

Lenten

MEDITATIONS

*Daily Lenten meditations from the
clergy, staff, and parishioners of
Trinity Episcopal Church, Tulsa, OK*

Dear friends,

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of Lent, the 40 days of preparation for the Easter season. *“We invite you, therefore, in the name of the Church, to the observance of a holy Lent, by self-examination and repentance; by prayer, fasting and self-denial; and by reading and meditating on God’s Holy Word”* (Book of Common Prayer, 265). The belief is that our consistent participation in these practices—like exercise we do for our physical strength—improves our spiritual well-being by stripping away all that is unnecessary and becoming more mindful of how God is working in our lives.

Challenge yourself this year and go beyond the usual practice of “giving up” something. Now is a great time to take stock of your spiritual life and grow in it. Wherever you are on your spiritual journey, Trinity welcomes you!

Blessings,

Lee+

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Wednesday, February 17, 2021 (Ash Wednesday)

Rev. Dr. Lee Domenick

Joel 2:1-2,12-17 or Isaiah 58:1-12

2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10

Matthew 6:1-6,16-21

Psalm 103 or 103:8-14

I Give Up... *Isaiah 58:1-12*

The holidays are over. We have returned to our ordinary lives. The hectic time of the holiday season has now come to an end. Or has it? In the middle of February, we will begin the reflective season of Lent. A time of slowing down. A time of reflection. Can we do just that? Can we slow down and take a well-needed breath?

A young American was eager to search for the world's spiritual truths and had heard of a holy man in the Far East. He journeyed there and climbed up the steep mountain to the cave where the holy man lived. He sat outside the cave for an hour or so, waiting for the holy man to come out so that he could speak with him about the wisdom of the spiritual journey.

Finally, the holy man came out and sat across from the young man, looked him straight in the eye, and said, *"What is the most important thing that you can do for God?"* The young man sat there, reflected and thought and thought, and after a long silence, pondering everything he could think of, he looked at the holy man and said, *"I give up."* The holy man said, *"Exactly, that is the best thing you can do for God."* and returned to the cave.

One of the fundamental truths in Alcoholics Anonymous is to say, "I give up." That is the beginning, AA says, of sobriety. You start with, "I give up. I do not know how to do this thing. I do not know how to control this thing. I do not have the foggiest idea of how to handle this. I give up." The members at the AA meeting look at you and smile, and they say, "Ah, you might be ready. You might be ready."

It is just like that with Jesus. All the people He seemed to deal with were the people who said, "I give up." and then He moved right into their world. And all these other people, the Sadducees, the Zealots, the Essenes, they had it right, and He could not seem to get along with them.

It seems as though Jesus ministered most effectively to folks who said, "I give up. I do not know." Today we are looking for people who will be honest enough with us to say, "I will journey with you. I will go on seeking the path with you because I am not so sure myself."

Lent is an excellent time to let go and let God. Lent is a good time for at least forty days to stop being the universe's general manager. Lent is an excellent time to say, "I do not know. I give up." And as the old holy man said, *"That is the best thing you can do for God."*

During the season of Lent, we will step into a more reflective time. A time in which we will come together and take an in-depth, more introspective look at our walk with God. This time will be spent in prayer, scripture reading, discussion, and in doing so, deepen our spiritual walk with God and each other. *Lee+*

Thursday, February 18, 2021 (Day 2)

Libbye Sloan-Brooks

Deuteronomy 30:15–20

Luke 9:18–25

Psalm 1

In Education for Ministry (EfM) we are trained to reflect theologically by considering four sources: Tradition, Culture, Experience, and Position. As I reflected on the scripture for today, the words “I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses” brought visions of the unrest during this past year.

The Gospel reminds us “What good is it for someone to gain the whole world, and yet lose or forfeit their very self?” I have friends and family from both sides of just about every issue and it often feels like a tightrope walk to maintain our friendships. I believe it is necessary to speak the truth, but it can, and should, be done without the hate-filled posts so often seen on Facebook. As Christians, we are followers of the Prince of Peace, and therefore called to choose peace and love, which will bring us life and blessings.

Friday, February 19, 2021 (Day 3)

Mark Shackelford

Isaiah 58:1–9a

Matthew 9:10–17

Psalm 51:1–10

To give something up, or to give something. That is always the question that I wrestle with every year. I have stopped eating or drinking certain things in years past, and I have also added habits to my prayer life that have endured to the present time. However, service to others and forgiveness is probably the most I can give of myself, not just during Lent, but as a life-long pursuit. As Jesus said, “I desire mercy, not sacrifice.” This is what Jesus taught during his whole ministry, which fell on deaf ears, especially to those who considered themselves righteous and holy in respect to the religious laws of the day. To forgive is a holy gift that is not easily given. This is my aspiration for this Lenten season.

Saturday, February 20, 2021 (Day 4)

Brettin White

Isaiah 58:9b–14

Luke 5:27–32

Psalm 86:1–11

God, You know, this has been a time of great change for all of us. God, You know, often we long for days past, but You tell us that is foolish. And yet, God, You do want us to remember. Remember enough to grieve. Remember enough to rebuild. Remember enough to try something new, to find a new way home to You. For what is repentance if not change? And what is restoration if nothing remains? O Changeless One, make us brave to hope for something better. Make us bold to reach out to one another. Make us whole in Your love that we feel together.

Sunday, February 21, 2021 (1st Sunday of Lent)

Mother Cheryl Harder-Missinne

Genesis 9:8-17

1 Peter 3:18-22

Mark 1:9-15

Psalm 25:1-9

Sunshine, lollipops and rainbows...

The simpleness of youth. That is where the first Sunday in lent takes me. Children see things without being encumbered by all of life's issues". When they hear that the rain"bow" in the sky is the sign of God's covenant with us that God will never destroy the earth by water. It signifies that God is always on our side. Even if (when) we break that covenant. God will keep up God's end of the bargain. When I worked with youth, we spent time talking about the differences between a covenant and a contract. Here are some fundamental differences: While a contract is legally binding, a covenant is a spiritual agreement. A contract is an agreement between parties while a covenant is a pledge. A contract is an agreement you can break while a covenant is a perpetual promise. You seal a covenant while you sign a contract.

Especially during Lent, we recall that we are not worthy of God's love, and yet by grace God will never desert us.

Monday, February 22, 2021 (Day 5)

Jacque Swanston

Leviticus 19:1-2,11-18

Matthew 25:31-46

Psalm 19:7-14

"Be holy, for I the Lord your God am holy." What can we glean from these three passages in Leviticus, Matthew, and Psalms together?

