

Once for All

Reflections and Prayers on the Cross of Christ
by the members and friends of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church

Lent: February, 2007

You only get one life to live.

For some reason, I've been thinking a lot about that lately - about how fragile and short our lives can be, wondering how much time I have left and whether if I'm using that time wisely. As I bear down on the last third of my work life, I find myself wondering about the value of my work and my life, and what I want to leave behind.

That is the function of Lent, I believe: to make time for us reflect upon our lives and where our lives are taking us. Lent begins Ash Wednesday, with those terrible words God first spoke to Adam and Eve as they were cast out of paradise, "Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return." Remember that you are not gods, remember that your days are numbered. Bad news, that would surely be, were it not for the words with which Lent ends on Easter Sunday, "He is not here, he is risen!" We have been saved, at great price, by one who died in our place. Saved not just from the death of our bodies but from the death of our souls, from the death of friendship and love, from the death of our hopes and dreams. In Jesus Christ, we have a second chance at life. In Jesus Christ, we have one more day.

To help us explore that new life and the price Jesus paid for it, we have the season of Lent, the forty days and five Sundays between Ash Wednesday and Easter. Forty days to step back and look at our lives, forty days to follow Christ to the cross he carried for us, forty days to ponder what we have to share and whether we dare to share it. To help you set aside that time, we offer this devotional: selections from the Gospel according to Luke, describing Jesus' ministry and the final days of his life; interwoven with readings from prophets Joel and Isaiah, that describe the suffering and death that paid for our sins. Each passage is accompanied by a devotion and prayer written by one of your friends at Good Shepherd. Forty devotions, one per day, from Ash Wednesday to Easter - each a window into the life of Christ, each a window into the heart and faith of a sinner like you and me, whose life had been spared by the one who taught us how to live.

We have been saved at great price. Will you share or will you squander the gift you have been given?

*God's peace,
Pastor Jim*

Ash Wednesday, February 21, 2007

Joel 2:12-14 *Yet even now, says the LORD, return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning; rend your hearts and not your clothing. Return to the LORD, your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, and relents from punishing. Who knows whether he will not turn and relent, and leave a blessing behind him, a grain offering and a drink offering for the LORD, your God?*

There is no seed to plant, no food to eat, no green grass for the animals...a time of total destruction by swarms of locusts. The year is sometime between 400 and 350 B.C. in the land of Judah. The prophet, Joel, sees this plague as God's judgment on the people. Joel calls them to lament and return to the LORD.

Have you ever experienced a plague like locusts? Many years ago I lived in a small, southern Texas town that was invaded by crickets. I mean thousands of crickets that totally covered the outside of buildings in the business area of the town. Shopkeepers stood at their doors frantically sweeping with brooms to keep the "invaders" out. If not, fabrics and food would be devoured.

Yet even now there are other plagues that devour our lives like jealousy, addictions, verbal and physical abuse, feeling unworthy, fear and so many more. To the people of Judah the LORD is saying RETURN.....NOW with all your heart. As we enter the Lenten season the LORD calls us to RETURN.....NOW....with all our heart. Note that Joel uses the word "return" twice in this passage.

I'm sure you have been invited to return to a class or family reunion after many years have gone by and you wondered how you would be received. In Joel we read that the LORD we are returning to this Lenten season is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. Where else can you find such a welcome? Yet even now, says the LORD, return to me....return to the LORD, your God.

Open my heart, LORD, that I may return with all my heart and know your steadfast love. Amen

Merle Malmquist

Ash Wednesday Worship Service of Ashes, Song and Prayer
7:00 pm, February 21, at the Corpus Christi Center, corner 120th & Quincy

Our Ash Wednesday service marks the beginning of Lent with the sign of the cross in ash upon our foreheads. This cross echoes our Baptismal anointing, when we were buried with Christ. The ash is a chilling reminder of our mortality, but because our death is now in Christ our endings are but beginnings. We'll mark the beginning of new life in Christ by reflecting on the things that clutter our lives and our souls, then offer God those very things that come between us and God. Throughout the service we'll share the gentle, haunting beauty of music from taizé, contemplative songs of prayer that feature short, easy-to-learn, thoughtful refrains, based in words of scripture.

Thursday, February 22, 2007

Luke 4:14-21 Then Jesus, filled with the power of the Spirit, returned to Galilee, and a report about him spread through all the surrounding country. He began to teach in their synagogues and was praised by everyone.

When he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, he went to the synagogue on the sabbath day, as was his custom. He stood up to read, and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

And he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant, and sat down. The eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. Then he began to say to them, "Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing."

Jesus, triune God, I am, I was, We ARE: All in One; One of Three. So when Jesus was filled with the power of the Spirit, He must have glowed!! The Holy Trinity is such a mystery. . .if identical twins think alike, dress similar (without knowing), act alike; from one being, what power must come to us from the Holy Spirit 3 in 1??

When Jesus read from Isaiah 61:1-2, being filled with the Holy Spirit and all knowing, it is so profound to think that He was the One who He was reading about to profess "I am He." The fulfillment of scripture! All we have to do is Believe; God's grace is upon us.

There have been several times in my life when I have felt the Holy Spirit in answer to my prayers, or realized later, that He was there with me in a situation and answered my prayer or need. I'm sure you have felt Him at work in your life too!! We can do everything through Him, in Him, and with Him; just ASK.

Dear Lord, help us to remember to be with you in thought and prayer every day. We know that you are always there for us. Let us call on your name and praise you for your power, grace, and healing. Thank you, Triune God, for your presence in our lives. Amen.

Donna Preisler

Friday, February 23, 2007

Luke 8:22-25 *One day he got into a boat with his disciples, and he said to them, "Let us go across to the other side of the lake." So they put out, and while they were sailing he fell asleep. A windstorm swept down on the lake, and the boat was filling with water, and they were in danger. They went to him and woke him up, shouting, "Master, Master, we are perishing!" And he woke up and rebuked the wind and the raging waves; they ceased, and there was a calm. He said to them, "Where is your faith?" They were afraid and amazed, and said to one another, "Who then is this, that he commands even the winds and the water, and they obey him?"*

What stands out for me in this verse are three words: "They were afraid." I was afraid. This word can also be terror at what will happen to me. As a child during the depression, my father would come home drunk - his escape from the cares of the world, no work and four children to provide for.

What emotions were programmed into me: fear, anger, escape, denial. My children still say I'm in denial at 82 years old. What do they know?

These emotions can lead to addictions in the future - food, alcohol, drugs, sexual promiscuity, anger, unforgiveness. You name it. Beware, Satan has planned an addiction for each one of us.

The fear that immobilizes came upon me later in life. In one week's time, three of my family were taken to Holland Hospital with the police involved. This was after our whole family received Christ. First, my husband's job was downsized, he had surgery ending up with blood clots in the lung - a life threatening situation. My son was in an accident and another young man was killed. My daughter was driving down a busy street when a girl, running across the street, ran into the side of her vehicle. I have questioned the cause of these happenings in my life and sought council if it was God or satan. No one had a satisfactory answer for me.

I now *know* that God has not given me the spirit of fear but of love, power, and a sound mind. I now *know* that the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart need to be pleasing to the Lord. I now *know* that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. I now *know* that the book of James talks about four wisdoms that can affect my life for change. They are my own sensual wisdom (self sufficiency); the wisdom of the world; the wisdom of satan (yes, he has wisdom); and the wisdom of the Lord.

I am still working on the question *Is everything that happens to us from God?* Jesus said to Simon, "Satan has been given permission to sift you like wheat, but I am interceding for you that your faith not fail."

Heavenly Father, In this Lenten season teach us what it means to fear you and how knowing without a doubt that your perfect, agape love to each one of us casts our ALL fear from our hearts. Amen.

Margaret Gonder

(Resident at McIntosh Manor)

Saturday, February 24, 2007

Luke 8:42b-48 *As Jesus went, the crowds pressed in on him. Now there was a woman who had been suffering from hemorrhages for twelve years; and though she had spent all she had on physicians, no one could cure her. She came up behind him and touched the fringe of his clothes, and immediately her hemorrhage stopped. Then Jesus asked, "Who touched me?" When all denied it, Peter said, "Master, the crowds surround you and press in on you." But Jesus said, "Someone touched me; for I noticed that power had gone out from me." When the woman saw that she could not remain hidden, she came trembling; and falling down before him, she declared in the presence of all the people why she had touched him, and how she had been immediately healed. He said to her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace."*

When I was feeling really bad because my marriage was over, I went to see many doctors. I was prescribed medications and told to "focus on myself." I didn't know how to do that.

