednesday by Jan Richardson

All those days
you felt like dust,
like dirt,
as if all you had to do
was turn your face
toward the wind
and be scattered
to the four corners

or swept away
by the smallest breath
as insubstantial –

did you not know
what the Holy One
can do with dust?

This is the day
we freely say
we are scorched.

This is the hour
we are marked
by what has made it
through the burning.

This is the moment
we ask for the blessing
that lives within
the ancient ashes,
that makes its home
inside the soil of
this sacred earth.

So let us be marked
not for sorrow.
And let us be marked
not for shame.
Let us be marked
not for false humility
or for thinking
we are less
than we are

but for claiming
what God can do
within the dust,
within the dirt,
within the stuff
of which the world
is made
and the stars that blaze
in our bones
and the galaxies that spiral
inside the smudge
we bear.

—Jan Richardson from Circle of Grace
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March 3, 2022

THURSDAY

Another morning and I wake with thirst
for the goodness I do not have.

I walk

out to the pond and all the way God has
given us such beautiful lessons.

Oh Lord,

I was never a quick scholar but sulked
and hunched over my books past the hour
and the bell; grant me, in your mercy,
a little more time.

Love for the earth

and love for you are having such a long
conversation in my heart.

Who knows what

will finally happen or where I will be sent,
yet already I have given a great many things

away, expecting to be told to pack nothing,
except the prayers which, with this thirst,

I am slowly learning.

— Mary Oliver, *Thirst*, Beacon Press, Boston, 2006, pp. 1, 52, 69



March 4, 2022

FRIDAY



“For Lent, 1966”

By Madeleine L’Engle

It is my Lent to break my Lent,
To eat when I would fast,
To know when slender strength is spent,
Take shelter from the blast
When I would run with wind and rain,
To sleep when I would watch.
It is my Lent to smile at pain
But not ignore its touch.
It is my Lent to listen well
When I would be alone,
To talk when I would rather dwell
In silence, turn from none
Who call on me, to try to see
That what is truly meant
Is not my choice. If Christ’s I’d be
It’s thus I’ll keep my Lent.

LENT 2022

March 5, 2022

SATURDAY

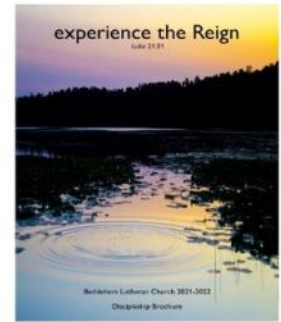
There's a Wideness in God's Mercy

- 1 There's a wideness in God's mercy,
like the wideness of the sea;
there's a kindness in God's justice
which is more than liberty.
There is no place where earth's sorrows
are more felt than up in heav'n.
There is no place where earth's failings
have such kindly judgment giv'n.
- 2 There is welcome for the sinner,
and a promised grace made good;
there is mercy with the Savior;
there is healing in his blood.
There is grace enough for thousands
of new worlds as great as this;
there is room for fresh creations
in that upper home of bliss.
- 3 For the love of God is broader
than the measures of our mind;
and the heart of the Eternal
is most wonderfully kind.
But we make this love too narrow
by false limits of our own;
and we magnify its strictness
with a zeal God will not own.
- 4 'Tis not all we owe to Jesus;
it is something more than all:
greater good because of evil,
larger mercy through the fall.
Make our love, O God, more faithful;
let us take you at your word,
and our lives will be thanksgiving
for the goodness of the Lord.

Text: Frederick W. Faber, 1814-1863, alt.



March 6, 2022
**1ST SUNDAY
OF LENT**



LENT 2022

Lessons: Deuteronomy 26:1-22

Psalm 91: 1-2, 9-16

Romans 10: 8b-13

Luke 4:1-13

Luke 4:1-13 (NRSV)

The Temptation of Jesus

Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness, where for forty days he was tempted by the devil. He ate nothing at all during those days, and when they were over, he was famished. The devil said to him, 'If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become a loaf of bread.' Jesus answered him, 'It is written, "One does not live by bread alone."'

Then the devil* led him up and showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world. And the devil* said to him, 'To you I will give their glory and all this authority; for it has been given over to me, and I give it to anyone I please. If you, then, will worship me, it will all be yours.' Jesus answered him, 'It is written, "Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him."'

Then the devil* took him to Jerusalem, and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple, saying to him, 'If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here, for it is written, "He will command his angels concerning you, to protect you", and

"On their hands they will bear you up, so that you will not dash your foot against a stone."'

Jesus answered him, 'It is said, "Do not put the Lord your God to the test."' When the devil had finished every test, he departed from him until an opportune time.

Prayer of the Day:

O Lord God, you led your people through the wilderness and brought them to the promised land. Guide us now, so that, following your Son, we may walk safely through the wilderness of this world toward the life you alone can give, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

1. WHERE DID YOU EXPERIENCE GOD'S AFFECTION FOR YOU IN THE TEXT/SERMON?
2. WHAT FEELINGS OF CONNECTION WERE YOU EXPERIENCING IN RESPONSE TO GOD'S AFFECTION FOR YOU AND THE WORLD?
3. WHAT ARE YOUR THOUGHTS ABOUT ACTION(S) THAT COULD BE PUT INTO PRACTICE?

March 7, 2022
Boundless

CREATION

Devotional written by Pastor Jordan Gades, First Lutheran



In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.

-Genesis 1:1-2

LENT 2022

Our story starts here. In the beginning. This is the story where our faith begins. All else flows from this point. It is out of nothing, out of the dark, out of the empty waste that we were formed and filled. God created this universe with us in mind. With you in mind. And while so often we still think of ourselves wandering this endless waste our God still hovers ever close. This Lent season our journey leads us confessing these things. We have a creator that created all and created us. That creator is close at hand no matter how small we feel. Our prayer this Lenten season is not for the presence of our creator, for God is always here. Our Prayer today tomorrow, always is please dear loving creator, help me to see you and the works of your hands in my daily life. Amen.

March 8, 2022
Boundless

CREATION

Devotional written by Pastor Jordan Gades, First Lutheran



For every house is built by someone, but God is the builder of everything.

-Hebrews 3:4

I'm sure almost every one of us has been a part of some construction project, and if you have you've surely heard about them from some one else. Because once you're in the midst of the project there is not much else that will consume your body mind and soul. It always seems easy at first, just gotta take down that wall, just gotta build a little cabinet thing, just gotta fill in the blank. But then the planning starts, and the figuring out everything behind the plans starts, you pull the permits and call every contractor you can think of to cover all the little details because you want everything to be right. Thing the delays happen, and the problems show up, and the costs go higher and higher. And every time I'm in the middle of all of that I try and thank God for what God has gone through with his creation. "Oh, just going to create a universe, doesn't sound so hard. Oh, and I'll add some little humans with free will, that'll be great!" And then look where that has led. New problems rising every day. Our God still working endlessly, tirelessly, lovingly, to see the project through to that end. Because Our God will not tire. Because our God is proud of the work that is done and will be done with us working by his side.