The Leviticus passage specifically addresses treating neighbors with equity and justice. How would a serious reader go about obeying these laws, all of which would be applicable to life in 2021? Should we make a list of them to remember them to make sure we adhere to the letter of the law? I think verse 17 gives us a hint that perhaps the law should be written on our hearts. That verse reminds me of the "low negativity

threshold.” Research shows that in the most successful relationships, couples address issues when they arise rather than letting them bottle up (<https://www.businessinsider.com/mathematical-secret-to-lasting-relationships-2015-6>). Further, in the passage from Matthew, Jesus addresses those who spent their lives focused on risk avoidance rather than tenderness toward neighbor. Tenderness toward neighbor might have involved listening to the heart and responding with a word or a touch, something almost imperceptible to the tender-hearted, which is why they were surprised to be commended by Jesus.

Thankfully David addresses the harsh reality of life and the grace we all need in Psalm 19 as we seek to let the law mold our hearts. After extolling the law in several different ways, David asks God to “clear me from hidden faults,” acknowledgement that after all of our efforts, we may be blind to the wrong that we’re doing. Adding onto that, he asks that the insolent not have power over him, otherwise, he isn’t making any promises about his behavior. Thank God for grace in our pursuit of holiness and may we grow in mindfulness as we journey toward holiness.

Tuesday, February 23, 2021 (Day 6)

Rick Barr

Isaiah 55:6–11

Matthew 6:7–15

Psalm 34:15–22

Lent for me has always been a time of self-reflection and a time to think about where I find myself on the journey. This year I feel we are all moving from a time of disorder into reorder, from a time of being closed off from any primal union to a time of transformation. In Psalm 34 we hear that “The eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, and his ears are open to their cry.” and “When the righteous cry for help, the Lord hears, and rescues them from all their troubles.” This Lent I pray to be open to God’s presence and action within me. I pray for transformation and rescue from all troubles. I pray to be righteous and not self-righteous. Following the Christian story from Crucifixion to Resurrection I look for hope and union with God and all my brothers and sisters along the journey.

Wednesday, February 24, 2021 (Day 7)

Finley Wood

Acts 1:15-26

Philippians 3:13-21

John 15:1,6-16

Psalm 15

John 15:1, 6-16 contains Jesus' command that we remain attached to Him, the true vine and His proclamation that the greatest love is laying down our lives for one another. Our baptismal vows point to ways we "remain" in Him: we "proclaim by word and example the Good News of God in Christ, seek and serve Christ in all people, and strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being." We remain in Him by doing His commands, and the resultant fruit is love. It is love for the beloved community of Christ's Body and love for the whole world. How do we manifest this "greater love"? Very few of us will ever face death for a friend, but we each must lay down our "soul life." That life we lay down includes the desire to use people for convenience, the sacrifice of truth in our relationships to maintain mere polite, surface friendship, and the refusal to recognize and honor the image of God in one another. Jesus, the true vine, calls us to stay attached to Him by loving one another as our vows of Baptism instruct us. During Lent, let us ask for fresh insight, new desire, and greater power to love one another. This is how we show the world that He is real and that we are His. This love is the fruit that lasts.

Thursday, February 25, 2021 (Day 8)

Emily Bibens

Matthew 7:7-12

Psalm 138

"Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find..."

In their song "Tell the Truth" The Avett Brothers sing, "Tell the truth to yourself, and the rest will fall in place." How often do we dig down to the deeper truth of what we are asking for from God?

When I dig deeper, I find that I don't just want my old car to stop needing repairs (which would be nice); what I really want is less

anxiety, more security, and the reassurance that when everything material goes wrong, I still have something steadfast to lean on.

I don't think that our loving God ever begrudges us for asking for what we want or need, no matter how small or trivial, but when we dig deeper to the heart of what we desire, we might see the ways that God is already providing for us. In the stress of everyday life, I often forget that I have a God of abundant love and generosity and a community of friends, family, and church family that embody that love and generosity.

When I open my eyes to what I've been given, trust and ask for help, and join in God's call to care for others when they need help, I find that life is a little bit easier and much more joyful. Many things, big and small, go wrong in our lives. I find comfort in knowing that God is always present, listening, caring, and working in the world (and through us) for good.

Friday, February 26, 2021 (Day 9)

Eric Saulnier

Ezekiel 18:21–28

Matthew 5:20–26

Psalm 130

Life is painful. Fear is invariable. But we are not what happens to us; our lives are the sum of our reactions to what happens to us. Do we grasp at what we want to have or fear to lose, rage at the prospect of getting less than we think we deserve? This way of living places us in the “depths” from which in Psalm 130 we cry.

Happily, we can do better. God reminds us in Ezekiel that relief from our woes lies in examining our choices. Blaming God leads to nothing but suffering. The good news, as Psalm 130 says, is that God offers us “steadfast love” and “power to redeem.”

How do we experience this wonder? In Matthew, Jesus provides a clear answer: “So when you are offering your gift at the altar, if you remember that your brother or sister has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother or sister; and then come and offer your gift.” Faith without works is the absence of faith. If we want to benefit from the love and

redemption that heals, we must first make amends to those we have harmed.

Given this reality, maybe Lent is more than an opportunity to refrain from a pleasure for a few months. Maybe Lent is an invitation to stop suffering. And maybe we know God's peace when we offer our peace to others.

Saturday, February 27, 2021 (Day 10)

Sue Gronberg

Deuteronomy 26:16–19

Matthew 5:43–48

Psalm 119:1–8

This bit of Gospel (Matthew 5:43-48) is too hard for me. We're told to love and pray for our enemies, reminded that God blesses even those we're certain are unjust, chided that it's not much to love those who love us. All Jesus requires is that we "be perfect, as [our] heavenly Father is perfect." Well, I'd better hang on to God's grace with tooth and nail.

*It helps me to remember that *perfect* derives from Latin roots meaning "thoroughly" and "made"; something perfect is complete, lacking nothing, containing nothing extraneous. God created me in God's image, but I'm part of a fallen creation, and I'm a mess. My job is to keep working toward the perfection meant for me, and only God's grace lets me do that. I'm to love my neighbor, and the parable of the Good Samaritan shows me that ALL humans are my neighbor; I'm not to divide people into US and THEM. This love is labor, not warm feelings. Jesus requires us to work and pray for the good of all Creation, to love even the parts that raise our hackles, that seem to work against justice. That task often seems impossible, and I fall short again and again. I can't even pray wholeheartedly. But when I sin, I can and must repent, depend on Grace, and keep working toward God's perfect love. I won't get there alone, and God doesn't expect us to. Thanks be to God for that!*

Sunday, February 28, 2021 (2nd Sunday of Lent)

Fr. Chris Cole

Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16

Romans 4:13-25

Mark 8:31-38

Psalm 22:22-30

When Jesus first predicts his suffering, death and resurrection, Peter wants nothing to do with the news. He rebukes Jesus for making the prediction. Maybe Peter couldn't imagine how such a fate could befall his teacher, mentor and savior. Perhaps he couldn't bear the thought of the loss. For Peter it was easier to simply deny it and to tell Jesus to take it back. I can sympathize with Peter. It's hard to hear bad news and to accept it right away, especially when it shocks us. We struggle to cope. It's hard to sit with such news, to tolerate the feelings that come along with it. We want the bad news to go away, so the emotions, the anxiety, and the fears it brings will go away, too. We want to get rid of the news, and perhaps to rebuke the messenger, too. Our reactions may be very human, but as Jesus reminds us, to deny an unpleasant reality is to set our minds on only human things. Today let's ask the Lord to grant us the fortitude to accept life's news, even when we'd rather not, and to walk with us, to make us brave enough, to follow that news wherever it may lead.