It was through church and "spiritual" 12-Step Meetings that I was able to even see myself. My image of God being judgmental changed to God being forgiving and loving. So then I could forgive and love myself and others. I finally learned to focus on myself. Now I only go to doctors when I have to, but I attend church and 12-Step Meetings as often as I can.

In this text, I like how the woman is finally healed just by reaching out and touching Jesus. Oh, the times I've suffered and tried everything I know to feel better until finally, in desperation, I pray. I've found a release through prayer that not only redirects my focus, but feels like a weight is removed from me.

And then she's caught. Jesus knows what she's done. What an awful feeling. Wouldn't it be easier to run? She comes forth and admits what she's done. That's so hard to do, but it's so freeing. Because of her actions she is healed - and she has Jesus' approval. Isn't that what we all want? To be healed and right with God? I'll focus on that.

God, help us to reach for you when we need to be healed. Please guide us to do your will so as to spare us the suffering "our" will brings us. Thank you for your forgiveness. May we do the same for our fellow people. Amen

Julie Pearson

The First Sunday of Lent, February 25, 2007

Worship with Holy Communion, 10:00 am, at the Corpus Christi Center, 120th & Quincy

We face daily temptations to abandon Christ and serve only ourselves, just as Jesus was tempted by Satan after being filled with the Holy Spirit at his baptism. Just as his response to those temptations defined what it means for him to be called "the Son of God," so our response to temptation defines what it means for each of us to be called to follow Jesus. We have been saved at great price - will you lose your life by clutching it, or will you gain your life by giving it away?

Monday, February 26, 2007

Isaiah 42:1-4 Here is my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen, in whom my soul delights; I have put my spirit upon him; he will bring forth justice to the nations. He will not cry or lift up his voice, or make it heard in the street; a bruised reed he will not break, and a dimly burning wick he will not quench; he will faithfully bring forth justice. He will not grow faint or be crushed until he has established justice in the earth; and the coastlands wait for his teaching.

The part of this scripture that caught my eye was... “a bruised reed he will not break and a dimly burning wick he will not quench.”

Several years ago when I was going through an unwanted divorce, I was that bruised reed. Even though I was bruised, Christ in his mercy never failed me or broke me. Having to depend on Him each day, hour and second has brought my dimly burning wick into a flame.

As we go through these troubles and trials, we must assure one another that God is in control and that he will never leave us or forsake us. Often times we hear someone say they are “out of control.” When we are “out of control” and put God “in control,” that is the best place to be. Bruised? Yes. Dimly burning wick? Yes. Give Him control. He holds our tattered lives in His hands and heals our bodies and spirits so we may stand firm with a burning desire to do His will.

Sharon Arntson

Tuesday, February 27, 2007

Isaiah 49:1-6 Listen to me, O coastlands, pay attention, you peoples from far away! The LORD called me before I was born, while I was in my mother's womb he named me. He made my mouth like a sharp sword, in the shadow of his hand he hid me; he made me a polished arrow, in his quiver he hid me away. And he said to me, "You are my servant, Israel, in whom I will be glorified." But I said, "I have labored in vain, I have spent my strength for nothing and vanity; yet surely my cause is with the LORD, and my reward with my God." And now the LORD says, who formed me in the womb to be his servant, to bring Jacob back to him, and that Israel might be gathered to him, for I am honored in the sight of the LORD, and my God has become my strength – he says, "It is too light a thing that you should be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to restore the survivors of Israel; I will give you as a light to the nations, that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth."

Poor Isaiah! God's "chosen spokesperson" was given the impossible task of trying to lead the tribes of Jacob and God's chosen people, Israel, back to their faith in the one true God, and he's ready to quit. He's done his best, but it didn't work out like he wanted. He has faith God will appreciate his efforts and have mercy on him. But, God says, this was too small a task. Now suck it up and bring the Gentiles to me as well!

We can all relate. As a child, my mom would ask me to clean my room before I'd go out and play. Upon completion of this task in short order by cramming the closet and hiding stuff under the bed, she'd say that since it was so easy I could go help my three brothers do their rooms as well. My first job out of college was running a Sears store whose sales were declining in a failing farm town in Storm Lake, Iowa. After righting the ship in 18 months and making it a profitable, smooth running operation, they said, "Great work, now go fix Ludington!" With my children, I'd help them with their math homework, and when they got it right, instead of letting them off the hook, I'd make them work on their English. As a Christian, I think God wants us to do the best we can and keep spreading His Word, like Isaiah and Christ, and deliver His message to others as we continue our journey through life's ever changing challenges.

Lord, help us all to learn the value of your love for us, and to persevere in continuing to spread the "Good News" of our salvation, through Christ your Son, despite all the obstacles we face in our lives. Amen

Scott Tomberlin

Wednesday, February 28, 2007

Luke 9:1-6 Then Jesus called the twelve together and gave them power and authority over all demons and to cure diseases, and he sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal. He said to them, "Take nothing for your journey, no staff, nor bag, nor bread, nor money – not even an extra tunic. Whatever house you enter, stay there, and leave from there. Wherever they do not welcome you, as you are leaving that town shake the dust off your feet as a testimony against them." They departed and went through the villages, bringing the good news and curing diseases everywhere.

I have been a nurse for 16 years. Throughout my experiences, the one gift that has been the most helpful to my pediatric patients and their families is the gift of presence - actually listening and helping the families and the child cope with how a certain disease or condition has impacted their lives. More than teaching a skill or educating them about their illness, the interaction - personal and emotional - that these circumstances bring to bear, and assisting them through the process, has been the most important to the family, and the most satisfying aspect of my career.

I think that God is telling us in this passage that we need to remember that it is through the dynamic of the human-to-human contact that God's presence acts through us. We should cherish this basic interaction as the most precious in the time that it occurs, to learn more about ourselves and others, gaining through these experiences a better understanding of how God intended us to be. We are equipped with all we need to give ourselves to others and receive from others. This gift has the ability to heal and cure what ails us.

Even when we give of ourselves with good intentions and it is not well received by others, both parties are forever touched by the interaction. We should take from these interactions and learn from them, move on and build for the next interaction. Our readiness to proclaim God's presence and receive from or give to others, can be limited by our own dependence on worldly possessions, and our focus on differences among ourselves. I think that God is also trying to challenge us toward interactions that may not be comfortable for us- to give up our worldly possessions, trust in Him, and go forward to help those and learn from those that are different than us. These differences include differences in gender, ethnicity, religion, sexual preferences, cultural practices, language, and others. We are not alone in this dynamic. Together, in God's presence, all can be accomplished with faith.

It is easy to forget the gifts You have given us, instead paying attention to the importance of worldly gifts. Help us to remember that You have given us all we need to help others. Help us to not close ourselves off from the opportunity to selflessly help others with pure intentions, so that we may be closer to You and know what You have intended for us. Amen.

Angela Reed

Thursday, March 1, 2007

Luke 9:23-25 Then he said to them all, "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will save it. What does it profit them if they gain the whole world, but lose or forfeit themselves?"

We live in a consumer society where what we have seems never enough and what we are is never enough. Daily we are bombarded with advertisements that try to sell us hopes and dreams; mostly hope of what the things we buy can do for us. To see this one needs only to look at the names of perfumes: *Miracle, Forever, Happy, Beautiful, and Euphoria*. I'll be the first to admit that ads are hard to resist. Especially the ones that say "70% off." It might be something we think we "need" for Christmas eleven months down the road! We buy, buy, buy and accumulate. In the process we expend an inordinate amount of energy shopping, managing, organizing, and caring for the "stuff," and spend a lot of money. In some cases the credit card debt becomes a nightmare. Then one day we find ourselves saying, "I have way too much stuff!" When I find myself saying that, and I do, I know I'm on the wrong track. And isn't that a coincidence that I just happened to pick up Luke 9:23-25 to reflect on for the Lenten devotional?

So, when I read Jesus' words, "Take up your cross and follow me" I ask myself, "Why not take notice? What good will all the material things do for my soul and for others?" I need to change! Yes, the more I come to know God, the more I'll put my time, energy, and money into reaching out to the needs; whether it's for the sick, the hungry, the poor, the lonely. I'll work and pray for a world at peace, where there's honesty, fidelity, and humility in our relationships. It's true my heart is restless until I find rest in God! And my hope in this season of Lent is that I trust God, grow in faith, be obedient to His word so that my life can be transformed. The hymn "Change My Heart, O God" is my prayer for you and me.

*"Change my heart, O God. Make it ever true.
Change my heart, O God. May I be like you.
You are the potter, I am the clay;
Mold me and make me, this is what I pray.
Change my heart, O God. Make it ever true.
Change my heart, O God. May I be like you."*

Ellie Buggeln

Friday, March 2, 2007

Isaiah 50:4-6 The LORD GOD has given me the tongue of a teacher, that I may know how to sustain the weary with a word. Morning by morning he wakens – wakens my ear to listen as those who are taught. The LORD GOD has opened my ear, and I was not rebellious, I did not turn backward. I gave my back to those who struck me, and my cheeks to those who pulled out the beard; I did not hide my face from insult and spitting.