LENT 2022

March 9, 2022
Boundless

CREATION

Devotional written by Pastor Jordan Gades, First Lutheran



Does the clay say to the potter,
'What are you making?'
Does your work say,
'The potter has no hands?'
-Isaiah 45:9

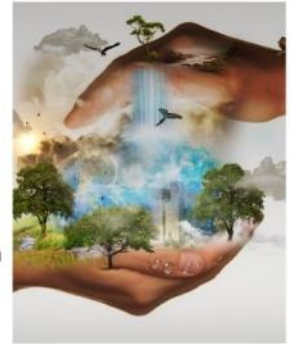
LENT 2022

Lent is a season of thinking differently about our faith and our God. In our daily life, and I'll be the first to say this happens to me far too often, when we think about God its usually in the attitude of what can God give or offer me. It's a hard truth to face but one that we can recognize in ourselves easily enough. How many times have you prayed for money, that new job, new car, new roof, or just a better day then yesterday? These aren't bad prayers but when they start to define how we see God as our cosmic butler it leads down a bad road of faith. Our listening and caring God created us to follow. God loves us as only the divine can but knowing that love comes at the cost of putting God first in lives and being willing to put ourselves second. That love means that we trust when nothing else says that's logical. And that love from our Creator means we hope when there seems like there's nothing worth hoping for. That is the faith journey of Lent.

March 10, 2022
Boundless

CREATION

Devotional written by Pastor Patty Bjorklund, First Lutheran



Come and See!

1 Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth!
You have set your glory in the heavens.

3 When I consider your heavens,
the work of your fingers,
the moon and the stars,
which you have set in place,

4 what is mankind that you are mindful of them,
human beings that you care for them? (Psalm 8: 1,3-4, NIV)

A few years ago my husband and I enjoyed a late summer overnight stay at a resort on Lake Superior. We'd spent the sunny day on the shore, marveling at its crystal clear vastness, walking the shore, picking rocks and inhaling the beauty that is singularly Lake Superior. It was a glorious day. But who knew that our time on the shore was merely a foretaste of what was in store for us that night.

After a day on the beach, we easily fell asleep come evening. I happened to wake up around 3 am and just by chance glanced out our picture window that faced the Lake. And to the north- dancing in the sky- was a most spectacular display of the Aurora Borealis, the Northern Lights! Bright yellow-green undulating colors shooting up to the heavens sending a sparkling reflection into the gentle waves of the Lake below. Such a stunning sight, I didn't hesitate to awaken my husband. "Come and see!" And we stood together in awestruck silence at the glory that danced before us. It seemed almost as if the heavens were performing a neon ballet of praise to our Creator God.

Our late night visual affirmed for us once again that indeed, God has set God's glory in the heavens, as Psalm 8 proclaims. And how blessed are we that we are given the privilege to be witnesses of this glory of God's creating hand. Witnesses that proclaim, "Come and see!" "Come and see the majesty that is our God!" What is humankind that you are mindful of them?? Most blessed is what we are! Amen.

LENT 2022

March 11, 2022

Boundless

CREATION

Devotional written by Pastor Patty Bjorklund, First Lutheran



Beyond!

O God, beyond all praising, we worship you today
and sing the love amazing that songs cannot repay;
for we can only wonder at ev'ry gift you send,
at blessings without number and mercies without end;
we lift our hearts before you and wait upon your word,
we honor and adore you, O great and mighty Lord.
ELW 880 Text: Michael Perry. Music: Gustav Holst

Of all the "new" songs of the ELW Hymnal, O God, Beyond all Praising (#880) is far and beyond, my favorite. Michael Perry's text is so beautifully written, only to be outdone by the gorgeous tune, Thaxted. Though it may be the identified tune of the hymn itself, many of us know that the tune is actually lifted from Gustav Holst's symphonic masterpiece, The Planets. The tune is drawn from the movement entitled Jupiter.

How appropriate that we sing of a God that is "beyond all praises" via a tune that echoes the vast cosmos that is all creation. A tune that brings our souls along for the ride on it's soaring melody, leaving us breathless at the wonder of God's creative hand forming and reforming the universe, as super nova stars explode, expelling stardust as far as the heavens reach. And how wondrous that we ourselves are formed of the elements of that stardust, as scientists have discovered; how God has given even us a cosmic identity by our very physical make-up. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, too lofty for me to attain! (Psalm 139, vs.6 NIV) And what's more, our God, the creator of this vast cosmos, has called and claimed us as his own. Us! Beyond. Just beyond! Amen.

March 12, 2022

SATURDAY



Oh, Love, How Deep

1 Oh, love, how deep, how broad, how high,
beyond all thought and fantasy,
that God, the Son of God, should take
our mortal form for mortals' sake!

2 God sent no angel to our race,
of higher or of lower place,
but wore the robe of human frame,
in Christ our Lord to this world came.

3 For us baptized, for us he bore
his holy fast and hungered sore;
for us temptation sharp he knew;
for us the tempter overthrew.

4 For us he prayed; for us he taught;
for us his daily works he wrought,
by words and signs and actions thus
still seeking not himself, but us.

5 For us by wickedness betrayed,
for us, in crown of thorns arrayed,
he bore the shameful cross and death;
for us he gave his dying breath.

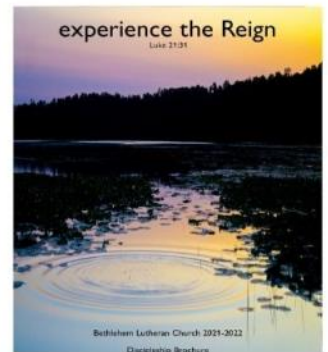
6 For us he rose from death again;
for us he went on high to reign;
for us he sent his Spirit here
to guide, to strengthen, and to cheer.

7 All glory to our Lord and God
for love so deep, so high, so broad;
the Trinity whom we adore
forever and forevermore.

Text: Thomas á Kempis, 1380-1471; tr. Benjamin Webb, 1819-1885, alt.

March 13, 2022

2ND SUNDAY OF LENT



Lessons: Genesis 15:1-12, 17-18

Psalm 27

Phillippians 3:17-4:1

Luke 13:31-35

Luke 13:31-35 {NRSV}

The Lament over Jerusalem

At that very hour some Pharisees came and said to him, 'Get away from here, for Herod wants to kill you.' He said to them, 'Go and tell that fox for me, "Listen, I am casting out demons and performing cures today and tomorrow, and on the third day I finish my work. Yet today, tomorrow, and the next day I must be on my way, because it is impossible for a prophet to be killed away from Jerusalem." Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often have I desired to gather your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing! See, your house is left to you. And I tell you, you will not see me until the time comes when you say, "Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord."'

Prayer of the Day:

God of the covenant, in the mystery of the cross you promise everlasting life to the world. Gather all peoples into your arms, and shelter us with your mercy, that we may rejoice in the life we share in your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, on God, now and forever. Amen.

LENT 2022

1. WHERE DID YOU EXPERIENCE GOD'S AFFECTION FOR YOU IN THE TEXT/SERMON?
2. WHAT FEELINGS OF CONNECTION WERE YOU EXPERIENCING IN RESPONSE TO GOD'S AFFECTION FOR YOU AND THE WORLD?
3. WHAT ARE YOUR THOUGHTS ABOUT ACTION(S) THAT COULD BE PUT INTO PRACTICE?

March 14, 2022
Boundless

LOVE

Devotional written by Pastor Mark Skinner, Bethlehem Lutheran



Lesson: Ephesians 3:1-21

Look at verse 14. "For this reason, I bow my knees before the Father ... " What is behind Paul's "reason" for bowing his knees before the Father? Look to the beginning of chapter three (verses 1-13) and ask yourself, "How would you describe in your own words, the mystery that Paul is revealing?" How has this mystery been made known according to verses 5 and 6? Look at verses 7 through 9 and summarize how you think Paul is understanding his calling and what fuels/powers him for this calling? As we think about the Spirit working in rhythm with Christ and the Father, Paul often refers to the manifestation of the Spirit through faith, hope and love. (see 1 Corinthians 13:13 as example). Take a moment, close your eyes, and reflect on how the boundless riches of Christ reach you right now, through the Spirit. Where and how are you experiencing God's affection for you in Christ through these boundless riches?