Monday, March 1, 2021 (Day 11)

Sara Arnold

Daniel 9:3-10

Luke 6:27-38

Psalm 79:1-9

Luke 6:26-29 – “But I say to you that listen, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you. If anyone strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also;”

Luke 6:31 – “Do to others as you would have them do to you.”

Luke 6:36 – “Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.”

In today's environment of us vs. them, black or white, extremes of any and all ilk, I struggle with these scriptures. When we look in the face of

the other, we should see the face of God. How do we do that? I believe listening and empathy are the key. Why is her opinion so opposite from mine? Listen with an open mind to understand, not with my head spinning to formulate the sentences of a comeback. If I want him to understand me, then shouldn't I do the same for him? That "do to others" conundrum. Some days it is a struggle to "be merciful", but every day mercy is a more fulfilling way to experience life.

Tuesday, March 2, 2021 (Day 12)

Shawna Gehres

Isaiah 1:2–4,16–20

Matthew 23:1–12

Psalm 50:7–15,22–24

Isaiah 1:17 calls the reader to "learn to do good; seek justice, rescue the oppressed, defend the orphan, plead for the widow." This brought to mind the poem Amanda Gorman wrote and recited at the inauguration of President Biden: "the norms and notions of what just is isn't always justice."

When problems seem too big or too deep-rooted, my limited imagination struggles to envision a solution. I too easily accept what "just is." I believe God expects us to do more than settle for the limits of our minds, or to assume that poverty or homelessness or inequality or the partisan divide or climate change are problems too complex for us to solve. We must learn, seek, rescue, defend, and plead for. We must strive to change what "just is" to justice. For all.

Wednesday, March 3, 2021 (Day 13)

Caroline Crane

Jeremiah 18:1–11,18–20

Matthew 20:17–28

Psalm 31:9–16

Today's reading of Matthew 20: 17-28 reiterates the mission Jesus had on earth - to serve. Jesus knew he was going to his death, his ultimate service to humans. He was still trying to teach his disciples about what it means to follow him, what it means to serve without reward. I think

of this often. If I am to follow the way of Jesus what does that mean in my life today? It's so easy to be caught up in my own needs. It takes time and deliberate thought to focus on the needs of others. So how can I make service a purpose in my life? One way is intercessional prayer. Another is becoming anti-racist. It is important to me and has to help all people in the long run. The past few months I've been involved in discussions and readings about racism. There are lots more hands on things we all can do - volunteer to help children in school, donate to the food bank, take dinner to a sick friend, etc. Those actions are important but are they enough? Do my actions and my life model what Jesus wants us to do? I'm trying to remember every day to be kind, be generous of myself and to remember what Jesus gave to us.

Thursday, March 4, 2021 (Day 14)

Pat Woodrum

Jeremiah 17:5–10

Luke 16:19–31

Psalm 1

There are times when it seems as though our whole world is out of control. I pray for the time to come, when we return to what we once thought was normal.

Our lives today are fraught with many concerns and challenges. A worldwide pandemic, social isolation, churches closed, attempts to overturn our government, a lack of concern for the lives of others, etc. Yet, as I stroll through my garden, I see signs of spring everywhere. Tiny sprouts pushing up through the soil and birds building nests. God's promise for another new year. God is watching over us as stated in Psalm 1:3. "They are like trees planted by streams of water, which yield their fruit in its season and do not wither." The one thing I know for sure, is that we are in God's hands and he will not desert us.

Friday, March 5, 2021 (Day 15)

Melissa Smith

Genesis 37:3–4,12–28

Matthew 21:33–43

Psalm 105:16–22

In the stories from Genesis and Psalms, Joseph is betrayed by those who should have loved him. He was cast into slavery and suffering because his brothers wanted what he had and were jealous Joseph did not have to work as they did. The suffering Joseph endured did not break his faith. In fact, in slavery and in prison, Joseph did learn how to work and use the gift he had been given by God. Because of his hard work and faith, he was able to not only free himself but all of Egypt.

Our modern-day suffering is no different from the ancient stories of the Bible - suffering from not having enough, suffering from taking more than is ours, suffering from clinging to money, power, influence. We hurt others and we hurt ourselves. All of this suffering comes from being disconnected from God.

In Matthew, the parable teaches us that no one can do our work for us. No matter what we pay, no matter our important place in life, we MUST do the work.

We may not have the gift of dream interpretation, but we each have been given the gift of grace and forgiveness through Jesus. May we follow Joseph's example and give our gifts faithfully. May the suffering around us not break our faith, but inspire us to do the work we have been given - to love God and love our neighbor.

Saturday, March 6, 2021 (Day 16)

Jordan Bracht

Micah 7:14–15,18–20

Luke 15:11–32

Psalm 103:1–4(5–8)9–12

Micah 7:18-19 reads “Who is a God like you, pardoning iniquity and passing over the transgression of the remnant of your possession? He does not retain his anger forever, because he delights in showing clemency. He will again have compassion upon us; he will tread our

iniquities under foot. You will cast all our sins into the depths of the sea.”

Growing up, I believed God wanted me to reach some sort of spiritual perfection. Striving for this left me with spiritual pride—believing my high expectations for myself made me especially pious. However, striving for spiritual perfection simultaneously left me feeling ashamed and defeated because I could not eliminate my chronic slip-ups.

Micah 6:8 reveals that God wants us “...to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God.” Micah chapter 7 acknowledges that God’s people did not live up to these ideals—sound familiar? Yet Micah 7:18-19 illustrates that God sees the people’s lapses yet delights in restoring them, forgiving them, and having compassion on them *again*. *Pastor Nadia Bolz-Weber often says that we in the Church are 100% sinners and at the same time 100% saints—God knows this about us and loves us the same.*

In this season of Lent, may God give us the courage to acknowledge our imperfectness. May this allow us to be open to a fresh experience of God’s unending grace in our lives as we prepare for the ultimate grace of Easter.