How blessed the prophet Isaiah was! The LORD GOD used him mightily. Sometimes we wonder how, and even if, the Lord is using us in any way. Sometimes it's hard for us to see our talents, to see how we affect people. We envy people like Isaiah and others we know who seem to know what their mission in life is.

But it wasn't always an easy life for Isaiah, either. He was beaten, his beard was pulled out, he was spit on and insulted. And that was just for starters. I wonder if we could bear up under the persecution that Isaiah and the other Old Testament prophets experienced. I wonder if we have the strength to stand up for the Lord and for our beliefs as the martyrs did in the first century and later.

When I think of what Christians in other parts of the world, especially in the Muslim areas, are experiencing right now, I'm ashamed to acknowledge that I don't think I could take it. I'm not sure I could stand firm. However, the LORD GOD used Isaiah; He can use me also. I need to put myself, body and spirit and soul, into His hands, and let Him use me.

Dear Lord, I am ashamed before You. I believe in You and Your promises; I believe and thankfully accept what You have done for me. I don't know if my faith is strong enough to be tested. Lord, I believe, help me in my weakness. Amen.

Myra Kohsel

Saturday, March 3, 2007

Isaiah 50:7-9 The LORD GOD helps me; therefore I have not been disgraced; therefore I have set my face like flint, and I know that I shall not be put to shame; he who vindicates me is near. Who will contend with me? Let us stand up together. Who are my adversaries? Let them confront me. It is the LORD GOD who helps me; who will declare me guilty? All of them will wear out like a garment; the moth will eat them up.

I'm not a saint and I have done things in my life that I wish I could do over. I also believe in taking my medicine if I deserve it. But there have been a few times when I have been accused of deeds that I didn't commit. Disgrace, indignation, rage ----- setting my face like flint; I know these emotions.

The first incident, and perhaps most memorable, occurred when I was in the 7th grade. I was told by my teacher to go to the office. I was shocked when I was confronted by the principal and my basketball coach and told to confess to a recent act of playground vandalism. I calmly told the truth which was I didn't know what they were talking about and I wasn't involved in the incident they described. I thought this would be the end, since I knew I was innocent, and surely they knew that my word was good.

But they pressed on and aggressively told me I was lying and they had witnesses. I was devastated. For a moment I was speechless. I was lost. I wasn't so much concerned about the principal but I was crushed that my mentor, the one teacher who really knew me, could look at me with distrust. My coach told me I was a liar!

Once the room stopped spinning, I fought back. I can't remember all that I said, but I know that it was said with animation and a red face of rage. I concluded my tirade with the statement, "Call my father. He will tell you I don't lie!" I left the office and heard nothing further about the incident; but I was different. Giving away my trust and friendship became very difficult for a long time. I still don't do it very well.

I no longer ask people to call *my* father when times are difficult. This passage from Isaiah reminds us that the world is a difficult place, a place where we have adversaries and accusers. But we can still call *our* Father and we can stand together in truth and salvation. We may even take less than 47 years to forgive our basketball coach.

Dear Father, We have been disgraced through our own acts and the accusations of others. Help us survive with the knowledge that while our lives are filled with problems, you stand with us. You won't accuse us but will forgive us and offer salvation through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen

Larry Heckel

The Second Sunday in Lent, March 4, 2007

Worship with Holy Communion, 10 am, at the Corpus Christi Center, 120th & Quincy

In today's reading from the book of Genesis, God promises a childless and doubting Abram that he will have a son, descendants as numerous as the stars, and land that will be their inheritance. Our reading from the Gospel of Luke reveals Jesus' fearless commitment to promise our inheritance of forgiveness and eternal life, despite the threats imposed by enemies in high places. They share journeys of faith in God's promise, journeys of faith we share every moment of every day.

Monday, March 5, 2007

Luke 15:1-7 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: "Which one of you, having a hundred sheep and losing one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness and go after the one that is lost until he finds it? When he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders and rejoices. And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and neighbors, saying to them, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep that was lost.' Just so, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance.

Why were the Pharisees and scribes grumbling because Jesus welcomed sinners? There is no one in the whole world, except maybe a little baby, who has not sinned. Even the Pharisees and scribes who grumbled have sinned. Jesus would be all by himself if He could not be with sinners. That is what he is supposed to do, to be with sinners so he can help them and love them.

The parable that Jesus told says that the shepherd would leave ninety-nine sheep to look for one lost sheep. That's what a shepherd would do. The other ninety-nine sheep are okay, but the one who is lost needs the shepherd to look for him. When we learn something new in school not everyone gets it right away and the teacher needs to help those that need it. The rest of the class doesn't need the help. Maybe sometime we will need help and then it will be our turn to have the teacher help us. The shepherd wants to have all of his sheep safe just like the teacher wants to have all of the kids in class understand the lesson, and Jesus wants to have all of us saved. Like the shepherd saves the one sheep, Jesus saves the sinners.

Jesus is happy with people who realize their mistakes and say they are sorry. That is why God is so happy about sinners repenting so they can enter heaven.

Dear God, Thank you for sending Jesus to die for our sins. Help us to remember to say we are sorry when we make a mistake, to repent for our sins. Amen

Charlie Marinz Brandy Moore

Kellie Moore

Joshua Ryan Kennedy Sauer

Sarah Schumann

(Intermediate Sunday School Class)

Tuesday, March 6, 2007

Isaiah 52:13-15 See, my servant shall prosper; he shall be exalted and lifted up, and shall be very high. Just as there were many who were astonished at him – so marred was his appearance, beyond human semblance, and his form beyond that of mortals – so he shall startle many nations; kings shall shut their mouths because of him; for that which had not been told them they shall see, and that which they had not heard they shall contemplate.

It's hard to read this passage and to think about the horrors that Jesus went through on the cross. It's hard to imagine how anyone could willingly and humbly go through that much pain and suffering and do it with such grace. In order to understand this, I think we need to look at verse 13, a promise from God: "He will be raised and lifted up and highly exalted." In the midst of his suffering, Jesus was able to hold onto this promise and know that God would be faithful.

Through Jesus' death and resurrection, we too have been given such a promise. Romans 6:4 says, "We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life."

I recently took a cross cultural trip to Cambodia which is one of the poorest countries in the world. We saw many people who literally suffered through life – people living in the garbage dump, women with tiny babies begging on the streets, families who didn't know where their next meal would come from. And yet, despite their struggles, the Christians that we met were quick to smile, they worshipped God with passion, and they had a great sense of hope and peace. From our materialistic mindset, we would think that they had little to be thankful for, but they didn't see it that way. They were grateful for the simple things in life, and they held on to the wonderful promises of God. Just as Jesus was raised up from his suffering, so they too have the hope of new life in Him. And that is all they need.

*Lord, Thank you for the sacrifice of your Son that we may have new life and hope through Him. Help us to take hold of your promises and remember that you are faithful, even in the midst of our struggles. In Jesus' name,
Amen*

Kelsey Morrison

Wednesday, March 7, 2007

Isaiah 53:1-3 *Who has believed what we have heard? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed? For he grew up before him like a young plant, and like a root out of dry ground; he had no form or majesty that we should look at him, nothing in his appearance that we should desire him. He was despised and rejected by others; a man of suffering and acquainted with infirmity; and as one from whom others hide their faces he was despised, and we held him of no account.*

In today's world, geeks and nerds are getting some long overdue respect. A man has written a book called "Geek Logik." Others are offering computer services by geeks. Bill Gates, a well-known geek, is one of the wealthiest men in the world. But when I was in high school, the nerds were laughed at, ridiculed, and shoved into lockers or trash cans. As Rodney Dangerfield said, "They got no respect."

This is what popped into my mind when I read this passage from Isaiah. Here was our Savior and Lord being despised and rejected. He was saying things like love your neighbor, do good to those who persecute you, forgive and care for one another, and for this he was thought a fool. He was beaten, spat upon, and finally crucified. He wasn't what they expected. He wasn't the handsome, strong, popular quarterback of the football team. He wasn't the king on a throne with a golden crown; he was a servant. How are we responding to our Savior? Do we follow in his footsteps or are we afraid of being a Geek for Jesus?