Prayer of the Day: God, I thank you for the boundless riches of your grace revealed to us through Jesus Christ in the power and promise of your Spirit. Renew me in your love and guide me in your ways today and always. In the name of Jesus, Amen.

LENT 2022

March 15, 2022
Boundless

LOVE

Devotional written by Pastor Mark Skinner, Bethlehem Lutheran



Lesson: Ephesians 3:1-21

Look at verses 10-12. How would you describe the mission of the church as it relates to our world today? Notice how Paul uses similar wording in verse 8, “boundless riches of Christ” now in verse 10 with the “riches of the church.” Notice also, the language “in the heavenly places” which many scholars cite as the cosmic formation and mission of the church – beyond just here in present time on earth!

Take a moment, sit back in a chair, feet firmly on the ground, and take some deep breaths and center yourself with these words as you focus on your breathing ... as you inhale, think of the word, “in” as you exhale, think of the word, “Christ.” Continue with this rhythm and if you feel yourself getting distracted, simply return to focusing on your breathing and the words, “in Christ.” What are you imagining in your mind and your heart as consider the mission of the church?

Prayer of the Day: God, I thank you for the boundless riches of your grace revealed to us through Jesus Christ in the power and promise of your Spirit. Renew your church in your love and guide the cosmic church to proclaim and live out the wisdom revealed in Jesus Christ our Lord. I ask this through Jesus, Amen.

March 16, 2022
Boundless

LOVE

Devotional written by Pastor Mark Skinner, Bethlehem Lutheran



Lesson: Ephesians 3:1-21

Look at verses 14-17. Now looking over our work these past two days (Monday and Tuesday), we can see how verse 14 begins to make sense ... "For this reason, I bow my knees before the Father ..." How would you describe being strengthened in your inner being right now? Where do you feel you need to be strengthened today? Paul goes on to pray in verse 17, "... that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, as you are being rooted and grounded in love."

Take a moment, sit back in a chair, feet firmly on the ground, and take some deep breaths and center yourself with these words as you focus on your breathing ... as you inhale, think of the word, "in" as you exhale, think of the word, "Christ." Continue with this rhythm and if you feel yourself getting distracted, simply return to focusing on your breathing and the words, "in Christ." What are you imaging in your mind and heart as consider being rooted and grounded in the love of Christ?" Feel Christ strengthening those areas of your life and inner being with his love.

Prayer of the Day: Lord Jesus, I thank you for dwelling in my heart through faith. Strengthen my inner being with your love that I may experience the riches of your grace today and always. Renew my heart and mind to serve you today as you strengthen me for service in your world. In Jesus name, Amen.

LENT 2022

March 17, 2022
Boundless

LOVE

Devotional written by Pastor Mark Skinner, Bethlehem Lutheran



Lesson: Ephesians 3:1-21

Look at verses 18-19. "... to know the love of Christ that surpasses all knowledge." How can we begin to know something that surpasses (is greater than) knowledge itself? Maybe, because the love of Christ is not dependent on knowledge, conditioned by knowledge, or even that knowledge is the endgame for God. Rather, Paul asks this so that, "... you may be filled with all the fullness of God."

Take a moment, sit back in a chair, feet firmly on the ground, and take some deep breaths and center yourself with these words as you focus on your breathing ... as you inhale, think of the word, "in" as you exhale, think of the word, "Christ." Continue with this rhythm and if you feel yourself getting distracted, simply return to focusing on your breathing and the words, "in Christ." As you breathe in, image Christ filling you with the fullness of God's love. As you breathe out, image sharing that love with others.

Prayer of the Day: Lord Jesus, I thank you for empowering me with your Spirit that I may be filled with the fullness of the love of God in Christ Jesus. Renew my heart and mind to serve you today as you strengthen me to love others and your creation. In Jesus name, Amen.

March 18, 2022
Boundless

LOVE

Devotional written by Pastor Mark Skinner, Bethlehem Lutheran



Lesson: Ephesians 3:1-21

Look at verse 20. Paul ends this prayer with these words, “Now to him who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations ...” Looking at this verse, how does God intend to accomplish all of this? Through Jesus or through us, or both? Accordingly, what (who) should have our primary attention within the church as we endeavor to live out God’s mission for the world and beyond?

Prayer of the Day: Lord God, to whom be the glory forever and ever, may your Spirit empower us individually and as members of your church to boldly proclaim and live out your gospel through the love of Christ Jesus, crucified and risen from the dead for the sake of your world and entire creation. In Jesus name, Amen.

LENT 2022

March 19, 2022

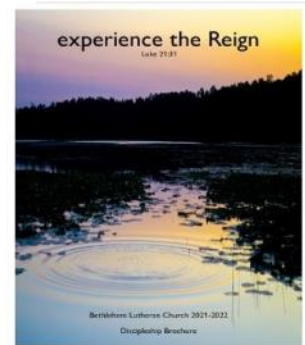
SATURDAY



Beneath the Cross of Jesus

1. Beneath the cross of Jesus I long to take my stand;
the shadow of a mighty rock within a weary land,
a home within a wilderness, a rest upon the way,
from the burning of the noontide heat and burdens of the day.
2. Upon the cross of Jesus, my eye at times can see
the very dying form of one who suffered there for me.
And from my contrite heart, with tears, two wonders I confess:
the wonder of his glorious love and my unworthiness.
3. I take, O cross, your shadow for my abiding place,
I ask no other sunshine than the sunshine of his face;
content to let the world go by, to know no gain nor loss,
my sinful self my only shame, my glory all, the cross.

March 20, 2022
**3RD SUNDAY
OF LENT**



Lessons: Isaiah 55:1-9
Psalm 63:1-8
1 Corinthians 10:1-13
Luke 13:1-9

Luke 13:1-9

Repent or Perish

At that very time there were some present who told him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. He asked them, 'Do you think that because these Galileans suffered in this way they were worse sinners than all other Galileans? No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all perish as they did. Or those eighteen who were killed when the tower of Siloam fell on them—do you think that they were worse offenders than all the others living in Jerusalem? No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all perish just as they did.'

The Parable of the Barren Fig Tree

Then he told this parable: 'A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came looking for fruit on it and found none. So he said to the gardener, "See here! For three years I have come looking for fruit on this fig tree, and still I find none. Cut it down! Why should it be wasting the soil?" He replied, "Sir, let it alone for one more year, until I dig round it and put manure on it. If it bears fruit next year, well and good; but if not, you can cut it down.'"

Prayer of the Day:

Eternal God, your kingdom has broken into our troubled world through the life, death, and resurrection of your Son. Help us to hear your word and obey it, and bring your saving love to fruition in our lives, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen

LENT 2022

1. WHERE DID YOU EXPERIENCE GOD'S AFFECTION FOR YOU IN THE TEXT/SERMON?
2. WHAT FEELINGS OF CONNECTION WERE YOU EXPERIENCING IN RESPONSE TO GOD'S AFFECTION FOR YOU AND THE WORLD?
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March 21, 2022

Boundless

FORGIVENESS

Devotional compiled by Ruth Jeremiason, Bethel Lutheran



Lessons: Genesis 33:4-11

Forgiveness frees us!

