

Gifts of the Dark Wood



“Gift of Disappearing”

Maundy Thursday

April 1, 2021

First Lutheran Church - Sandpoint

WE GATHER

Music for Gathering

Welcome

On this day the Christian community gathers to begin the Three Days liturgy that does not end tonight; it continues with the worship of Good Friday and concludes with the Resurrection of Our Lord. Together the Three Days proclaim the mystery of our faith: Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

Threshold to the Dark Woods

[lights dim... soloist sings]

There's a path... though it winds its way through darkness
We would choose... to avoid it if we could
We awake... to an unexpected calling
God says, "come... there are gifts in the Dark Wood"

Pastor: Throughout Lent, we have been on a journey through the Dark Woods of our lives. The Dark Woods are those times when uncertainty, emptiness, lostness and temptation become companions. No one is immune from these aspects of life. Even Jesus. Indeed, the story of Jesus' final days in this human life is a story of a journey through a dark night of the soul for all those that surrounded him.

[soloist sings again, inviting the group to echo]

There's a path (echo: **there's a path**) ... though it winds its way through darkness
We would choose (**we would choose**) ... to avoid it if we could
We awake (**we awake**) ... to an unexpected calling
God says, "come (**God says, "come**) ... there are gifts in the Dark Wood"

Prayer

Let us pray,

Unexpected Love, Holy Spirit Guide

Open us to the story of pain and sacrificial love anew.

Help us to walk with each other as Jesus walks with us.

And help us this night to walk with Jesus in the Dark Woods of humanity's pain.

Amen.

Narrator: Tonight we encounter six people who had front row seats in this incredible real-life drama ...

Let us enter what the Celts call a “thin place”—a place of disappearing into a space and time where the human and divine seem particularly close. Let us allow these ancient people to call us more deeply into our faith story.

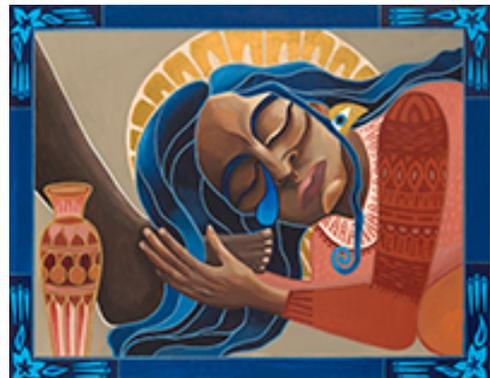
Song of Preparation (*hum*) - Just as I am

1 Just as I am, without one plea,
but that thy blood was shed for me,
and that thou bidd'st me come to thee,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

Mary, friend of Jesus

Scripture: John 12:1-11

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. 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. Judas objected: Why was the money not used to feed the poor? Jesus said, "Leave her alone. She bought it so that she might keep it for the day of my burial."



Narrator: Mary's anointing of Jesus belonged to the tradition of honoring someone with sweet-smelling oil made of a combination of many herbs. This was used at the consecration of kings and also as anointing for burial. In this one act, Mary offers signs of love and honor. The early Christians then used this same scented oil as part of their baptismal and confirmation rites to emphasize their new identity with Christ (which also means “anointed one”). So tonight, inspired by Mary's act, we anoint our own foreheads with oil, as those early Christians did, with a sign of the cross and the words, “You are God's Beloved Child.”

Using the small vial of unscented olive oil, use your finger to use a drop to make the sign of the cross on your forehead.

3 Just as I am, thou wilt receive,
wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve;
because thy promise I believe,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come,

Simon Peter, disciple

Scripture: John 13:3-8; 12-16:



When they finished supper, Jesus 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 a towel. He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?" After he had washed their feet and returned to the table, he said to them, "Do you know what I have done to you? Learn from me. You call me teacher, Lord. If I have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet."

Hum "The Servant Song"(ELW 659)

Brother, sister, let me serve you
Let me be as Christ to you
Pray that I may have the grace to
Let you be my servant, too

We are pilgrims on a journey
We're together on this road
We are here to help each other
Walk the mile and bear the load

Narrator: Jesus used water to model the kind of love we must have for one another—a love that serves the least of our brothers and sisters. Anoint Hands with oil. Let this be a symbol of our commitment to love our neighbors.