*Dearest Jesus, thank you for your life among us to teach us how to live and for giving that life for our salvation.
Amen*

Carolyn Willaman

Thursday, March 8, 2007

Isaiah 53:4-6 Surely he has borne our infirmities and carried our diseases; yet we accounted him stricken, struck down by God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the punishment that made us whole, and by his bruises we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have all turned to our own way, and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

My husband's grandmother is 101 years old. She's led a marvelous life, rich in family and experiences. In the past few months her health has deteriorated at a more rapid pace, and at the end of January she began hospice care. When the arrangements were finalized for hospice, she said to her daughter, "I'm going to die." She was a little teary when she said this. Her daughter said, "Is that OK?" and she answered, "I don't know." It struck me as both a poignant and very honest answer.

Through most of our lives, we realize that we are mortal, that our life will end with death just as surely as it began with birth. We certainly hope that the end of our lives will be peaceful, and without pain. And we believe in eternal life, because Jesus died for us. And still there is fear. I know I have fear. Perhaps it is the fear of the unknown, or maybe the fear of letting go of loved ones and of life itself, or even the fear of life actually going on without us.

Isaiah was a prophet 700 years before Christ was born. As a religious scholar, surely Jesus was familiar with this book in the Old Testament. I cannot imagine how Jesus may have felt to know His own fate of an early death with pain and suffering, and with the betrayal of close friends. Yet if Christ was terrified of the end of his life on earth, his actions and his words certainly didn't show it. He faced his betrayers and his executioners and willingly accepted his destiny.

Lent is a time to reflect, to put some things in perspective. Christ took the sting out of death, and taught us how to live a life of love and peace.

Lord, help us to face life with the same courage that your son had in facing death. Give us the strength and the awareness to make our daily lives more of a reflection of Christ's selflessness and love. Amen.

Elizabeth Brubaker

Friday, March 9, 2007

Isaiah 53:7-9 *He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth. By a perversion of justice he was taken away. Who could have imagined his future? For he was cut off from the land of the living, stricken for the transgression of my people. They made his grave with the wicked and his tomb with the rich, although he had done no violence, and there was no deceit in his mouth.*

Who could have imagined?

In the midst of unparalleled oppression...silence.

In the terror of affliction...silence.

In the perversion of justice...silence.

Who could have imagined?

This word "silence" rends my heart. Why not cry out against oppression, against affliction and against injustice! Why not work against the brokenness in this world and the tyranny of sin! Isn't it perverse to stand "silent" in the midst of suffering? Are we not to speak out against every form of coercion and oppression? Yet the suffering servant stands like a lamb before slaughter...silent.

Perhaps, just perhaps, the lamb is silent because speaking against oppression, affliction or injustice doesn't necessarily mean speaking for love. Perhaps, just perhaps, the most powerful negation of "wrong" is to not empower it by working against it – but to diffuse it by speaking only for love, by love, in love and through love. Perhaps Isaiah's prophecy of the suffering servant does not affirm silent submission to brokenness and pain, but wholehearted participation in speaking love into being. Perhaps this is why the Lamb himself commands us...

"I give you a new commandment, that you love one another.

Just as I have loved you, you should also love one another" (John 13:34).

Heavenly Father, we praise and bless you for the precious gift of our savior, Jesus Christ! May we, at all times and in all places and as your servants, reflect the light of Christ's love to each person we encounter. Lord, may this be so through your Holy Spirit. In Christ's name we pray. Amen.

Rosanne Barton Devries

Saturday, March 10, 2007

Luke 22:1-6 Now the festival of Unleavened Bread, which is called the Passover, was near. The chief priests and the scribes were looking for a way to put Jesus to death, for they were afraid of the people. Then Satan entered into Judas called Iscariot, who was one of the twelve; he went away and conferred with the chief priests and officers of the temple police about how he might betray him to them. They were greatly pleased and agreed to give him money. So he consented and began to look for an opportunity to betray him to them when no crowd was present.

Remember Flip Wilson's line: "*The Devil Made Me Do It*"? Well, I guess he really did make Judas do it, but that said, Judas had free will to turn down that temptation.

Wouldn't we all like to blame the devil for what we do wrong? It is only when we accept the blame and repent that we can seek the forgiveness that we need to live with our misdeeds. Accepting responsibility is only the first step. Returning the money to the scribes and priests could be considered repenting, but the real repentance Judas needed was not for the betrayal for money, but for the betrayal of seeking power through Jesus on earth. He tried to tempt God! He did not repent of that sin by returning the money, and the priests and scribes had no forgiveness to give to him. That can only come from God through Jesus.

It is no laughing matter if we give in to the devil's temptations. Nor is it right to blame anyone but ourselves for that weakness. But when we do give in, remember Jesus has enough forgiveness for those who repent to make you joyful again.

Lord, please deliver us from evil. Amen

Paulette Yohe

*The Third Sunday of Lent, March 11, 2007
Worship with Holy Communion, 10:00 am, Corpus Christi Center, 120th & Quincy*

Last Sunday's Gospel reading dealt with Jesus in danger. This week it is our lives that hang in the balance. The lessons bid us see the peril of our existence, the fatal or saving difference our choices make. They challenge and bless us with their cry to wake up and watch out, calling us back when we head away from the God whose love feeds our deepest hungers.

Monday, March 12, 2007

Luke 22:7-13 *Then came the day of Unleavened Bread, on which the Passover lamb had to be sacrificed. So Jesus sent Peter and John, saying, "Go and prepare the Passover meal for us that we may eat it." They asked him, "Where do you want us to make preparations for it?" "Listen," he said to them, "when you have entered the city, a man carrying a jar of water will meet you; follow him into the house he enters and say to the owner of the house, 'The teacher asks you, "Where is the guest room, where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?"' He will show you a large room upstairs, already furnished. Make preparations for us there." So they went and found everything as he had told them; and they prepared the Passover meal.*

Our family likes to celebrate special occasions like Thanksgiving and Christmas with a special meal. My mother loves to cook. She would prepare a Thanksgiving type meal for the whole family every special occasion if her health were better. Unfortunately, she is unable to handle that daunting task anymore.

Jesus wanted to celebrate the Passover meal (a very special occasion in the Jewish faith) with his closest friends, his disciples. He knew where he wanted to have the meal served and he sent Peter and John to prepare the meal. I am assuming that Peter and John were going to have someone prepare the meal for them but who knows, maybe they were the cooks for this itinerant group of disciples. Whatever the case, this was a very special occasion.

My research on the Passover meal as it is celebrated today says that there are 15 ritualistic steps to the meal. Only one of them is to actually eat a large Thanksgiving type meal of turkey, roast chicken or beef brisket. The others have a lot of symbolism to remember the Exodus events. I guess I always thought that Jesus and his disciples celebrated the Last Supper (this Passover meal) by only eating bread and drinking wine. We know they had bread and wine but they may have had more. Because Jesus and his disciples had bread and wine we also celebrate this meal (communion) with bread and wine (Jesus said they were his body and blood).

Not only are we duplicating the food and drink that was served, but we, as Christians (and therefore disciples of Christ), are taking the place of the original disciples because we are truly disciples, also. All we need is Jesus and the event is a duplicate of what happened 2000 years ago. If you look around at the wonderful people in church with you and search your heart you will know that Jesus is truly there with you also. I think we are reenacting Jesus' last Passover meal more closely than you may have ever imagined.

Loving Jesus, help us feel your presence every time we take Communion. Amen

Dennis Willaman

Tuesday, March 13, 2007

Luke 22:14-23 When the hour came, he took his place at the table, and the apostles with him. He said to them, "I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer; for I tell you, I will not eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God." Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he said, "Take this and divide it among yourselves; for I tell you that from now on I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes." Then he took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me." And he did the same with the cup after supper, saying, "This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood. But see, the one who betrays me is with me, and his hand is on the table. For the Son of Man is going as it has been determined, but woe to that one by whom he is betrayed!" Then they began to ask one another which one of them it could be who would do this.

When I was growing up, I listened to the minister intone these words four times a year. I watched as the solemn men in their dark suits walked to the front of the sanctuary, then gravely passed the trays of bread cubes and the trays of small glasses full of grape juice to the people sitting in the pews. I listened when the minister said, "Take, eat," and "Take, drink." I watched all the adults sitting in the pews raise their hands to their mouths in unison.

I knew that the week before everyone in that church who had made profession of their faith had been examining their souls, their life, their actions, to be sure they were worthy of taking the Lord's Supper, because to take it unworthily was to bring damnation upon themselves. I lived in fear of the time I, too, would be eligible to receive the Lord's meal.

Then I went to Confirmation Classes with Pastor Earl Merz at Peace Lutheran Church. We studied Luther's Small Catechism as the foundation of the Lutheran faith and practices. And Pastor Merz made clear what the Lord's Supper is. He said (and I paraphrase), "We take Communion because we are sinners. We take Communion because we are saints and freed from our sins. We take Communion because we are sad and hurting; we take Communion because we are happy. We take Communion to give thanks; we take Communion to ask for a blessing. Whatever we need from Communion, the Lord will give to us."