Nothing promotes reconciliation more than forgiveness. To forgive someone means to let him or her off the hook or to cancel a debt owed. When we refuse to forgive someone, we still want something from that person, and even if it is revenge that we want, it keeps us tied to the person forever. Refusing to forgive a family member is one of the main reasons people are stuck for years, unable to separate from their dysfunctional families. They still want something from their family. It is much better to receive grace from God, who has something to give, and to forgive those who have nothing with which to repay their debt. This ends the suffering because it ends the wish for repayment that is never forthcoming, and which makes the heart sick because the hope is deferred (see Proverbs 13:12). If we do not forgive, we are demanding something our offender does not choose to give, even if it is only confession. This "ties" the person to us. If we come from a toxic family situation and have been waiting for something before we can forgive, we need to let go. If we cut loose the ties, we will be free. We will be free in forgiveness.

March 22, 2022
Boundless

FORGIVENESS

Devotional compiled by Ruth Jeremiason, Bethel Lutheran



Lessons: Genesis 45:1-28

Forgiveness Doesn't Allow Abuse

Joseph's own brothers had attacked him, thrown him into a cistern and sold him into slavery (see Genesis 37:12-28) causing him to be separated from his loving father for over 20 years. And though Joseph had much to forgive, he did not dwell on the offenses. He gained grace from God and let go of what others had done to him. His response is a healthy model for us when we've been hurt or sinned against: we need to let it go and then get what we need from God and people who can give. That is a better life. Unforgiveness destroys a good life. Forgiveness creates it. Forgiveness is not denial. We need to name the sin against us to forgive it, as Joseph did (see Genesis 45:4-5; 50:20). He worked through it. He named it. He expressed his feelings about it. And then he let it go. We need to watch out for the resistance that will want us to stay in the past, trying to collect a debt that will never be paid.

LENT 2022

March 23, 2022

Boundless

FORGIVENESS

Devotional compiled by Ruth Jeremiason, Bethel Lutheran



Lessons: Genesis 50:15-21

15 Realizing that their father was dead, Joseph's brothers said, 'What if Joseph still bears a grudge against us and pays us back in full for all the wrong that we did to him?' 16 So they approached* Joseph, saying, 'Your father gave this instruction before he died, 17 "Say to Joseph: I beg you, forgive the crime of your brothers and the wrong they did in harming you." Now therefore please forgive the crime of the servants of the God of your father.' Joseph wept when they spoke to him. 18 Then his brothers also wept,* fell down before him, and said, 'We are here as your slaves.' 19 But Joseph said to them, 'Do not be afraid! Am I in the place of God? 20 Even though you intended to do harm to me, God intended it for good, in order to preserve a numerous people, as he is doing today. 21 So have no fear; I myself will provide for you and your little ones.' In this way he reassured them, speaking kindly to them.

LENT 2022

Our Treatment of Others Affects How We Live

How we treat others will affect our own lives as well. Joseph had every reason to be bitter and angry with his brothers, but instead of anger, he chose forgiveness. To the extent that we surrender our tendencies to condemn others, and are able instead to forgive, we will experience the fullness of forgiveness from God. God freely forgives us and gives us eternal life (see John 3:16). But he also expects us to extend that same mercy to others (see James 2:12-13), with strict warnings to us if we don't. A life of judgment, condemnation and unforgiveness is a prison. We find ourselves focusing not on the good we have—our spiritual lives or joyful relationships—but on the failings of another. It brings resentment and emptiness. When we let go of judgment and live in the grace that has also freed us, we move past the demand that everyone pay us back; as a result, our own quality of life increases.

March 24, 2022

Boundless

FORGIVENESS

Devotional Compiled by Ruth Jeremiason, Bethel Lutheran



Lessons: Acts 10:23-48

Forgiveness bring freedom

A recurring theme in Solomon's prayer of dedication for the temple is forgiveness. He asks God to hear the prayers of the people and forgive their sins. This emphasis on forgiveness is a key element in all our relationships. To forgive is very difficult. It means letting go of something that someone "owes" us. But forgiveness brings freedom from the past; it brings freedom from anyone who has hurt us. To forgive means to write it off. Let it go. Tear up the account. It is to render the account canceled. "[God] forgave us all our sins, having canceled the charge of our legal indebtedness, which stood against us and condemned us; he has taken it away, nailing it to the cross" (Colossians 2:13-14). He asks us to forgive others in the same way that he has forgiven us (see Matthew 18:21-35). To forgive means we will never get from that person what was owed us. What is done is done and can't be undone. But the result of forgiveness is freedom from that reality and the chance to have a future unfettered by resentment and grudges from the past. It takes the power away from others, and we get our lives back. It is an arrangement that cannot be matched.

LENT 2022

March 25, 2022

Boundless

FORGIVENESS

Devotional compiled by Ruth Jeremiason, Bethel Lutheran



The truth about forgiveness

As Peter shared the gospel with Cornelius and Cornelius' relatives and close friends, he referred to God's forgiveness of sins (see Acts 10:43). At that moment, all the people who heard Peter's words believed and received the Holy Spirit (see Acts 10:44-47). What is so significant about the forgiveness of sins? Our sin alienates and disconnects us from God, his love and his care. Our sinful nature puts us in an isolated and hopeless state. Forgiveness through Jesus' death is God's solution; it rescues us from our hopelessness and restores our connection with God. If we ask God to forgive us, he will. He then sees us as completely new people. We are clean, washed with pure water; whatever we might have done is forgotten and put away. The knowledge that we are forgiven and have a clean slate is powerful. If we turn to him in faith, he will cleanse us and we can walk in a guilt-free state. It is a strong state indeed.

March 26, 2022

SATURDAY



I want Jesus to Walk with Me

1 I want Jesus to walk with me.
I want Jesus to walk with me.
All along my pilgrim journey,
Lord, I want Jesus to walk with me.

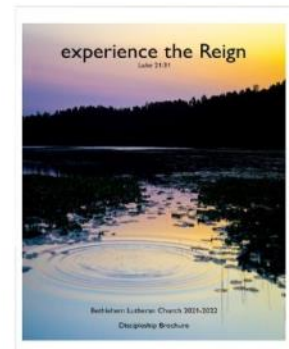
2 In my trials, Lord, walk with me.
In my trials, Lord, walk with me.
When my heart is almost breaking,
Lord, I want Jesus to walk with me.

3 When I'm in trouble, Lord, walk with me.
When I'm in trouble, Lord, walk with me.
When my head is bowed in sorrow,
Lord, I want Jesus to walk with me.

LENT 2022

March 27, 2022

4TH SUNDAY OF LENT



LENT 2022

Lessons: Joshua 5:9-12

Psalm 32

2 Corinthians 5:16-21

Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32

Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32

The Parable of the Prodigal and His Brother

Now all the tax-collectors and sinners were coming near to listen to him. And the Pharisees and the scribes were grumbling and saying, 'This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them.'
So he told them this parable:

Then Jesus said, 'There was a man who had two sons. The younger of them said to his father, "Father, give me the share of the property that will belong to me." So he divided his property between them. A few days later the younger son gathered all he had and travelled to a distant country, and there he squandered his property in dissolute living. When he had spent everything, a severe famine took place throughout that country, and he began to be in need. So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed the pigs. He would gladly have filled himself with the pods that the pigs were eating; and no one gave him anything. But when he came to himself he said, "How many of my father's hired hands have bread enough and to spare, but here I am dying of hunger! I will get up and go to my father, and I will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me like one of your hired hands." So he set off and went to his father. But while he was still far off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion; he ran and put his arms around him and kissed him. Then the son said to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son." But the father said to his slaves, "Quickly, bring out a robe—the best one—and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. And get the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate; for this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!" And they began to celebrate.