Sunday, March 7, 2021 (3rd Sunday of Lent)

Deacon Deborah Underwood

Exodus 20:1-17

1 Corinthians 1:18-25

John 2:13-22

Psalm 19

When I think of the Ten Commandments, I think of a comic strip, Frank and Ernest, that I used to read in my morning paper. It showed them standing in front of a huge bookcase, full of books, and Frank said, “It’s amazing that it started with Ten Commandments”.

When I first look at the commandments, I see only the harshness. But once I look deeper, I see that the first four are about how to worship and love God.

The rest are how to treat your neighbor; maybe I can step back a little further and say it is about loving your neighbor.

I think once I read the Ten Commandments, and understand what God is *really asking me to do*, it looks a lot more achievable. I know it is not going to be easy, but it sounds like something I've heard before; Love God. Love your neighbor. Those are things worth striving for.

Monday, March 8, 2021 (Day 17)

Joe Wilkinson

2 Kings 5:1–15b

Luke 4:23–30

Psalm 42:1–7

Naaman is a fierce Aramean commander, known for his ruthless raids on neighboring Israel. He is also a leper and is desperate enough to hear the words from a captured Jewish girl, “the prophet in Samaria can heal him.” However, the King of Israel is enraged when Naaman appears and asks to be healed. Elisha gets wind of the situation and asks for Naaman to be sent to him. But when the proud and powerful man arrives, Elisha simply sends word with a messenger to go wash himself in the Jordan river, it becomes Naaman’s turn to be enraged. God was truly working through Naaman’s servants when they convinced him to wash, and he was healed. How many times are we too proud to do something simple, yet powerful? Especially when the suggestion comes from those we feel are somehow inferior to us?

In the psalm today, we see repetitive references to the life-giving qualities of water. Once again, water is the metaphor for giving us life. The author, in exile, longs for his lost ability to pray to God in the Temple (déjà vu!).

And in Luke’s passage, Jesus has returned from the desert to his hometown. He enrages those he grew up with by mentioning Naaman, a Gentile, who was healed by God. So, according to Luke, Jesus’ first teaching was that the Kingdom of God is for all, not just the Jews. And that is certainly Good News!

Tuesday, March 9, 2021 (Day 18)

Harry Dandelles

Matthew 18:21–35

Psalm 25:3–10

In the passage from Matthew, Jesus reminds us through a parable of the awesome power of forgiveness and the responsibility that goes with it. The symbolic king grants the gift of forgiveness to the servant however the servant does not have the goodwill, understanding or love to pass it on to another. In today's terminology he did not pay it forward.

Forgiveness requires both the love and courage of the forgiver, and the understanding and acceptance of the forgiven. Today's Psalm reinforces the concept of forgiveness, or mercy, coming from a place of steadfast love and faithfulness. As our Lord through his only son forgave our sins, so must we all go forward and forgive ourselves and others to bring love and peace to all.

Wednesday, March 10, 2021 (Day 19)

Laura Duncombe

Deuteronomy 4:1–2,5–9

Matthew 5:17–19

Psalm 78:1–6

In these passages, God commands us to do two things: keep His law and teach it to our children. It sounds simple, no? But as every teacher knows (and every covid-homeschooling parent is learning) teaching is anything but simple. To teach, you must first understand what you are teaching. How can I teach my boys God's law if I don't even understand it myself?

Bigots point to the Bible to defend their anti-tolerant views, while liberals like myself gleefully counter-quote the Bible's prohibition against eating shellfish, wearing polyester, and touching a football. Can either of us be right? How do I explain this to my kids?

Jesus does not let us off the hook. He did not “come to abolish [the laws] but to fulfill them.” We're meant to wonder, I think, about all of the intricacies and nuances of the Bible, instead of just pointing out the

parts we like and find useful. But my guiding star when I get too “in the weeds” is my favorite Lenten image—Jesus flipping over the tables in the temple. His arrival was indeed a departure from the status quo, and His primary law was “love thy neighbor.” When I’m in doubt about WWJD, I can always go back to this.

I will never have all the answers, but I can teach my children that loving God means seeing Him in every face, even the faces of people we disagree with. Now does anyone know a scripture about finishing your vegetables?

Thursday, March 11, 2021 (Day 20)

Marilyn Cook

Jeremiah 7:23–28

Luke 11:14–23

Psalm 95:6–11

The messages from today’s scriptures are:

Don’t doubt God’s power

Bow down – Listen - Obey - Trust

Learn from the past

A Kingdom divided against itself is laid waste

When our daughters were children I told them that God’s rules are like our rules as parents. They are not to keep us from having fun and enjoying life. They are to protect and guide us. But how do we sort through what rules are relevant for today? The world is very different from the times the Bible was written. Some stand up to the test of time and some don’t. I also believe that God didn’t stop talking to us after the Bible was written. So how do we do this? How do we navigate through what God wants for us today? A good place to start are the Ten Commandments, the Golden Rule, to love God with all of our souls, all of our hearts and all of our minds and to love our neighbors as ourselves.

I think that the scriptures for today stand the test of time. I am going to challenge myself to follow them and others more consciously. I don’t always put in the effort. I have found it helpful to keep God at my side and not somewhere far away. When I have heeded the messages from God and these scriptures they have never let me down.

Most Gracious God, We strive to always praise you, listen to you

through the scriptures and by what you tell us every day, trust you, obey you and learn from the past. We will listen because we really need your help in our personal lives and as inhabitants of the world in these divisive times. In Christ's name we pray. Amen

Friday, March 12, 2021 (Day 21)

Judy Randle

Hosea 14:1–9

Mark 12:28–34

Psalms 81:8–14

In this time of quiet thought, as we await the coming of Easter, we may wonder what kind of preparation is appropriate. Prayer? Actions? Serving others? Giving up candy? The answer is simple, and direct from Jesus.

One day, Jesus is asked which Commandment is the most important.

His answer: “Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.

“The second is this: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’

“There is no Commandment greater than these.”

The man to whom he was speaking acknowledged it was “well said”... and was “more important than all the burnt offerings and sacrifices.”

But as we know, simple and direct things are often the most difficult. Loving others as we love ourselves? We know who those “others” are — the individuals we avoid at all costs.

Because of COVID, it is easy to separate from anyone. We have a good excuse not to get out at all. But a person doesn't have to be face-to-face with another to give attention. A simple email or phone call in greeting or to see if anything is needed. Easy? No!

But, we all know how much we enjoy such surprise contacts. So, do unto others...

It is never too late to start. Come Easter, our hearts will be filled with joy!