As Pastor Jim says, "We never run out of bread," but more importantly, God never runs out of love and grace. He died for our sins and blesses us abundantly; now we are free to remember and honor him whenever we participate in the Lord's Supper.

Lord Jesus, we praise You and bless You. We fall on our knees before You, not in fear and trembling, but in thanksgiving for all You've done for us. Help us to be constantly aware of what participating in Your meal means to us, and to You. In Your blessed name, Amen.

Myra Kohsel

Wednesday, March 14, 2007

Luke 22:24-27 *A dispute also arose among them as to which one of them was to be regarded as the greatest. But he said to them, "The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them; and those in authority over them are called benefactors. But not so with you; rather the greatest among you must become like the youngest, and the leader like one who serves. For who is greater, the one who is at the table or the one who serves? Is it not the one at the table? But I am among you as one who serves.*

I volunteer at an elementary school every morning where I read, play games, and just hang out with kids. I have one little friend there who is always first to greet me and ask if I'll play a game with her. She comes from a Spanish speaking home, so I used to try to get her to read a book with me to work on her reading skills. She much prefers to play games, so I go along with it, thinking that the conversational skills are just as important.

At the beginning of the year as soon as we'd open up a game she'd say, "I go second!" After a few weeks of her always going second, I asked her why she always said that. I asked why she didn't sometimes say, "I go first!" or "I go third!" I thought maybe she didn't know how to say "first" in English and was just saying the phrase she knew. So, she took my advice and every day after that she said, "I go first!"

I felt like I had created a little monster. She was a very polite little girl and hadn't suddenly turned rude overnight. I just didn't realize how much changing that one little word would affect me. Up until that point she seemed so kind -- always putting the other person before herself. Now it felt like she was saying, "Me, me, me!" I later realized that I probably was responsible for undoing what her parents had been working hard up until that point to teach her! Or perhaps it was the result of having two older brothers to compete with. It's probably hard for her to be first in most cases, so she's learned to quickly claim second place so that she's not last. Whatever the case, I learned a good lesson. In fact, it's been one that Jesus has been trying to teach me all along "...the greatest among you must become like the youngest."

Dear Lord, thank you for the lessons you teach us, when and from whom we least expect them. Help me become a better teacher of your lessons and continue to remind me to put others ahead of myself. Teach me to say, "Yo voy segundo!"

Nancy Morrison

Thursday, March 15, 2007

Luke 22:28-29 "You are those who have stood by me in my trials; and I confer on you, just as my Father has conferred on me, a kingdom.

I once heard a letter read on the radio from a grandfather to his granddaughter. In the letter he spoke of his declining health and the deep peace he received from it. He mentioned how people often out of politeness said, "How are you?" He replied, "Fine, thank you." He thought about his body and what he really wanted to say is, "I'm not so well, this old jalopy of a machine that I have for a body is wearing down, the steering is totally gone, and though we try to lube everything, nothing stays oiled. It's rusted and decayed." But what he was able to share with folks was that his spirit was well. Though his body was past its prime, his thoughts were growing deeper and calmer. He focused not on his trials but on the promises of God. He could hear God always whispering to him, "It is well, don't be afraid."

That story made me think of my father. His body was ravaged by Lou Gehrig's disease, a devastating neurological illness that robs your body of every working part, but leaves your mind in perfect condition. I thought of my Dad's last day and how everything was failing; I remember the fear in his eyes. But late in the day his Pastor arrived at the hospital. We gathered around my dad's bed and the Pastor asked if we could pray and I saw a spark in my Dad's eyes when he said yes with such eagerness. I saw Jesus in those eyes; I saw a lifetime of faithfulness come together in that very second. And I saw fear begin to slip away; surely God was whispering to him, too.

Sensing that the end was very near, I reluctantly left my parents alone and drove to their home for some sleep. I knew that they needed to say their good-byes, though I knew that the words would never be spoken aloud, only felt with the heart. And there is never enough time to say good-bye.

On the drive home to my parents' house, there was one of those incredible June skies. It was as if God was promising me that, despite my intense sorrow, all would be well. And I believe in God's promises. And so I silently whispered to God that if he had room for one more wonderful father that perhaps this could be Dad's time to go. Less than six hours later my Dad died peacefully in his sleep, with my sleeping mother close by.

Grief is enormous; it doesn't let you go, but neither does God. I cling to my faith, to the promises of God of new lives, new bodies, peace that we cannot fathom. And I go on with my days always aware of my heart growing closer to God and taking the time to listen for those quiet whispers that recall all of those promises - promises that will never be broken.

Heavenly Father, we praise and thank you for your promises. The hope of your resurrection is powerful and real. May we listen for the quiet whispers that you speak to our hearts. Amen

Lynda Parrott

Friday, March 16, 2007

Luke 22:31-34 "Simon, Simon, listen! Satan has demanded to sift all of you like wheat, but I have prayed for you that your own faith may not fail; and you, when once you have turned back, strengthen your brothers." And he said to him, "Lord, I am ready to go with you to prison and to death!" Jesus said, "I tell you, Peter, the cock will not crow this day, until you have denied three times that you know me."

As I read these words from Luke, I can't help but think how like Simon we all are. We have our moments of resolve to do the right thing or to make a change in our lives that we know we should do, or to reach for a lofty goal. It seems, though, that while we have good intentions, we more often than not fall short.

If only all of us would follow through with that resolve, what a different world this would be --- the poor would be cared for, we would be healthier and happier, and we would have a wonderful sense of accomplishment.

We are, however, subject to the same human weaknesses as Simon. We aim high but then pressures of the world and our own weakness cause us to fall short of what we know we should do. We have good intentions but fail more times than we would like to admit.

Though we don't measure up to our own expectations we must take solace in knowing that Jesus knows we will not be "perfect" but still loves us and saves us, not because of how "perfect" we are but because we have faith in him.

Lord Jesus, help us to be the kind of person that we know we should be and make the kind of decisions that will reflect your teachings and your desires for us. Strengthen us with your love. Amen

Marlene Howe

Saturday, March 17, 2007

Luke 22:35-38 He said to them, "When I sent you out without a purse, bag, or sandals, did you lack anything?" They said, "No, not a thing." He said to them, "But now, the one who has a purse must take it, and likewise a bag. And the one who has no sword must sell his cloak and buy one. For I tell you, this scripture must be fulfilled in me, 'And he was counted among the lawless'; and indeed what is written about me is being fulfilled." They said, "Lord, look, here are two swords." He replied, "It is enough."

It's really hard to try to teach your children right from wrong, good strangers from bad strangers, and all the millions of other things we take for granted that we already know. The one I struggle with the most is trust. How do you teach trust? I've lived a pretty normal life so far and I still get burned occasionally with trusting people too much or not enough. You can't trust everybody but you don't want to become paranoid either. I know my boys will trust people in their lives that they shouldn't, and probably not trust Jason and me enough. Those are all parts of growing up and the whole "live and learn" thing. But I wish I could save them from all of that.

Jesus was trying to remind his disciples that he had given them all they needed, and they agreed that they weren't lacking anything. But he knew what was going to happen so he wanted his followers to be prepared for what was to come.

LORD, Please help us to always remember that you are truly the only one who can have our whole trust, and we can trust in you to always be there. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen

Tracy Lovell

The Fourth Sunday in Lent, March 18, 2007

Worship with Holy Communion, 10:00 am, at the Corpus Christi Center, 120th & Quincy

Today's readings provide images of homecoming - Israel's coming home into the land of promise, the return of a prodigal son to his waiting father. Those images reflect the very heart of Lent and the heart of our God, images to remind us that in Christ, we really can come home again, no matter how far we've strayed.

Monday, March 19, 2007

Luke 22:39-46 He came out and went, as was his custom, to the Mount of Olives; and the disciples followed him. When he reached the place, he said to them, "Pray that you may not come into the time of trial." Then he withdrew from them about a stone's throw, knelt down, and prayed, "Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me; yet, not my will but yours be done." Then an angel from heaven appeared to him and gave him strength. In his anguish he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat became like great drops of blood falling down on the ground. When he got up from prayer, he came to the disciples and found them sleeping because of grief, and he said to them, "Why are you sleeping? Get up and pray that you may not come into the time of trial."