'Now his elder son was in the field; and when he came and approached the house, he heard music and dancing. He called one of the slaves and asked what was going on. He replied, "Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fatted calf, because he has got him back safe and sound." Then he became angry and refused to go in. His father came out and began to plead with him. But he answered his father, "Listen! For all these years I have been working like a slave for you, and I have never disobeyed your command; yet you have never given me even a young goat so that I might celebrate with my friends. But when this son of yours came back, who has devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the fatted calf for him!" Then the father said to him, "Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. But we had to celebrate and rejoice, because this brother of yours was dead and has come to life; he was lost and has been found."

Prayer of the Day:

God of compassion, you welcome the wayward, and you embrace us all with your mercy. By our baptism clothe us with your mercy. By our baptism clothe us with garments of your grace, and feed us at the table of your love, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

1. WHERE DID YOU EXPERIENCE GOD'S AFFECTION FOR YOU IN THE TEXT/SERMON?
2. WHAT FEELINGS OF CONNECTION WERE YOU EXPERIENCING IN RESPONSE TO GOD'S AFFECTION FOR YOU AND THE WORLD?
3. WHAT ARE YOUR THOUGHTS ABOUT ACTION(S) THAT COULD BE PUT INTO PRACTICE?

March 28, 2022

Boundless

PROMISE

Devotional written by Pastor Bob Russert, Trinity Lutheran



The Promise of Boundless Presence: Hagar and Ishmael Genesis 16.

6Sarai dealt harshly with Hagar, and she ran away... 7The angel of the LORD found her...in the wilderness. 8"Hagar, where are you going?" She said, "I am running away..." 9The angel said, "... Go back and... I will so greatly multiply your offspring they can't be counted." 11(He) said, "Now you shall bear a son...Ishmael, for the LORD has given heed to your affliction. 13So she named the LORD... "You are El-roi (God who sees me)."

Alone in a wilderness place or alone while pressed in on by people everywhere... seems it makes no difference. We can feel isolated, lost, insignificant and unseen. Feelings of being lost, forgotten, despairing... these can overwhelm us in COVID Times, threat of WAR Times, BAD NEWS Times, GREIF Times and FAILING Times. In the worst of wilderness VICTIM Times, Hagar experienced, "El-roi," the God Who Sees Us. Despite her despairing, Hagar was simply never alone... she was sought out, seen, and heard before, during and after the worst of times by God's Boundless Omnipresence. What a wonderfully promising introduction Hagar gives to us to El-roi, our loving Lord God who inhabits the depths of the seas, the vast deserts, even the unmeasurable, unsearched black holes of space. Whatever our troublesome circumstances, single parenting trials... depression and loneliness... anxiety over our future... the God of Boundless Presence sees our plight and enters into it with us to carry us through.

"Gracious Omnipresent God, You promise to grant us our daily spiritual bread of blessed assurance so with You, in Your watchful eyes, we are never alone. Thank You, for Your Boundless Presence. Amen."

LENT 2022

March 29, 2022

Boundless

PROMISE

Devotional written by Pastor Bob Russert, Trinity Lutheran



The Promise of Boundless Hope: The Exiles of Israel in Babylon Jeremiah 29

10For thus says the LORD: ... I (will)... fulfill my promise and bring you back to this place. 11For surely I know the plans I have for you, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope. 12Then when you...pray to me, I will hear you. 13When you search for me; you will find me...

Psalm 137 reveals the despairing of the people of Israel, despairing such that they could not play or sing the songs of Zion in exile by the rivers of Babylon. As they laid down their musical instruments in silence, we might picture them laying down themselves to die. So despondent, so tortured, so hopeless that their instruments were silenced, and their mouths were filled with only words of vengeance, the children of Israel were... HOPELESS! It was to those pathetic children of God, after a dreadfully long period of affliction, that Jeremiah spoke light into their darkness, comfort into their agony, and hope into their defeated spirits. For the hopeless, God's Word of grace and promise of a "future with hope" prepared and lifted them for new life in a promised land. The God of Boundless Hope speaks that same grace and promise of hope for our future.

"Gracious Re-creating God, You promise to shine Your New-life Light into the dead end "dark and drearies" of our lives and speak Your enlivening Word of Hope into all our defeats. Thank You, for Your Boundless Hope. Amen."

March 30, 2022

Boundless

PROMISE

Devotional written by Pastor Bob Russert, Trinity Lutheran



The Promise of Boundless Power: John 14:12 & Acts 2 Corinthians 11

12Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do and, in fact, will do greater works than these.

Betrayer Judas having departed, while He was sitting with His most intimate friends and disciples at the table of His last supper (first Eucharist), Jesus made them a promise of boundless power. That power of the miraculous was at work in the Apostles through their healing ministry recounted in Acts. The exponential growth of the Church under persecution was yet another example of the power of the Spirit of Christ Jesus manifested in His disciple's missionary work. And the entire life story of the Apostle Paul surviving and thrived in the face of floggings, beatings, stoning and shipwreck and being adrift at sea, dangerous journeys, and dangers of rivers and seas. "24Five times I received... forty lashes minus one. 25Three times... beaten with rods. Once I received stoning. Three times... shipwrecked; adrift at sea for a night and a day; 26on journeys... in danger from rivers, bandits, my own people and from Gentiles, danger in the city, the wilderness, at sea... danger from false brothers and sisters; 27in toil and hardship through many sleepless nights, hungry and thirsty, without food, cold and naked..." In modern times Christians and the Church, the Body of Christ, brought down walls in Germany, brought down apartheid in South Africa, brought down segregation and lifted up voting rights in America. In facing evil, injustice, and the demonic the God of Boundless Power knows NO LIMITS! That is true in our daily lives today as well!

"Gracious Omnipotent God, You promise through the Spirit of Christ Jesus to blow through our hearts, our minds, our lives to manifest Your ability in us to accomplish greater things, overcoming all adversaries and adversities. Thank You, for Your Boundless Power. Amen."

LENT 2022

March 31, 2022
Boundless

PROMISE

Devotional written by Pastor Bob Russert, Trinity Lutheran



The Promise of Boundless Courage: Matthew 14 Peter's Walk on Water

25 Early in the morning Jesus came walking toward them on the sea. 26When the disciples saw him walking, they were terrified, saying, "It is a ghost!" And they cried out in fear. 27But Jesus spoke and said, "Take heart, it is I; do not be afraid." 28Peter said, "Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water." 29He said, "Come." So Peter got out of the boat, started walking on the water, and came toward Jesus."

Settled into our comfort zones, at ease in our sweet spots, calm, cool and collected in our places of familiarity... wouldn't life be great if we could live all our lives "at ease?" Actually... NO! Life without challenge would grow boring, life without adversity would grow us weak, life without risk would grow us dull and uninteresting. Peter and the other disciples went about their daily usuals for years... and one day Jesus showed up and nothing was ever the same. He called them to risk following Him to catch people... He called them to risk losing their life to gain it... He called them to take up their cross to be found faithful. One day by the sea Jesus called Peter to get into his boat for a catch and the boat began to sink under their weight. Another day on the sea Jesus called Peter to get out of his boat and walk to Him on the water. Now that would take boundless courage! Could the Apostle Paul have heard about this... because years later, while in prison (Paul) said, "I can do ALL THINGS through Him who strengthens me." What risk might our God of Boundless Courage be asking us to take?