Saturday, March 13, 2021 (Day 22)

Audra Brulc

Hosea 6:1–6

Luke 18:9–14

Psalm 51:15–20

In today's reading from Luke, Jesus does one of my favorite Jesus-things: he spins a good old-fashioned yarn. Writing about this passage felt a bit like choosing the low-hanging fruit, so I tried to prayerfully consider it (read: procrastinate) until I could figure out what exactly stood out to me. This time, I think it's the way that God works in the quiet places. In the breaths between whispered prayers. In the dark. Some of God's most profound mysteries happened in the quiet-dark—in the waters of the womb and the still air of the tomb. God doesn't wait for showy, ostentatious demonstrations of faith (even from us high-church Episcopalians) to start doing God's work.

Sometimes it feels like the bar of faithfulness is impossible to clear, but this story shows us what God is really after: humility. God wants us to seek out and offer up the messy, half-baked, un-glamorous prayers that are tucked into the dark, quiet corners of our hearts. Because God already knows who we really are, all the time. God isn't interested in the artificial versions of ourselves that we put on for others like a mask, especially when it leads our practice of faith to stray into the performative, the "holier than thou." Seeking humility is a constant check against our worst human impulses—and it's a challenge to invite God into the dark places, to sit back, and let God work.

Sunday, March 14, 2021 (4th Sunday of Lent)

Deacon Bert Bibens

Numbers 21:4-9

Ephesians 2:1-10

John 3:14-21

Psalm 107:1-3, 17-22

Almost exactly a year ago today, our way of life came to a grinding halt, with the advent of the coronavirus. Since then, we have taken some strange detours, leading in uncharted directions.

We read about Jesus' conversation with Nicodemus, introducing the

concept of being “born again”. That brings to mind other words and phrases like “reborn”, “death” and “raised up”. I also can’t help thinking of the reshaped attributes of my own existence, as this covid crisis stretches on.

Personally, I’m valuing my family and friend connections, with clearer vision. And, my love of “home” has heightened dramatically! In addition, my faith has become even more important, as the storm has weathered my consciousness.

What have we given up, or taken on, as practical aspects of life? Have you experienced a loss in your inner circle? Have “reborn” priorities taken hold, during covid? Any new discoveries about yourself, your needs, and desires settling into your mental framework? Will you continue some new habits, after the current threat passes?

I invite you to explore those answers, and say a prayer, either in thanksgiving, or begging God’s healing touch. Learning more about ourselves, is there still room for Christ in those reborn circumstances? I hope so!

Monday, March 15, 2021 (Day 23)

Caroline Chandler

Isaiah 65:17–25

John 4:43–54

Psalms 30:1–6, 11–13

I found the passages for my Lenten reflection to be poignant, most especially the passage from Isaiah in which we read about God’s purpose for a new heaven and a new Earth filled with joy. For a year now, I have commiserated with family and friends over the loss of loved ones. I write this now—with tears streaming down my face—refusing to believe that this grief is all that we are. Just as the royal official in John has unquestioning faith that Jesus will heal his son, I have faith that a joyful future for all of us is still possible. Throughout the difficulties of this past year, I still notice how I have never stopped searching for Joy. And there have been moments when I have found it. Through creative yet safe solutions that still allows me to support my family and friends, I am able to celebrate their achievements with them, no matter how small. What moments in your life have recently brought you joy?

Tuesday, March 16, 2021 (Day 24)

Ed Roling

Ezekiel 47:1–9,12

John 5:1–18

Psalm 46:1–8

Most gracious God, my Father Creator; most loving Son of God, my personal Savior; and God the Holy Spirit, my Sanctifier and the energy of God for me! On this day of Lent, 3/16, the birthdate of our son Joseph, I thank you, God, for the 25 years, five months, and 11 days of life Joey shared with us here on earth, till August 27, 2014.

I am aware of “the Church inviting us to the observance of a holy Lent, by self-examination and repentance; by prayer, fasting, and self-denial; and by reading and meditating on God’s holy Word.” My Lord, I pray to you now in the Words of our sacred Scriptures.

For today that Word is **from the Prophet Ezekiel, 47:1-9,12**. Ezekiel had a vision of life-giving power pouring from the Temple, bringing about growth and new life for both vegetation and for people’s minds and hearts. Somehow, Lord God, do that for me. Increase my love for you, as I strive this Lent for the hope that too often eludes me. Work a miracle in my heart!

And **from the Evangelist John 5:1-18**. In reflecting upon this Word, I see that I could truly benefit by calling out to you, Lord Jesus, to make me aware of the ways I have grown indifferent to the ways to reach out and assist others. I seek to repent of my wrongdoing in thought, word, and deed. “I do want to be made well. Heal me, Lord Jesus, heal me!”

And **from Psalm 46:1-8**. The writer paints a picture of the chaos, confusion, and fear that came from the political turmoil of their day. They asked the God of Jacob to help them. And the power of faith prevailed for them. Our times are very difficult for us today, as well. If we pray and ask God each day to help us, God will do that for us, and more!

Finally, God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, I want to pray now, not with words, but by being **silent*** *[for 3-5 minutes]*. *I want to listen* to what God speaks to me.* **[same six letters]* **Thank you, Jesus. Stay with me today. Amen.**

Wednesday, March 17, 2021 (Day 25)

Michael Bibens

Exodus 32:7–14

John 5:30–47

Psalms 106:6–7,19–23

I don't believe that God tests us. I find that version of God to be cruel and manipulative. I do believe the world God created for us is filled with good and evil that shape the way that we see the world. Over the last year, COVID-19 has wreaked havoc on our health, our economy, and the way that we spend our time. I hope that vaccines eradicate this virus and allow our economy to reverse ever-growing levels of unemployment. However, I do not want all aspects of my life to go back to the way they were before COVID-19. I call relatives now, get together with friends (socially distanced of course), read for fun, cook meals at home, and I have started praying every morning, all because this virus took away mindless activities that made me "too busy" in the past. I fear that once this virus is gone, we will only see the negative that came from it, and not be thankful for the perspective that it has given our lives.

My readings for this meditation all center around Exodus, and God's anger at his chosen people in their response to being delivered out of slavery in Egypt. They celebrated and idolized wealth, possessions, and security just like we do today. I pray that we will not make this same mistake when COVID-19 is gone. I hope that we will continually embrace God, family, and friends, and not rush back to our embrace of status, possessions, and greed.

Thursday, March 18, 2021 (Day 26)

Lizze Radford

Exodus 32:7–14

John 5:30–47

Psalms 106:6–7,19–23

How do I go about celebrating something I cannot yet see or fully anticipate, like Easter for early Christian communities? "Easter" for me this year might look like a world that is post pandemic or even post racism. So, how do I unlearn what the passage from Psalms calls "sins or committed iniquity" we might not even have played a hand in committing, the way that the Christians in the time of the Psalm writer

might have felt about their ancestors who followed Moses out of Egypt just to worship the calf?