When I was eight years old, my grandfather became ill. Our whole family went to his home to be with him and my grandmother. He was to turn 72 on the 4th of July, which was two weeks away. He was to retire then. I didn't really know how to pray very well. Usually at the dinner table it was with one eye open to see what everybody else was doing during our supper prayer. But I prayed he would make it to retirement because that was all anyone seemed to be talking about. I was not familiar with death and did not know to be sorrowful. So I played outside and was told to be quiet if I got too close to Grandpa's house while playing. My ignorance was my strength in this situation.

When I saw him in the casket I was told I would not see him again. He looked peaceful, though. My older cousins seemed very sad as did many of the adults. I asked them why they were so sad and they said my grandfather was sleeping. So I thought, "Why are you sleeping? I am not through going fishing with you." Several years later while at my grandmother's funeral, I was filled with grief and remembered the times I had spent with her and my grandfather.

Why, then, are we sleeping now when God has called us to help others out of their time of trial? Wake up and pray for them.

Dave Arntson

Tuesday, March 20, 2007

Luke 22:47-53 While he was still speaking, suddenly a crowd came, and the one called Judas, one of the twelve, was leading them. He approached Jesus to kiss him; but Jesus said to him, "Judas, is it with a kiss that you are betraying the Son of Man?" When those who were around him saw what was coming, they asked, "Lord, should we strike with the sword?" Then one of them struck the slave of the high priest and cut off his right ear. But Jesus said, "No more of this!" And he touched his ear and healed him. Then Jesus said to the chief priests, the officers of the temple police, and the elders who had come for him, "Have you come out with swords and clubs as if I were a bandit? When I was with you day after day in the temple, you did not lay hands on me. But this is your hour, and the power of darkness!"

I thought I was betrayed by my family, but when I read about Jesus' arrest, it makes me weep. I am so weak compared to what my savior went through. To have nobody on your side and to lose or be separated from the Father, to be denied by your close friend and co-workers, students who you thought would stand with you. But Christ knew he was alone. It was all on his shoulders.

He loved them, shared meals with them and washed their feet. Why didn't they remember what he taught them? Where was their faith?

The mockery, the arrest of you by a friend. They came with swords and clubs. What were they thinking? The betrayer kissed him, then the fighting started; this is not what Jesus came for, it was chastisement for our peace that he must have upon him.

Jesus was willing to die for our sins so that we might live through faith in him. Jesus knew if he called on the Father at once, twelve legions of angels would help.

But the scriptures must be fulfilled. After the disciples deserted him, the devil with his many devices, often uses people as his agent to tempt and discourage us. God claimed responsibility for the death of his son allowing anyone to claim his gift of forgiveness through repentance and baptism.

Thank you Father, Son and Holy Spirit for your plan of forgiveness through the cross and heaven. We are never alone in our struggles. The Holy Spirit you sent knows how to deal with the enemy and free us from all bondage. We ask the Holy Spirit to let us grow in spiritual fruitfulness, we ask to be rid of all hypocrisy and we ask for gentleness, patience and love. We know you still love us in spite of our lack of these things, so stand by us and help us. Amen

BJ White
(Resident at McIntosh Manor)

Wednesday, March 21, 2007

Luke 22:54-62 Then they seized him and led him away, bringing him into the high priest's house. But Peter was following at a distance. When they had kindled a fire in the middle of the courtyard and sat down together, Peter sat among them. Then a servant-girl, seeing him in the firelight, stared at him and said, "This man also was with him." But he denied it, saying, "Woman, I do not know him." A little later someone else, on seeing him, said, "You also are one of them." But Peter said, "Man, I am not!" Then about an hour later still another kept insisting, "Surely this man also was with him; for he is a Galilean." But Peter said, "Man, I do not know what you are talking about!" At that moment, while he was still speaking, the cock crowed. The Lord turned and looked at Peter. Then Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said to him, "Before the cock crows today, you will deny me three times." And he went out and wept bitterly.

Was Peter a coward, a traitor, ashamed, or scared? Yes, he was a coward because he didn't stand up for what he believed in. Yes, he was a traitor because he went back on his word and denied Christ. Yes, he was ashamed because he wept bitterly and he knew that he had done wrong. Yes, he was scared because he was afraid that he might be killed if he had admitted to knowing Jesus.

We, as Christians, can easily relate to the story because we have all failed God and others in different ways, not just once, but time and time again. We need to ask God and others for forgiveness and thank them for their patience with us.

Jack Burk

Thursday, March 22, 2007

Luke 22:63-65 *Now the men who were holding Jesus began to mock him and beat him; they also blindfolded him and kept asking him, "Prophesy! Who is it that struck you?" They kept heaping many other insults on him.*

Usually, when we read this passage, we focus on the beating and how awful that was. Today, I wonder how Jesus felt about the mocking and the insults. Words, too, are painful. And sometimes that pain lasts longer.

I've made some new friends since moving back to Holland. I had lunch with one just last week who is feeling some of that "word pain." Others, in a group that we are both part of, said some things that hurt her deeply. We talked for a long time while she told me what had happened nearly two months ago, and how it made her feel, how she still feels. I could see the hurt in her face, hear it in her voice. I suggested that she confront them, let them know how it made her feel; but she doesn't think that's appropriate, and doesn't feel strong enough to do that. Instead, she is avoiding these people, dropping out of a group she has really enjoyed.

We are aware when someone is physically hurt, but we don't often think about how our words can hurt someone else; how what we say is perceived by others. I wish this hadn't happened to my friend. I wish I could do something to take away her pain. And, I hope I don't cause anyone that much pain with my words. I don't want to be like those men holding Jesus, mocking and insulting him.

Heavenly Father, help me to realize how hurt can come from words, and to think about the perceptions of what I say. And give me the strength, when I cause "word pain" to be aware of it and to say "I'm sorry" and try to mend that pain. Amen

Vicki Russell

Friday, March 23, 2007

Luke 22:66-71 When day came, the assembly of the elders of the people, both chief priests and scribes, gathered together, and they brought him to their council. They said, "If you are the Messiah, tell us." He replied, "If I tell you, you will not believe; and if I question you, you will not answer. But from now on the Son of Man will be seated at the right hand of the power of God." All of them asked, "Are you, then, the Son of God?" He said to them, "You say that I am." Then they said, "What further testimony do we need? We have heard it ourselves from his own lips!"

This passage reminds me of the way our society today gets "smart people" together to make important decisions, just like in biblical times. In biblical times there was a gathering "of the elders of the people." These were the individuals that were the wisest and supposedly the most capable of making an "educated" decision as to whether Jesus was actually who he claimed. We still do this in today's society with experts getting together on every imaginable topic to discuss the evidence, and give advice. I can imagine this assembly getting together with everyone trying to look smarter than the next guy.

The second phase to this passage that is interesting is the way Jesus makes them answer for themselves. It's kind of like when people tend to agree with things if they think it's their idea. His conversation with them doesn't ever directly state he is actually the Son of God, but allows them to almost state it themselves, thus convincing them. I think this gives insight into the skill that Jesus had dealing with people by this time in his life.

This makes me think about my own relationship with Christ and how I shouldn't overanalyze. Taking Jesus' word as truth is the best policy.

Lord, be with us during this Lenten season and help make your Word clear to us. In your name we pray. Amen.

Brian Underhill

Saturday, March 24, 2007

Luke 23:1-5 Then the assembly rose as a body and brought Jesus before Pilate. They began to accuse him, saying, "We found this man perverting our nation, forbidding us to pay taxes to the emperor, and saying that he himself is the Messiah, a king." Then Pilate asked him, "Are you the king of the Jews?" He answered, "You say so." Then Pilate said to the chief priests and the crowds, "I find no basis for an accusation against this man." But they were insistent and said, "He stirs up the people by teaching throughout all Judea, from Galilee where he began even to this place."

Tell lies, falsehoods, half-truths. Then mix it all with just a bit of truth—just enough so that the other person thinks everything you say is truth. That's what these righteous men who wanted to be rid of Jesus did.

We all know of times throughout the centuries when world leaders have done this to justify their actions, and sometimes we, too, find ourselves in this situation. These are normal but sinful actions which we excuse by saying, "Well, I did tell the truth about —", even though the rest were lies. We do this to get what we want, to defend our dealings with others.

In the case of Jesus, God used those men for a good purpose—Jesus' crucifixion, without which we would not have salvation. In our case, however, there can be no good purpose—the means do not justify the end. We are called to be righteous, truthful before God in all things, no matter what.

Dearest Lord, our gracious God, help me as I make my way through life, striving to be the person you want me to be. Keep me from telling falsehoods, from trying to make my life easier by not telling the whole truth. Lord, I want to be what you want me to be—full of truth and light, a beacon to other people. I pray in Jesus' loving name. Amen

Myra Kohsel

The Fifth Sunday in Lent, March 25, 2007

Worship with Holy Communion, 10:00 am, at the Corpus Christi Center, 120th & Quincy

Today we hear the prophet Isaiah declare that long ago the Lord performed mighty deeds and delivered the people Israel from slavery in Egypt. Our Gospel lesson describes a new act of deliverance the Lord will perform, but this time for all peoples - a deliverance from slavery to sin and death, a deliverance that is free but of great cost, a deliverance that calls forth our most extravagant praise.