"Gracious Undaunted Lord God, You promise us courage to step out, to step up and courageously risk whatever it takes to live in Your will for us. Embolden us to risk even the unthinkable for Your Kingdom. Thank You, for Your gift of Boundless Courage. Amen."

April 1, 2022
Boundless

PROMISE

Devotional written by Pastor Bob Russert, Trinity Lutheran



The Promise of Boundless Life: John 11:23-25 Martha, Mary, and Lazarus

"23Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again." 24Martha said to him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day." 25Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live..."

LENT 2022

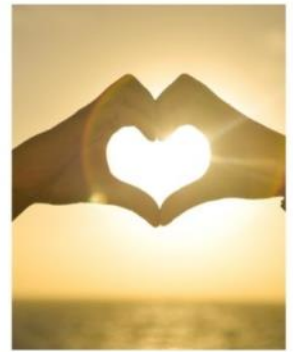
The loss of a loved one brings grief, agony, emptiness, and sorrow... perhaps even loss of meaning, purpose, and will to live on without them. Martha voices her disappointment at Jesus' late arrival on the scene. It's too late for her brother... too late to change his fate... too late to keep him alive for her and Mary. She almost seems to be pointing an accusing finger at Jesus for a lack of urgency and timely arrival in responding to her call for help, to come and save her brother from the ultimate and final separation... DEATH. Rather than waiting for the Last Day, when all will rise again, Jesus chooses to demonstrate His power of Boundless Life right then and there to Martha and all who gathered at the gravesite. Boundless Hope is inspired by Boundless Life and Boundless Love, enough for all who believe. The Apostle Paul proclaims the promise of Boundless Life when he presents his own case for the cause for hope...

12Now if Christ is proclaimed as raised from the dead, how can some say there is no resurrection of the dead? 19If for this life only we have hoped in Christ, we are of all people most to be pitied. 20But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have died. 21For since death came through a human being, the resurrection... has also come through a human being; 22for as all die in Adam, all will be made alive in Christ. 1 Corinthians 15

"Gracious Lord of Resurrection to Eternal Life, in the resurrection of Your Son Jesus You promise and show Your boundless power over death through Boundless Life. Thank You, for Your gift to us of Boundless Life. Amen."

April 2, 2022

SATURDAY



Beginning with Beloved A Blessing

Begin here:

Beloved.

Is there any other word
needs saying,
any other blessing
could compare
with this name,
this knowing?

Beloved.

Comes like a mercy
to the ear that has never
heard it.
Comes like a river
to the body that has never
seen such grace.

Beloved.

Comes holy
to the heart
aching to be new.
Comes healing
to the soul
wanting to begin
again.

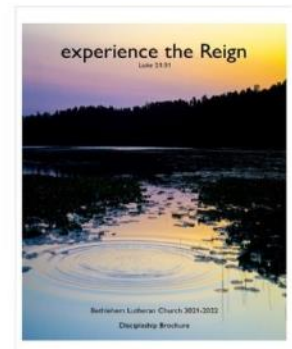
Beloved.

Keep saying it
and though it may
sound strange at first,
watch how it becomes
part of you,
how it becomes you,
as if you never
could have known yourself
anything else,
as if you could ever
have been other
than this:

Beloved.

-Jan Richardson

April 3, 2022
**5TH SUNDAY
OF LENT**



Lessons: Isaiah 42:16-21
Psalm 126
Philippians 3:4b-14
John 12:1-8

LENT 2022

John 12:1-8

Mary Anoints Jesus

Six days before the Passover Jesus came to Bethany, the home of Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead. There they gave a dinner for him. Martha served, and Lazarus was one of those at the table with him. Mary took a pound of costly perfume made of pure nard, anointed Jesus' feet, and wiped them with her hair. The house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume. But Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples (the one who was about to betray him), said, 'Why was this perfume not sold for three hundred denarii and the money given to the poor?' (He said this not because he cared about the poor, but because he was a thief; he kept the common purse and used to steal what was put into it.) Jesus said, 'Leave her alone. She bought it so that she might keep it for the day of my burial. You always have the poor with you, but you do not always have me.'

Prayer of the Day:

Creator God, you prepare a new way in the wilderness, and your grace waters our desert. Open our hearts to be transformed by the new things you are doing, that our lives may proclaim the extravagance of your love given to all, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

1. WHERE DID YOU EXPERIENCE GOD'S AFFECTION FOR YOU IN THE TEXT/SERMON?
2. WHAT FEELINGS OF CONNECTION WERE YOU EXPERIENCING IN RESPONSE TO GOD'S AFFECTION FOR YOU AND THE WORLD?
3. WHAT ARE YOUR THOUGHTS ABOUT ACTION(S) THAT COULD BE PUT INTO PRACTICE?

April 4, 2022

Boundless

INVITATION

Devotional written by Emily Ehlert, Lord of Life



LENT 2022

5 Days with God

It took 5 days for me in a canoe with 12 people I hardly knew in the middle of nowhere by the Canadian border to realize God and my strength in faith.

The first night we all spent together was awful; the weather was truly against us that day. The rain beating on and off again with the cold wind being blown from left and right tested my patience. It became even worse at night when we found out that we were going to be sleeping in hammocks in mosquito-infested woods in yucky Wisconsin. I don't think anyone got to sleep that night; I know I didn't. Especially, after the tarp on top of my hammock came flying off in the middle of the night scaring the daylights out of me.

Everything about our trip was on an upward spiral from that night. Having food over an open fire every night and our endless card games. We canoed island to island singing songs offkey at the top of our lungs. Yelling a French salute at anyone we passed.

But, it wasn't until the last night that all of us sat in silence staring out at Rainy lake with the sun setting in a vibrant pink hue. I've never seen a sunset so pretty before till that moment in time. We existed as 1 with another. No one is an island. 20 minutes later, we all begin to sing "Sanctuary." It was my heaven on Earth for a slow moment in time. "For whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him" (Heb 11:6)

April 5, 2022
Boundless

INVITATION

Devotional written by Pastor Erika Nielson, Lord of Life



The other day I was asked to send a text message to two young men whose uncle had just died at the age of 60, after struggling with ALS. Their mom had hoped I could offer a word of comfort or hope or maybe just connection at a time when community seems hard to grasp. Unsure of exactly what to say – I found myself texting this, “One thing we are simply not given in this life is an answer to the question WHY. We are not offered an explanation of life, but only given an invitation to it – in all of its fullness and complexity and difficulty and beauty. And in God’s grace and love – we discover a way through it all.”

LENT 2022

An invitation to life! Everyday! In every moment! With every breathe! Our loving God, in Jesus, came that we might have life and life abundant and invites us to the daily gift and task of living.

Today, may you experience joy in saying YES to the invitation to life – knowing that God will grant all you need for the way – even and most especially – through the valley of the shadow of death.

April 6, 2022

Boundless

INVITATION

Devotional written by Pastor Erika Nielson, Lord of Life



“Come to me all you who are weary and carrying heavy burdens, I will give you rest.” – Jesus – Matthew 11:28

The scriptures are full of invitations from Jesus to follow, to serve, to give, to wash feet, to love our neighbors, ourselves, our enemies, to be generous, to be compassionate, to do justice, to take hold of the life that really is life. But these days, maybe no other invitation from Jesus has seemed so important than this one from Matthew’s 11th chapter. Here, Jesus extends an invitation to rest, to unburden ourselves, to let go and let God. Here, Jesus acknowledges that sometimes life is just too much – or we take on too much – or do too much and it becomes heavy and hinders us from truly living.