When all have finished, the people finish the song, vs. 5-6

When we sing to God in heaven
We shall find such harmony
Born of all we've known together
Of Christ's love and agony

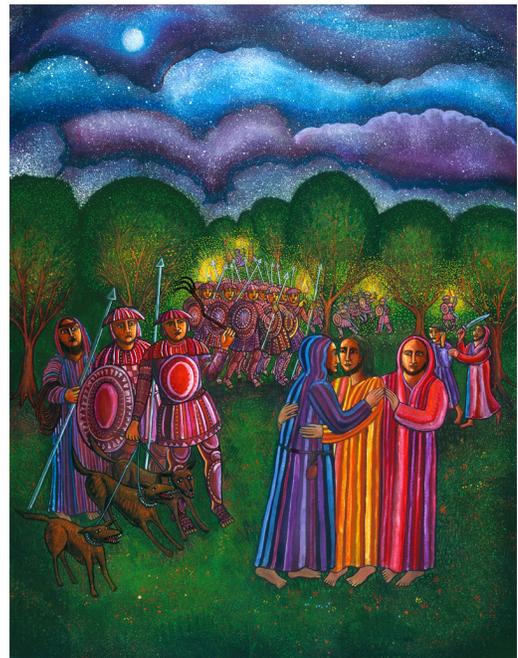
Brother, sister, let me serve you
Let me be as Christ to you
Pray that I may have the grace to
Let you be my servant, too

Judas, disciple

Scripture: John 13:21-30



Jesus was troubled in spirit that night, and he said, "I'm telling you: one of you is going to betray me." The disciples looked at each other, not sure who or what he was talking about. Peter leaned over to Jesus and said, "Lord, who is it?" Jesus turned to Judas, and gave him his own piece of bread. "Go quickly," Jesus said to him. "Do what you are going to do."



CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Friends in Christ, in this Lenten season we have heard our Lord's call to struggle against sin, death, and the devil—all that keeps us from loving God and each other. This is the struggle to which we were called at baptism.

Within the community of the church, God never wearies of forgiving sin and giving the peace of reconciliation. On this night let us confess our sin against God and our neighbor, and enter the celebration of the great Three Days reconciled with God and with one another.

Silence for confession

Most merciful God,
we confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name.
Amen.

In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and for his sake God forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of the church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the **+** Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

4 Just as I am; thy love unknown
has broken ev'ry barrier down;
now to be thine, yea, thine alone,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

A Roman Soldier

Scripture: *[a narrative of scripture]*
After dinner, they went to the Garden of Gethsemane and Jesus prayed. And then the soldiers came, and they and arrested Jesus. They took him to the Council, and to the Governor's palace, where they tried to make it look like a trial--but it wasn't. And then finally, they led him away, to the place where criminals were hung, always, on crosses. So that they would die—slowly, painfully. Jesus was hung in between two other crosses, bandits on each side of him. And the sign over Jesus' cross said, "This was the King of the Jews."



Roman centurion



PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

United by the servant love of God in Christ, we pray this holy night for the needs of the world.

A brief silence.

You call your people to hand on what we receive from you. Form all your disciples into tellers of your story in word and deed like Mary Magdalene. From one generation to the next, give your church hunger for your promises and joy in sharing your word. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Your creation provides all that we need. Cleanse and protect the water you have given for washing and drinking, water on which all life depends. Teach us how to live so that there is enough for all. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

You redeemed your people from slavery. Preserve people throughout the world who flee violence and oppression (*especially*). Establish just leadership to help men and women like Judas and the Centurion see another way to address the injustices in the world. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Jesus loved his followers to the end. Grant assurance of that love to all who need it: those living with guilt, those struggling to forgive, those who are lonely or overlooked. Heal the sick and embrace the dying with the love of Mary, the mother of Jesus and Salome (*especially*). Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Inspire this congregation's ministries of service (*especially*), that we love as Jesus loved us. Give us renewed courage to serve. With Peter, help us learn to receive grace as well as give it. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

Your glory shone in the suffering, death, and resurrection of Jesus. We thank you for generations of the faithful who have proclaimed our Lord's death. Unite us with them in hope until he comes again. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Hear these and all our prayers, O God, in the name of the one who loves us to the end, Jesus Christ our Redeemer.

Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.**

**Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those
who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.**

**For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
forever and ever. Amen.**

Stripping of the Altar: *You are invited to hum Jesus' request to the Disciples in the Garden, "Stay With Me" (ELW #348) as the candles are extinguished and the Altar is stripped. Through this stark ritual we recall that Jesus was abandoned by his followers, stripped of his dignity, and left to face the cross alone. We depart in silence, ready to continue the celebration of the Three Days on Good Friday (resources are available online). Each service builds on the prior worship, as we remember Jesus' saving acts for the world.*

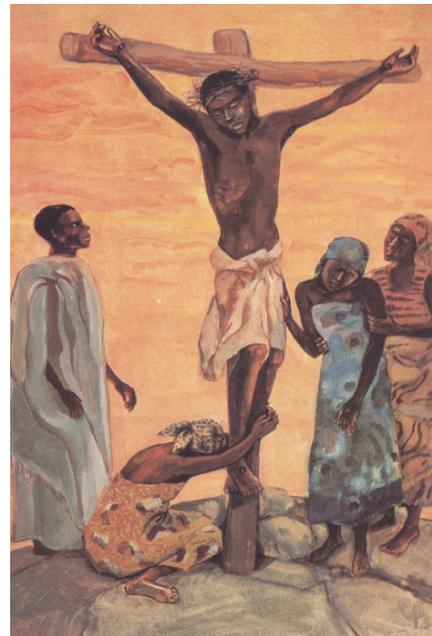
Stay with Me (ELW 348) - Repeat until altar cleared

Stay with me,
remain here with me,
watch and pray.
Watch and pray.