Monday, March 26, 2007

Luke 23:6-12 When Pilate heard this, he asked whether the man was a Galilean. And when he learned that he was under Herod's jurisdiction, he sent him off to Herod, who was himself in Jerusalem at that time. When Herod saw Jesus, he was very glad, for he had been wanting to see him for a long time, because he had heard about him and was hoping to see him perform some sign. He questioned him at some length, but Jesus gave him no answer. The chief priests and the scribes stood by, vehemently accusing him. Even Herod with his soldiers treated him with contempt and mocked him; then he put an elegant robe on him, and sent him back to Pilate. That same day Herod and Pilate became friends with each other; before this they had been enemies.

Why did this one encounter with Jesus cause Pilate and Herod to become fast friends after formerly being enemies?

When Pilate could find no treason against Rome, he passed Jesus on to be examined by the Jewish ruler, Herod. Both Pilate and Herod were anxious to maintain their power. Was this "King" of the Jews a threat to their leadership?

They were protecting their status, suspicious of any "King" who might become a political power. When they found Jesus innocent, they were still willing to permit his destruction to please the influential Jewish religious leaders.

Pilate and Herod both became crowd pleasers to enhance their own positions. They were birds of a feather, caring about the same things, working together to discredit Jesus and building a friendship based on greed and power.

All these leaders were so occupied protecting their power that none recognized the promised Messiah preaching among the poor and disenfranchised; the One who had more to offer than they could ever imagine.

How often are we like that? How often do we choose our friends because they make us look good or prove to be profitable associates? Do we only want Jesus if it means we don't have to give up any of our worldly power, status or wealth?

Lord God, we are so blinded by the trappings of worldly glamour and image! Please use your Holy Spirit within us to reveal the character and values you admire; show us how to use our strengths and gifts to benefit your ministry on earth; help us to care most about the things you care about. Thank you, Jesus, for caring more about us than yourself.

Marilynn Wickens

Tuesday, March 27, 2007

Luke 23:13-17 Pilate then called together the chief priests, the leaders, and the people, and said to them, "You brought me this man as one who was perverting the people; and here I have examined him in your presence and have not found this man guilty of any of your charges against him. Neither has Herod, for he sent him back to us. Indeed, he has done nothing to deserve death. I will therefore have him flogged and release him."

It is amazing how some things develop. I am sitting here in my office waiting to do a conference call on new safety programs and procedures, and yet keep getting brought back to the reading of how Pilate and Herod could not find guilt. I read this verse when I received the initial e-mail for help writing and meeting the deadline, and thought to myself, "I am too busy with this work" and "How can I get this done?" Well, here I am. I closed my office door and just reflected on where my priorities lie. Where do I really need to be now? I was telling myself that time was not available to do this, and now I feel better that I have taken this time to reflect.

Lord, thanks for opening my eyes today ----- I needed it. Lord, gotta go now - conference call coming in! Talk to you tonight!

Paul Boesenecker

Wednesday, March 28, 2007

Luke 23:18-25 Then they all shouted out together, "Away with this fellow! Release Barabbas for us!" (This was a man who had been put in prison for an insurrection that had taken place in the city, and for murder.) Pilate, wanting to release Jesus, addressed them again; but they kept shouting, "Crucify, crucify him!" A third time he said to them, "Why, what evil has he done? I have found in him no ground for the sentence of death; I will therefore have him flogged and then release him." But they kept urgently demanding with loud shouts that he should be crucified; and their voices prevailed. So Pilate gave his verdict that their demand should be granted. He released the man they asked for, the one who had been put in prison for insurrection and murder, and he handed Jesus over as they wished.

Have you ever been accused of something you didn't do? I have, and it is very difficult to prove your innocence when the overwhelming majority is against you.

That was the case with Jesus. He was being accused of false charges brought up by the chief priests because of their jealousy toward Jesus. For Jesus had been teaching, healing, and performing miracles in their midst, acts that extremely angered the chief priests. With their persuasion they convinced the people Jesus was guilty. I believe Jesus knew his fate and remained silent during his trial before Pilate, accepting his fate with selflessness and courage. His fate: To be crucified on a cross, a far to extreme punishment for the charges brought against him.

Reading this text brought another thought in me: forgiveness. As I recall, Jesus, while on the cross, asked his Father to forgive his accusers. After all that they had done, he still wanted his father to forgive them. I think this act by Jesus was the reason I forgave my accusers and eventually was cleared of all charges.

I cannot even imagine the courage it must have taken Jesus to ask his Father to forgive them, after all they put him through, not to mention how much God must have loved us to sacrifice his only Son for the forever forgiveness of our sins.

Dear Lord, thank you for sacrificing your Son for the forever forgiveness of my sins, and thank you for the unconditional love you show to us. Amen.

Bryan Blank

Thursday, March 29, 2007

Luke 23:26-27 *As they led him away, they seized a man, Simon of Cyrene, who was coming from the country, and they laid the cross on him, and made him carry it behind Jesus. A great number of the people followed him, and among them were women who were beating their breasts and wailing for him.*

Was this a burden or a blessing for Simon? Simon is not mentioned again in the Bible, so I have to wonder how he felt. Did he feel a burden knowing that he had helped in Jesus' crucifixion? Or, did he feel blessed to know that he helped Jesus fulfill his reason for life, to save us all from sin? Life can be like that for all of us.

This is the kind of question I have been struggling with for the past three years. I went to college to become a teacher. In doing so I raked up a great amount of loans. I no longer teach because I stay home to raise my children, but the loan bills still keep coming. Is this a burden or a blessing for me? I am burdened by the monthly toll we pay for something that I am not using. On the brighter side, I am home witnessing the miracles that God has gifted me.

Loving God, help us to find You and Your purpose for us. Give us the strength to face our burdens in order to see the blessings that you bestow on us. In Your name we pray. Amen

Jessica Underhill

Friday, March 30, 2007

Luke 23:28-31 But Jesus turned to them and said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. For the days are surely coming when they will say, 'Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bore, and the breasts that never nursed.' Then they will begin to say to the mountains, 'Fall on us'; and to the hills, 'Cover us.' For if they do this when the wood is green, what will happen when it is dry?"

"Don't cry for me Argentina, the truth is I shall not leave you..."

Eva Peron singing in Evita - that's actually the first thing I thought of when I read this passage. We saw a live production at the University of Montana two years ago. It was a haunting, moving story. The poor, downtrodden, lower classes of that country saw Eva as their savior, a shining star, a sign of hope and promise. They didn't ask for much - only for her to be immortal, to save them - but in the end she could not deliver.

"Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bore, and the breasts that never nursed." I remember my friend Nancy's grandma at her son's funeral. I was there for Nancy. It was her father who had died at a relatively young age of cancer. I went up to her grandma, sitting near the casket, and said how sorry I was. As I held her hand, she pulled me down toward her, held me tight around the neck and wept. When she finally let go, she said very clearly, "It's not right to outlive your children." Watching your children suffer in pain or sickness is hard enough. To watch them die is unimaginable.

In this passage, Luke focuses on Jesus' relationship to people - to women. His last sermon and words of instruction are to these women. Jesus knows his purpose as he makes his way to his execution, asks them not to have pity for him, but rather to repent and weep for themselves and their children. Worse things are yet to come as they see their children die in the destruction of Jerusalem. Ironically, those without children will be blessed. This journey to the cross is a rough road, but even through his own suffering, Jesus is still reaching out to us, bending his ear to our cries, assuring us of the gift of his presence in our lives.

Eva was not immortal, she died in the prime of her life. Mothers still cry out when their children die. Christ is still there, still here with us, walking toward the cross whenever we cry out in pain, loss, injustice.

Dear God, Thank you for the gift of life and love. Open our eyes to cruelty and injustice around the world and give us courage to act in your name.

Sandy Foster

Saturday, March 31, 2007

Luke 23:32-34 Two others also, who were criminals, were led away to be put to death with him. When they came to the place that is called The Skull, they crucified Jesus there with the criminals, one on his right and one on his left. Then Jesus said, "Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing." And they cast lots to divide his clothing.

Christ's purposeful end on this earth was near. He was ready to accept his lot. The soldiers who participated in his torture and death were unwittingly fulfilling prophecy. Their unbelief blinded them, allowing them to crucify him as a common criminal. Knowing this, Christ had compassion for them and on their behalf asked his heavenly father to forgive them.