LENT 2022

Are you weary? Tired out? Is this the invitation you long to hear? This one from God that invites you to rest? Lent is wonderful season in the church year that invites us to let go of the things that are getting in the way of our relationship with God – that are making it hard to hear that honest invitation to rest. What do you need to set down today?

Here’s your invitation to do it!

April 7, 2022

Boundless

INVITATION

Devotional written by Pastor Steve Rye, Lord of Life



John Gough, a great soloist, tells of sitting in church one Sunday. The congregation was singing the hymn, "Just as I am without one plea." He heard a hoarse, discordant voice behind him. The voice was so bad he couldn't help feeling sorry for its owner. Gough cringed as he listened to the grating voice without a hint of melody or awareness of what the tune should be. When the organist mercifully played an interlude, Gough felt a hand touch his arm, and the man behind him whispered, "Could you tell me, please, the first words of the next verse? I believe I could pick up the rest if I knew how the verse begins."

LENT 2022

John whispered back, "Just as I am, poor, wretched, blind." As he turned to whisper the words, he looked into the face of the man with the awful voice and saw that the man was blind. Suddenly as he heard that grating voice trying to sing the next lines, there was a beauty in the singing that had never come through before. "Sight, riches, healing of the mind - Yea, all I need in Thee to find. O Lamb of God, I come, I come."

John said he felt that he would like to lend him his voice and help him sing.

My father - a pastor - is a collector of stories. That story is one that I borrowed from him. Its one that I suspect has been passed around by a lot of preachers over the years. When we respond to God's invitations -- our response may feel as wanting as the man behind him - but unlike Gough, God is able (and does) support us and give beauty to whatever response we might muster beyond measure.

April 8, 2022

Boundless

INVITATION

Devotional written by Pastor Steve Rye, Lord of Life



When I was growing up, "Come, Lord Jesus, be our guest, let these gifts to us be blest" was the traditional table prayer. At the start of every meal, my father would fold his hands look at us all to start the prayer. He would say, "Come." and we would begin.

My father--a pastor--frequently said that "Come" is God's favorite word. You might think that "forgiveness" or "grace" would be God's favorite word, but if you pay attention - you'd be amazed at the number of times God uses the word: Come. Dad would offer the reminder that in Isaiah, "Everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and you who have no money, come, buy, and eat." And, "Come to me; listen, so that you may live." In John, Jesus says: "Whoever comes to me will never be hungry" and "Come to me, all you who are weary and carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest."

Our God is invitational. God is inviting us into fulfilling God's mission in the world. As God invited a young woman so long ago - and called her to bear the savior of the world. God calls you now: Come. God invites you now: Join in my work. It's is God's favorite word, Come.

Growing up, "come" became a favorite word of mine too. But, mainly because it meant it was time to eat.

April 9, 2022

SATURDAY

Will You Come and Follow Me The Summons

1 "Will you come and follow me
if I but call your name?
Will you go where you don't know
and never be the same?
Will you let my love be shown,
will you let my name be known,
will you let my life be grown
in you and you in me?"

2 "Will you leave yourself behind
if I but call your name?
Will you care for cruel and kind
and never be the same?
Will you risk the hostile stare,
should your life attract or scare?
Will you let me answer pray'r
in you and you in me?"

3 "Will you let the blinded see
if I but call your name?
Will you set the pris'ners free
and never be the same?
Will you kiss the leper clean,
and do such as this unseen,
and admit to what I mean
in you and you in me?"

4 "Will you love the you you hide
if I but call your name?
Will you quell the fear inside
and never be the same?
Will you use the faith you've found
to reshape the world around,
through my sight and touch and sound
in you and you in me?"

5 Lord, your summons echoes true
when you but call my name.
Let me turn and follow you
and never be the same.
In your company I'll go
where your love and footsteps show.
Thus I'll move and live and grow
in you and you in me.



LENT 2022

Text: John L. Bell, b. 1949
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April 10, 2022
PALM SUNDAY



Lessons: Isaiah 50:4-9a
Psalm 31:9-16
Philippians 2:5-11
Luke 23:1-49

John 12:12-26

Jesus' Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem

The next day the great crowd that had come to the festival heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem. So they took branches of palm trees and went out to meet him, shouting,

'Hosanna!

Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord—
the King of Israel!'

Jesus found a young donkey and sat on it; as it is written:

'Do not be afraid, daughter of Zion.

Look, your king is coming,
sitting on a donkey's colt!'

His disciples did not understand these things at first; but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things had been written of him and had been done to him. So the crowd that had been with him when he called Lazarus out of the tomb and raised him from the dead continued to testify. It was also because they heard that he had performed this sign that the crowd went to meet him. The Pharisees then said to one another, 'You see, you can do nothing. Look, the world has gone after him!'

Now among those who went up to worship at the festival were some Greeks. They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and said to him, 'Sir, we wish to see Jesus.' Philip went and told Andrew; then Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus. Jesus answered them, 'The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. Very truly, I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. Those who love their life lose it, and those who hate their life in this world will keep it for eternal life. Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there will my servant be also. Whoever serves me, the Father will honour.

Prayer of the Day:

Everlasting God, in your endless love for the human race you sent our Lord Jesus Christ to take on our nature and to suffer death on the cross. In your mercy enable us to share in his obedience to your will and in the glorious victory of his resurrection, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

April 11, 2022

MONDAY



Lessons: Isaiah 42:1-9

Psalm 36:5-11

Hebrews 9:11-15

John 12:1-11

John 12:1-11

Mary Anoints Jesus

Six days before the Passover Jesus came to Bethany, the home of Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead. There they gave a dinner for him. Martha served, and Lazarus was one of those at the table with him. Mary took a pound of costly perfume made of pure nard, anointed Jesus' feet, and wiped them with her hair. The house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume. But Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples (the one who was about to betray him), said, 'Why was this perfume not sold for three hundred denarii and the money given to the poor?' (He said this not because he cared about the poor, but because he was a thief; he kept the common purse and used to steal what was put into it.) Jesus said, 'Leave her alone. She bought it so that she might keep it for the day of my burial. You always have the poor with you, but you do not always have me.'

The Plot to Kill Lazarus

When the great crowd of the Jews learned that he was there, they came not only because of Jesus but also to see Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead. So the chief priests planned to put Lazarus to death as well, since it was on account of him that many of the Jews were deserting and were believing in Jesus.

Prayer of the Day:

O God, your Son chose the path that led to pain before joy and to the cross before glory. Plan this cross in our hearts, so that in its power and love we may come at last to joy and glory, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

LENT 2022

April 12, 2022

TUESDAY



Lessons: Isaiah 49:1-7

Psalm 71:1-14

1 Corinthians 1:18-31

John 12:20-36

John 12:20-36

Now among those who went up to worship at the festival were some Greeks. They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and said to him, 'Sir, we wish to see Jesus.' Philip went and told Andrew; then Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus. Jesus answered them, 'The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. Very truly, I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. Those who love their life lose it, and those who hate their life in this world will keep it for eternal life. Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there will my servant be also. Whoever serves me, the Father will honour.

'Now my soul is troubled. And what should I say—"Father, save me from this hour"? No, it is for this reason that I have come to this hour. Father, glorify your name.' Then a voice came from heaven, 'I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again.' The crowd standing there heard it and said that it was thunder. Others said, 'An angel has spoken to him.' Jesus answered, 'This voice has come for your sake, not for mine. Now is the judgement of this world; now the ruler of this world will be driven out. And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.' He said this to indicate the kind of death he was to die. The crowd answered him, 'We have heard from the law that the Messiah remains for ever. How can you say that the Son of Man must be lifted up? Who is this Son of Man?' Jesus said to them, 'The light is with you for a little longer. Walk while you have the light, so that the darkness may not overtake you. If you walk in the darkness, you do not know where you are going. While you have the light, believe in the light, so that you may become children of light.'