I find comfort in the patterns of grace: in the marked leap of faith it took to leave Egypt, then back slide into worshipping the golden calf. Another leap to turn away from the calf and follow Moses after we get the 10 Commandments, and then backslide again into doubting Jesus being sent as the son of God. Jesus is asking us to make another leap of faith to accept him, to believe in him and to then be filled with the love of God when we follow his teachings.

It's easy in Lent to reflect about how I become "stiff necked," and reflecting on the things that become "Golden Calves" or separate me from the love of God. This year, I find myself reflecting on what the "Moseses" in my life are. What or who has "stood in the breach" of Old Testament wrath, met me on the mountain and brought me back into relationship with God?

Friday, March 19, 2021 (Day 27)

Lily Gehres

2 Samuel 7:4,8-16

Romans 4:13-18

Luke 2:41-52

Psalm 89:1-29 or 89:1-4, 26-29

In Luke 2:41-52, Mary and Joseph lost Jesus in Jerusalem after the festival of the Passover. Three days later, they found him in the temple, speaking with the teachers there, who were all impressed by the insightfulness of the adolescent Jesus. The end of the passage describes how through this experience, Jesus had increased his wisdom, age, and favor.

My favorite part of this story is that it demonstrates the importance of asking questions and learning from others as a fundamental part of growth, not only as children, but every single day of our lives. This is, in essence, the breaking of bread with one another. Admittedly, this is not easy to do in a pandemic. Reaching across the virtual expanse between ourselves and others is very difficult. Despite this, reaching out to others is important to do now more than ever, whether by mail or email or Zoom, so we can continue to grow with each other and with God.

Saturday, March 20, 2021 (Day 28)

Arianna Sanders

Jeremiah 11:18–20

John 7:37–52

Psalm 7:6–11

In times of distress and suffering, it is often hard to see God’s light, to be patient, to trust that He will help us work through our own weaknesses. One may find oneself filled with the weight of resentment and loathing. In a world filled with fierce division and unfair judgment, it is important to remember that the Lord is present in times of blessing and adversity. He teaches us to anchor in our faith, keeping an open mind and an open heart because with faith comes clarity.

In these passages, there are themes contemplating belief and judgement. More specifically, the Lord being the one to seek that judgment. The judgment one might attempt to seek on their own, is often not the right path to follow. Yet, the Lord offers us his light to align with; a light bright and powerful enough to withstand doubt through division. Once that clarity and faith is restored within, it is far easier to project it to the world. For light spreads quicker than darkness.

Sunday, March 21, 2021 (5th Sunday of Lent)

Jeff Cox

Jeremiah 31:31-34

Hebrews 5:5-10

John 12:20-33

Psalm 51:1-13 or Psalm 119:9-16

During the days of Jesus’ life on earth, he offered up prayers and petitions with fervent cries and tears to the one who could save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission.

Hebrews 5:7

Among other reasons, the early Christians developed the season of Lent to restore to fellowship those who had been separated from the body of Christ. I suspect in those days what separated people from the body of Christ were of the “naughty list” variety. But if you are like me, separation from the body of Christ has taken on new meaning over the

past several months. Hugs and hymns and holy spaces once enjoyed have been suspended, or have at least taken on a new, less tactile form in the digital space.

The referenced passage tells us that Jesus offered up prayers and petitions *with fervent cries and tears to the one who could save him*. *When was the last time I prayed and asked with such deep passion or intensity? I don't believe it is required of us to pray this way to be heard. But, at this time, perhaps our nation, our first responders, the marginalized, our leaders, our teachers, our health care professionals, those who live alone...maybe all of us feel the need to offer a fervent cry and petition for God's mercy and grace.*

The passage reveals that Jesus' prayers were indeed heard. The One who can save us will hear our prayers too.

Monday, March 22, 2021 (Day 29)

Becky Moseman

John 8:1–11 or John 8:12–20
Psalm 23

There is a pettiness here in the beginning of the story. The Pharisees know the law and want to trick Jesus. They don't like the way Jesus is shaking things up. It is hard to feel like one is losing control or losing one's power. They see Jesus as a threat to their tradition and the way things have always been. But we know that sometimes laws aren't great laws, or that the situation isn't really so easy to compartmentalize. People aren't all bad and one's actions may have conditions that lead to such things, even if ultimately the final action was wrong.

Jesus gave this woman, who was accused of adultery, grace and forgiveness (as he forgave the other sinners in the temple). He also opened the eyes of those present to see that all of us have sinned, but we aren't all bad. Sometimes people in crisis make terrible decisions. Or they start down a path and can't get back easily. I feel like this is where we are today in our society—so divided by politics, racism, and pandemic isolation. We need perspective, like Jesus said to the Pharisees: “Who here is without sin?”

I love the phrase, “Don't lose sight of the forest for the trees.” Don't get caught up and lose the spirit of the law and forget God loves us and we can be forgiven. Jesus wants us to extend this to each other. At the end

sof this story Jesus turns to the woman and says to go and not sin again. It is the parent knowing the child will mess up again in some way but for now, the relationship has been restored.

Tuesday, March 23, 2021 (Day 30)

Ellen Cummings

Numbers 21:4–9

John 8:21–30

Psalm 102:15–22

In John 8:21-30, Jesus relates that, “. . . you cannot go where I am going.” Only when he is lifted by us on the Cross, will we know Him. In Psalm 30: 1-6, 11-13, we learn that the Lord will reveal His Greatness. In the reading from Numbers, we hear the story of those who were bitten but will be healed by looking up to the metal snake made by Moses upon instruction from God.

Know Him. Reveal. Look Up. Words that conjure seeing the Lord before us. How in the modern age do we find opportunities to witness His Greatness? This time of COVID has been a tremendous trial in which we could not find comfort in the community of our church in traditional ways: going to church, sharing meals, taking communion, learning in our Sacred space. And yet, we have been given even more ways and more time to both look up and search inside ourselves. We witness God’s good works in our first responders, teachers, and our Church leaders. We pivot to nature and take time to view God’s wondrous creations. We witness those who need food and warmth and reach out to help. We recognize those in our larger community who have long suffered from systemic inequity and stand alongside them in unity. And God reveals His Greatness in all of these, and we are healed by Hope.

Wednesday, March 24, 2021 (Day 31)

Jack Gordon

Daniel 3:14–20,24–28

John 8:31–42

I have a friend who has a sign on his desk that reads “rise above it”. I wasn’t sure about the sign, so I asked him about it. He smiled and said

“It’s for you to figure out what “it” is before you can act on it.”