Mary, Mother of Jesus

Scripture: *[a narrative of scripture]*

Standing near the cross of Jesus were his mother and some other women he had known well. When he saw his mother, and the disciple John there in front of him, Jesus said, "Take this son in my place... Take good care of my mother."



Hum *O God, Why Are You Silent* (ELW 703) verse 1 &3

1 O God, why are you silent?
I cannot hear your voice;
the proud and strong and violent
all claim you and rejoice;
you promised you would hold me
with tenderness and care.
Draw near, O Love, enfold me,
and ease the pain I bear.

3 Through endless nights of weeping,
through weary days of grief,
my heart is in your keeping,
my comfort, my relief.
Come, share my tears and sadness, come,
suffer in my pain, oh, bring me home to
gladness,
restore my hope again.

Salome, friend of Jesus



Scripture: *[a narrative of scripture]*

Mark's gospel mentions our last character at the scene of the cross, "Some women were watching from a distance. Among them were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James the younger and of Joseph, and Salome." Salome later accompanies the women to the tomb.

Narrator: Salome and the others have led us to the cross where you are invited to stay with Jesus a while, praying for all those who suffer injustice in this world. Reflect on the gifts the Dark Wood have revealed on our journey to the cross. Stay as long as you want in vigil at the cross.

Were you there when they
 crucified my Lord
Were you there when they
 crucified my Lord
oh... sometimes it causes me to
tremble, tremble, tremble
Were you there when they
 crucified my Lord



There will be no benediction. You are invited to stay in prayer and meditation as long as you would like. Please leave the church in silence while physically distancing. Online Good Friday worship opportunities can be found on our website. Easter services are 8:00 a.m. (outside) and 10:00 a.m.

Worship Notes:

Series based on *Gifts of the Dark Wood* by Eric Elnes
All liturgy/drama by Marcia McFee, www.worshipdesignstudio.com

“There’s a Path” words by Marcia McFee, music by Chuck Bell.

Songs: “Just as I Am” by Charlotte Elliott - Public Domain, “Servant Song” Text by Richard Gillard © 1997 Scripture in Song (Integrity Music, Inc). “Stay With Me” Text and Music © 1984 Les Presses de Taizé, Gia; “O God, Why Are You Silent?” Text by Marty Haugen © 2000 Gia Publications. Reprinted and streamed with permission. All rights reserved. OneLicense.net A-705894

Images:

- Title Image of Cross Photo by Daniel Joshua on Unsplash
- Pittman, Lauren Wright. Anointed, from **Art in the Christian Tradition**, a project of the Vanderbilt Divinity Library, Nashville, TN. <http://diglib.library.vanderbilt.edu/act-imagelink.pl?RC=57085> [retrieved March 30, 2021]. Original source: <http://www.lewpstudio.com> - copyright by Lauren Wright Pittman.
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- Weyden, Rogier van der, 1399 or 1400-1464. Mary's Tears, detail from Descent from the Cross, from **Art in the Christian Tradition**, a project of the Vanderbilt Divinity Library, Nashville, TN. <http://diglib.library.vanderbilt.edu/act-imagelink.pl?RC=55988> [retrieved March 30, 2021]. Original source: [http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Weyden,_Rogier_van_der_-_Descent_from_the_Cross_-_Detail_women_\(left\).jpg](http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Weyden,_Rogier_van_der_-_Descent_from_the_Cross_-_Detail_women_(left).jpg)
- Lantern Photo by Thought Catalog on Unsplash
- Angelico, fra, approximately 1400-1455. Descent from the Cross, from **Art in the Christian Tradition**, a project of the Vanderbilt Divinity Library, Nashville, TN. <http://diglib.library.vanderbilt.edu/act-imagelink.pl?RC=47859> [retrieved March 30, 2021]. Original source: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Fra_Angelico_076.jpg.

Worship Team:

Piano - Colleen Culwell

Monologues: Mary, friend of Jesus (Tina Sundquist); Peter (Dave Sundquist); Judas (Doug Bradetich); Roman Soldier (Foster Cline); Mary, mother of Jesus (Jenn VanVolkinburg); Salome (Christi Paulsen)

Scripture: Pastor Steve Neuder

Narrator and Presiding Pastor: Pastor Lori Morton

AV Tech: Scott Youngren

<https://youtu.be/8YQcZJk6INI>