After Jesus had said this, he departed and hid from them.

Prayer of the Day:

O God, your Son chose the path that led to pain before joy and to the cross before glory. Plan this cross in our hearts, so that in its power and love we may come at last to joy and glory, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

April 13, 2022

WEDNESDAY



Lessons: Isaiah 50:4-9a

Psalm 70

Hebrews 12:1-3

John 13:21-32

John 13:21-32

Jesus Foretells His Betrayal

After saying this Jesus was troubled in spirit, and declared, 'Very truly, I tell you, one of you will betray me.' The disciples looked at one another, uncertain of whom he was speaking. One of his disciples—the one whom Jesus loved—was reclining next to him; Simon Peter therefore motioned to him to ask Jesus of whom he was speaking. So while reclining next to Jesus, he asked him, 'Lord, who is it?' Jesus answered, 'It is the one to whom I give this piece of bread when I have dipped it in the dish.' So when he had dipped the piece of bread, he gave it to Judas son of Simon Iscariot. After he received the piece of bread, Satan entered into him. Jesus said to him, 'Do quickly what you are going to do.' Now no one at the table knew why he said this to him. Some thought that, because Judas had the common purse, Jesus was telling him, 'Buy what we need for the festival'; or, that he should give something to the poor. So, after receiving the piece of bread, he immediately went out. And it was night.

When he had gone out, Jesus said, 'Now the Son of Man has been glorified, and God has been glorified in him. If God has been glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself and will glorify him at once.'

Prayer of the Day:

Almighty God, your Son our Savior suffered at human hands and ensured the shame of the cross. Grant that we may walk in the way of his cross and find it the way of life and peace, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

LENT 2022

April 14, 2022

MAUNDY THURSDAY



Lessons: Exodus 12:1-4 [5-10] 11-14

Psalm 116:1-2, 12-19

1 Corinthians 11:23-26

John 13:1-7, 31b-35

John 13:1-7, 31b-35

Jesus Washes the Disciples' Feet

Now before the festival of the Passover, Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart from this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. The devil had already put it into the heart of Judas son of Simon Iscariot to betray him. And during supper Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going to God, got up from the table, took off his outer robe, and tied a towel around himself. Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was tied around him. He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, 'Lord, are you going to wash my feet?' Jesus answered, 'You do not know now what I am doing, but later you will understand.'

When he had gone out, Jesus said, 'Now the Son of Man has been glorified, and God has been glorified in him. If God has been glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself and will glorify him at once. Little children, I am with you only a little longer. You will look for me; and as I said to the Jews so now I say to you, "Where I am going, you cannot come." I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.'

Prayer of the Day:

Holy God, source of all love, on the night of his betrayal, Jesus gave us a new commandment, to love one another as he loves us. Write this commandment in our hearts, and give us the will to serve others as he was the servant of all, your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

April 15, 2022

GOOD FRIDAY



Lessons: Isaiah 52:13-53:12

Psalm 22

Hebrews 10:16-25

John 18:1-19:42

So they took Jesus; 17and carrying the cross by himself, he went out to what is called The Place of the Skull, which in Hebrew* is called Golgotha. 18There they crucified him, and with him two others, one on either side, with Jesus between them. 19Pilate also had an inscription written and put on the cross. It read, 'Jesus of Nazareth,* the King of the Jews.' 20Many 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. 21Then 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."' 22Pilate answered, 'What I have written I have written.' 23When 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. 24So they said to one another, 'Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it to see who will get it.' This was to fulfil what the scripture says,

'They divided my clothes among themselves,
and for my clothing they cast lots.'

25And 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. 26When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing beside her, he said to his mother, 'Woman, here is your son.' 27Then he said to the disciple, 'Here is your mother.' And from that hour the disciple took her into his own home.

28 After this, when Jesus knew that all was now finished, he said (in order to fulfil the scripture), 'I am thirsty.' 29A 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.

30When Jesus had received the wine, he said, 'It is finished.' Then he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

31 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. 32Then the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first and of the other who had been crucified with him. 33But when they came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. 34Instead, one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once blood and water came out. 35(He who saw this has testified so that you also may believe. His testimony is true, and he knows* that he tells the truth.) 36These things occurred so that the scripture might be fulfilled, 'None of his bones shall be broken.' 37And again another passage of scripture says, 'They will look on the one whom they have pierced.'

38 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.

39Nicodemus, who had at first come to Jesus by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, weighing about a hundred pounds. 40They took the body of Jesus and wrapped it with the spices in linen cloths, according to the burial custom of the Jews. 41Now 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. 42And so, because it was the Jewish day of Preparation, and the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there.

Prayer of the Day:

Merciful God, your Son was lifted up on the cross to draw all people to himself. Grant that we who have been born out of his wounded side may at all times find mercy in him, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

April 16, 2022

VIGIL OF EASTER



Lessons: Genesis 1:1-2:4a

Ezekiel 36:24-28

Romans 6:3-11

John 20:1-18

Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb. 2So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, 'They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him.' 3Then Peter and the other disciple set out and went towards the tomb. 4The two were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. 5He bent down to look in and saw the linen wrappings lying there, but he did not go in. 6Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen wrappings lying there, 7and the cloth that had been on Jesus' head, not lying with the linen wrappings but rolled up in a place by itself. 8Then the other disciple, who reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed; 9for as yet they did not understand the scripture, that he must rise from the dead. 10Then the disciples returned to their homes.

11 But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb. As she wept, she bent over to look* into the tomb; 12and she saw two angels in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had been lying, one at the head and the other at the feet. 13They said to her, 'Woman, why are you weeping?' She said to them, 'They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him.' 14When she had said this, she turned round and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not know that it was Jesus. 15Jesus said to her, 'Woman, why are you weeping? For whom are you looking?' Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, 'Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away.' 16Jesus said to her, 'Mary!' She turned and said to him in Hebrew,* 'Rabbouni!' (which means Teacher). 17Jesus said to her, 'Do not hold on to me, because I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to my brothers and say to them, 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'" 18Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, 'I have seen the Lord'; and she told them that he had said these things to her.

Prayer of the Day:

O God, you are the creator of the world, the liberator of your people, and the wisdom of the earth. By the resurrection of your Son free us from our fears, restore us in your image, and ignite us with your light, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

April 17, 2022

EASTER



Lessons: Acts 10:34-43

Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24

1 Corinthians 15:19-26

Luke 24:1-12

Luke 24:1-12

The Resurrection of Jesus

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.

Prayer of the Day:

God of mercy, we no longer look for Jesus among the dead, for he is alive and has become the Lord of life. Increase in our minds and hearts the risen life we share with Christ, and help us to grow as your people toward the fullness of eternal life with you, through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

LENT 2022

Lenten Worship

Opportunities

Sundays: 8:20 am & 10:30 am

Wednesdays: 6:20 pm

Online anytime or live at 10:30 am Sundays
at www.belcnet.net

Holy Week

Worship Schedule

4/10 Palm Sunday: 8:20 am & 10:30 am

Brunch served from 9:30 - 10:30 am;
must reserve a place; \$10 per adult

4/14 Maundy Thursday: 6:00 pm Seder Meal

must reserve a place; \$10 per adult

4/15 Good Friday: 6:00 pm

4/17 Easter: 7:00 am, 9:00 am, & 10:30 am

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