In the passage of John’s gospel, Jesus is in the last days of his teaching, his death drawing nearer by the day. The Jews want to believe him but they can’t let go of the past as “we are descendants of Abraham” and have never been slaves. But Jesus presses them to listen to him who is from the father.

The Jews to whom he was speaking could not figure out what “it” was. Jesus told them “it” was to leave the old behind and rise above that, and have faith in what he was teaching.

We are no different than the Jews. We let earthly things drag us down and can’t see the hope and promises of Jesus for each of us. All of you identify “it” and rise above “it” for a much more satisfying life. Amen

Thursday, March 25, 2021 (Day 32)

David Chandler

Isaiah 7:10-14

Psalms 45 or Psalm 40:5-11

Hebrews 10:4-10

Luke 1:26-38

As an English professor, I find myself thinking about language more often than sometimes. Perhaps it’s appropriate, then, that my Lenten reflection involves passages about the intricacies of biblical messages: the prophecy in Isaiah, Psalms about the limitations of words to describe God, Paul’s epistle to the Hebrews concerning the meaning of “sacrifice,” Mary’s visitation from the angel (a word which comes from the Greek *angelos*, or “messenger”). In the midst of the quiet, somber meditations we so often associate with Lent, we can give ourselves space to become more receptive to messages, whatever their forms. That’s at least one way to look at our mission in these coming months.

Another way, however, involves the way we do speak. Though our own language may lack the grandiosity of prophecy, the lyricism of the psalmists, or the eloquence of Paul, our words have inherent spiritual merit. As a liturgical people, Episcopalians understand communal speaking and recitation, but sometimes I wonder if in the midst of our calls and responses we don’t recognize language for the beautiful mystery it is. The act of speaking or writing is, itself, wondrous--an extension of the Word, the Logos, invoked in the Gospel of John. I can

think of nothing less mundane than language. So, this Lenten season, let us listen intently to the messages we receive. Let us use our words in turn with care and appreciation. Let us allow language to be an inherent miracle so that we can then understand its spiritual power more completely.

Friday, March 26, 2021 (Day 33)

Becky Moseman

Jeremiah 20:7–13

John 10:31–42

Psalm 18:1–7

“I love you, O Lord my strength, O Lord my stronghold, my crag, and my haven.” I have a long relationship with Psalm 18. For years I’ve read it once a week at my weekly staff meeting. Although I never asked for a relationship with psalms, this particular one is entwined with my soul.

When I had major surgery and was fighting control over pain, it was this psalm that came to me, giving me a tether when the “snares of death were set for me.” This psalm is such an interesting contrast to the gospel where the Jews are about to stone Jesus. In the psalm the narrator’s faith is so strong that even when in despair, it cannot be shaken. Whereas in the Gospel, the Jews are so afraid of being duped and misguided. They are afraid of what they can’t fully understand, as many of us find ourselves from time to time.

They don’t recognize the signs because everything they expect of a messiah isn’t what they see in Jesus. He isn’t riding in on a big horse with an army or from a prestigious family. He’s the unlikely hero like many of God’s chosen in scripture. Jesus tells them to believe by his works because they are God’s works. In our modern culture of facts and science supporting what is truth and real, it is easy to see why so many people doubt. Where are the hard facts? Where the Jews in the story were blinded by the strict adherence to the law, we are blinded by overlooking the small acts God uses to work through people around us. Works out of love for God and our neighbor.

At times we are all of the characters, the strong in faith reaching out for help, the faithful whose doubt and fear of change in understanding God’s message rock them to the core, and those who act out God’s love, which is sometimes misunderstood. What do we do with this? We

know that God hears our voices in God's heavenly dwelling. God uses us, unlikely heroes, to spread the message of God's love through works. Then we are to look for Jesus in the world around us.

Saturday, March 27, 2021 (Day 34)

Valerie Walls

Ezekiel 37:21–28

John 11:45–53

Psalm 85:1–7

John 11:47-48 Then the chief priests and the Pharisees called a meeting of the Sanhedrin. “What are we accomplishing?” they asked. “Here is this man performing many miraculous signs. If we let him go on like this, everyone will believe in him...”

Throughout life, we are not always in full view of the path that God has laid out for us. Sometimes, it may seem impossible to see an outcome, at first. But with faith, we can trust in God's plan. In the years before moving to Oklahoma, I sometimes questioned why I was not able to find employment. Then, it would become apparent. I was needed to help a family member, or two. I am grateful I had those opportunities, to be able to spend a week to help my sister-in-law and brother-in-law, and to be at home with a cousin who came to live with us for a few weeks, while his father was in Afghanistan. A miraculous sign.

Later on, when my husband, George, obtained a job in Tulsa, and our son and I stayed in Virginia until he graduated high school, we questioned how we could possibly survive, living in two households – paying for two sets of bills. But with faith, I did find employment which provided the extra income, along with some extra fringe benefits. This helped to sustain us until we completed our move, two years later. A miraculous sign which casts no doubt on my belief.

Sunday, March 28, 2021 (Palm Sunday)

Joe Williams

Isaiah 50:4-9a

Philippians 2:5-11

Mark 14:1-15:47 or Mark 15:1-39, [40-47]

Psalm 31:9-16

My favorite assignment in seminary was when we were given a character in the Gospel of Mark and were asked to rewrite their narrative. We embodied that person, crept into their life and created dialogue around their story— a take on *Lectio Divina*. I took that same approach with the woman from Bethany who broke open a jar of costly ointment and poured it on Jesus' head. Oil, especially first oils, were the most expensive, and kept the light burning in the tabernacle. Oil was also used to anoint kings and prophets, and at the time of death.

Mark's passion narrative is dominated by the theme of Jesus' kingship, and after his death, his body wasn't anointed, allowing us to anticipate what was to come. By embodying this singular character, I was able to draw connections from this seemingly insignificant moment to circumstances now. Today, we will hear how the crowd shouted, "Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!" as Jesus rode into the city— a phrase we repeat each time we celebrate the Eucharist. Our own baptism was sealed with holy oil on our heads, like Jesus' anointing today.

I pray we are able to embody the scripture we read, relate it to our own lives in such a way we are overcome with the love of God; that the oil used in our baptism illuminates us like the light in the tabernacle; and may this love cause us to shout for joy, like the crowd today.

Monday, March 29, 2021 (Day 35)

Bud Davis

Isaiah 42:1-9

Hebrews 9:11-15

John 12:1-11

Psalm 36:5-11

Can anything good come from devastation and ruin? How can God allow this to happen? At times it is difficult to remember that God is

God of all. Of all our pain, our joy, our sufferings, our celebrations. Isaiah gets it. He reminded Israel of who God is, how God works, and the larger purposes of God. The psalmist gets it. After God has answered prayer the suffering is replaced with singing and shouts of joy. Mary gets it. Her gift emanates from love and expresses understanding about Jesus and his purpose. Paul gets it. He tells the Hebrews when they surrender to a living God, as Jesus did, they can serve with a living faith. Today's readings all point to this: when we stop looking inwardly, when we choose to be still and listen for God, we are reminded that Jesus experienced loss beyond our comprehension and yet came to us to stay with us until we arrive at joy.

Tuesday, March 30, 2021 (Day 36)

Sharon Kelso

Isaiah 49:1-7

1 Corinthians 1:18-31

John 12:20-36

Psalm 71:1-14

The final week of Lent is upon us and we watch while Jesus, facing torment and a humiliating death, focuses on his last admonishments to his Apostles, and us. From John we see the words: "Whoever serves me must follow me...", but what does that mean?

As a child we use to play a game called Follow the Leader which entailed doing everything exactly as the leader did. It wasn't always easy but the objective was to move as the leader did no matter how tiring or difficult.

We have big shoes to fill in following Jesus. For each of us it requires great love, trust, faith, prayer and determination.

As we struggle to follow Him, Isaiah says "I will give you as a light to the nations, that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth." So as we move about our day, let us remember to follow our Leader so that we too, may share His light to those we meet.

Wednesday, March 31, 2021 (Day 37)

Harry Cook

Isaiah 50:4-9a

Hebrews 12:1-3

John 13:21-32

Psalm 70

Much of the Bible is a record of, and reaction to, persecution and suffering. Even at its height, the nation of Israel was never a major power and was often conquered or dominated by its more powerful neighbors, the Babylonians, Assyrians, Egyptians etc. Jesus lived his entire life while Israel was under Roman occupation. As a white, male, Christian American I have lived my life as a privileged citizen of the most powerful nation on earth. I understand persecution in a historical or conceptual manner but have seldom, or never, experienced persecution myself.

Lent seems an appropriate time to reflect on the plight of people who know persecution and suffering as a part of their daily lives, some of whom are our fellow countrymen. We all know, or know of, people who are persecuted and suffer because of their religion, race, nationality, sexual orientation, economic status or a host of other reasons. What is our responsibility toward these people? Are we complicit, either personally or as a nation, in their persecution?

I believe that our love for God is most directly demonstrated by how we interact with other people. What have we done to show God's love to our neighbors? Have we done enough? What more can we do?

“Oh Lord, make haste to help me!”

Thursday, April 1, 2021 (Day 38)

Susan Bibens

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

1 Corinthians 11:23-26

John 13:1-17, 31b-35

Psalm 116:1, 10-17

In the reading from the Gospel of John for Maundy Thursday, Jesus gives us a new commandment; that we should love one another as He

has loved us. This love for one another is how we will be identified as disciples of Jesus.

Love one another as Jesus loves us. At Trinity, there are many opportunities available for us to show this love: through our prayers for fellow parishioners and those who are sick or in distress; by giving money through the Social Justice Commission to assist people who are hungry or struggling; by giving your time by volunteering to bring a meal or help with a task at someone's home, at the church, or through Zoom! Hopefully, we will share this love and care with our family members, fellow students, co-workers, and neighbors, too.

How can we, each day, show God's love to others?

Almighty God, please help us as we try to fulfill the new commandment given to us by Jesus on Maundy Thursday; to love one another as Jesus loves us. Amen.

Friday, April 2, 2021 (Day 39)

Susan Glynn

Isaiah 52:13-53:12

Hebrews 10:16-25 or Hebrews 4:14-16; 5:7-9

John 18:1-19:42

Psalm 22

On April 2, 2021, Good Friday will be observed as the day Jesus was crucified on the cross. Reading the scriptures involving Jesus' last days, I focused on Hebrews' message "A Call to Persevere in Faith". Included in this passage (23) "Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful", (24) "And let's consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds", and (25) "not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching."

I focused on holding on to hope. I have hope during these unsettling times we are currently living through related to the pandemic. I believe with God's help and science we will persevere. I look forward to the Lenten Season remembering and honoring in prayer the life of Jesus and the impact on my life of hope and for all of us.

Saturday, April 3, 2021 (Day 40)

Rodger Randle

Job 14:1-14 or Lamentations 3:1-9, 19-24

1 Peter 4:1-8

Matthew 27:57-66 or John 19:38-42

Psalm 31:1-4, 15-16

Reading Job 14:1-14 we are reminded that the number of our days on earth is counted. Reflecting on this we ask ourselves why, with such limited time on earth, we fill our days in pursuit of trivialities with false meaning?

Our longings are for passing things that cannot bring lasting peace of spirit. The path Jesus offers us is easy, but it is not the path that society urges us to take. We may spend Sundays in church, but on the other days of the week, the television is constantly preaching of the Good News of the marvelous products that will bring us happiness if we buy them. Products that are available now for a low introductory price plus shipping and handling. Society tempts us with easy answers that can be found outside ourselves, when the true answers can only be found inside.

The season of Lent is a time of preparing for rebirth, not just the resurrection of Jesus, but the rebirth in all of us of lives lived in accordance with the message He brought us. The message of Jesus is about what is true and enduring. His resurrection was proof that He is eternal.

Carl Sandberg wrote a poem in which he asks the question that Lent presents to each of us. In the poem he tells of riding a limited express train speeding across the prairies. He pauses to contemplate the fact that one day all the steel cars of the train will be rust and all the people in it will be ashes. Sandberg turns to the man sitting next to him and asks where he is going. He replies, "Omaha".

ABOUT TRINITY EPISCOPAL CHURCH, TULSA

We are a church family made up of varied backgrounds and faith stories, and we invite you to add your voice to our collective story. Trinity has room for longtime followers of Christ, for people new to their faith, for doubters, and for everyone in between; there is no "right way." Every person is entitled to their own beliefs - we encourage questions and celebrate civil debate. We honor every human as a beautifully made manifestation of God, affirming all individuals as their authentic selves. We believe in doing the hard work to break down injustice and barriers to equality. And we welcome you and your unique contributions to our community.

We do not expect our members to have the same beliefs now, or ever. We are at our best when we listen and grow together. What we do hope is that you will find in Trinity a true community of faith. Where every person is both a teacher and a student and all are valued equally as their authentic selves. Wherever you are on your spiritual journey, Trinity welcomes you!

JOIN US VIRTUALLY

Sunday

10:00am (Rite I & Rite II alternating weeks)
streaming on Facebook

Monday-Saturday

11:00am TrinityConnect daily meditation
9:00pm Compline
Live streaming on Facebook

@TrinityTulsa on these platforms



TrinityTulsa.org



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