It is very important to realize how profound this act of forgiveness was and how, as Christians, we are called to forgive others as Christ forgives us. If we could just get a hold of that thought, we would have peace and joy and have it more abundantly.

Almighty God, the unconditional and selfless sacrifice of your son, Jesus, has provided us with abundant peace, joy and, most importantly, life everlasting. How thankful I am to have been given these gifts so free for the taking. I am eternally grateful.

Amy Gibson

Palm Sunday - Sunday of the Passion, April 1, 2007
Worship in the Way of the Cross, 10:00 am, at the Corpus Christi Center, 120th & Quincy

Today we enter Holy Week. Share the Lord's Supper through this deeply moving, participatory drama, engaging us in Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem and his suffering and death mere days later, at the hands of people just like us, the very people who had hailed him their king!

Monday in Holy Week, April 2, 2007

Luke 23:35-38 And the people stood by, watching; but the leaders scoffed at him, saying, "He saved others; let him save himself if he is the Messiah of God, his chosen one!" The soldiers also mocked him, coming up and offering him sour wine, and saying, "If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself!" There was also an inscription over him, "This is the King of the Jews."

Too often the focus of this passage is left as part of the story of Jesus' betrayal. But what should be considered is that Jesus had every right, ability and power to save Himself. He could have saved Himself but He chose not to. He chose to go along with the plan that He and the Father had had since the very beginning.

In one way, I relate to the passage. I read that Jesus was mocked for His title by those around Him and that reminds me the world is not fair to any of God's children, and that the world will make fun of me often for who I am in God.

In another way, to me the passage seems to cry for action. We hear stories of people who make sacrifices for others. Jesus made the ultimate sacrifice. In American culture the emphasis is placed on what we can gain, and what we deserve. But what would happen if everyone put others' well being above their own as Jesus did by dying on that cross that day even though He could have easily saved Himself? And asked daily "What can I sacrifice (give up) to the glory of the Lord?"

We are blessed to be Americans in that we have freedoms many people can never imagine and the abilities to get out of responsibilities. I've heard others say we live where we can 'cushion ourselves from the world.' As Christian Americans the necessity of bearing our responsibilities is real, we cannot shift them. The real challenge is: Can we take them up and sacrifice our luxuries?

Dear Heavenly Father, I pray that you will use this season of Lent to teach me how to give up for good worldly things that are blocking me from doing what I know to be Your will. Please help me to remember that You sacrificed Yourself for me and I, in turn, should make my life a willing sacrifice to You. I pray all these things in Jesus' name. Amen.

Shannon Mee

Tuesday, April 3, 2007

Luke 23:39-43 *One of the criminals who were hanged there kept deriding him and saying, "Are you not the Messiah? Save yourself and us!" But the other rebuked him, saying, "Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? And we indeed have been condemned justly, for we are getting what we deserve for our deeds, but this man has done nothing wrong." Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." He replied, "Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in Paradise."*

Talk about a bad day!!!! Jesus had been berated by the most powerful people in Israel, given up by the people he was sent to save, paraded through the streets, hung on a cross, and now to be kicked by a gutter rat. Jesus was having a really, really, really bad day!!!

What is your reaction on a bad day? Do you come home and yell at your wife or kids? Do you draw within yourself to shut the world out? These would have been the easy things for Jesus to do but he didn't. Unlike many of us on a bad day, Jesus was looking for the good in even the most hardened criminals. Jesus was able to see past the barbs thrown at him by the first criminal. Even though both of the criminals would suffer a horrendous death on the cross with him, Jesus was able to see past their crimes and was able to see into their hearts. By seeing into the heart of the second criminal, Jesus saw a true belief and rewarded him with the most precious gift imaginable - eternal life.

Dear Lord, please help us through our "bad days." Be with us so we can see the good in others and affirm their belief in your Son. Help us to be true believers so you will turn to us on our last day and tell us, "Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in Paradise." Amen

Chad Main

Wednesday in Holy Week, April 4, 2007

Luke 23:44-46 It was now about noon, and darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon, while the sun's light failed; and the curtain of the temple was torn in two. Then Jesus, crying with a loud voice, said, "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit." Having said this, he breathed his last.

The great poet Dante starts his Divina Comedia (Divine Comedy) with the following verse: "*Midway in the journey of my life I found myself in a dark forest - for I had lost the direct path.*"

The "darkness" at noon, referred to in this passage from Luke, brought this bit of poetry to mind. As Dante is describing the "darkness of his life," he is relating it to his spiritual nature.

As Jesus is going through "this darkness phase of his life," he commends his spirit to God before he "gives up the ghost." In so doing, he dies and descends into hell for three days before he ascends into heaven, "the light."

While reflecting on my life, with its many experiences -- I feel that I have many times entered from the "darkness." I'm sure there are more times that this will happen before I can experience "eternal light."

Holy Spirit, help guide me.

Bob Pantano

Maundy Thursday, April 5, 2007

Luke 23:47-49 *When the centurion saw what had taken place, he praised God and said, "Certainly this man was innocent." And when all the crowds who had gathered there for this spectacle saw what had taken place, they returned home, beating their breasts. But all his acquaintances, including the women who had followed him from Galilee, stood at a distance, watching these things.*

It must have been so very hard for Jesus. He knew exactly how his life was to be and how it was to be played out. How hard it must have been worrying about his family and how they would handle it all. He made peace with it in the Garden - and even that happened with some conflict with family members and friends, didn't it?

That worry happens to us, too. Especially when dealing with a loved one who is sick, recovering or even dying. We all think how hard it is on that person - and you know what, it certainly is! Wondering how family will handle it all, worrying what will happen after things get better or even if, heaven forbid, it doesn't. And then there are the family members. How hard is it on them, too. The wondering and worry comes to those folks, maybe even harder than anyone else realizes. Wondering what is the best course of action, worrying about care and finances and the like. We can all beat our breasts about doing the right thing, about how we should have done this or that.

But in the end we know, like the Centurion, that by the grace of God, in the death of Christ, we have been forgiven for the mistakes we make, even the mistakes we make for those we love. And it is that forgiveness that gives us the courage and the strength to face ourselves and those we love. To do the hard thing, to look for the right thing, to try again and again and again. Peace is found in that.

In this Lenten season when we worry about Jesus, wonder about what his family and acquaintances are thinking along with the worry for ourselves, peace can be found in ways that are obvious and ways that are subtle. From home cooked meals, to encouraging cards, to a friendly phone call, to a friend hugging you and whispering in your ear on Christmas Eve to say, "Hang in there, you're doing a wonderful thing." Peace will come!

Dearest Lord, Be with us this Lenten season. Take away our worry and give us strength to know what is the path you have set before us. Help us encourage each other and be at peace.

Molly Feenstra

Maundy Thursday Worship Service
7:00 pm, April 5, at the Corpus Christi Center, corner 120th & Quincy

Share this intimate service of scripture and song, as we turn again to the gentle, contemplative music of taize. The word "maundy" comes from an ancient word for "command" - reflecting the command of Christ that echoes across the centuries to dwell now in our hearts, his command to love one another as he has loved us. Receive the word of God's forgiveness promised on Ash Wednesday, when we began our journey together. Revisit our Lord's Last Supper the night of his betrayal, and hear Jesus offer all of himself to us, even his body and blood. Watch as the altar is stripped, and depart in silence. There is no benediction, no final blessing, for the worship services of Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter morn are all one, continuous service across the three days. So this is not the end; we continue in worship Good Friday and Easter Sunday.

Good Friday, April 6, 2007

Luke 23:50-56 Now there was a good and righteous man named Joseph, who, though a member of the council, had not agreed to their plan and action. He came from the Jewish town of Arimathea, and he was waiting expectantly for the kingdom of God. This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then he took it down, wrapped it in a linen cloth, and laid it in a rock-hewn tomb where no one had ever been laid. It was the day of Preparation, and the sabbath was beginning. The women who had come with him from Galilee followed, and they saw the tomb and how his body was laid. Then they returned, and prepared spices and ointments. On the sabbath they rested according to the commandment.

Joseph and the women were respecting Jesus. Joseph took the time to wrap him in a linen sheet and put him in a tomb. Jesus was their teacher. They showed their love for him, just like we would when we see someone we respect and love. It was brave for Joseph to go to Pilate and ask for Jesus' body; would I be that brave? The women gave up their spices and ointments, they showed their love through this sacrifice. They could have just left him on the cross, but they didn't.

I remember when my grandma and grandpas died, people took care of them, which showed a sign of respect. Don't let fear stop you from doing what's right.

It's surprising that Joseph and the women did those things for him after they saw what Pilate did to Jesus. Do we have that same courage to follow our faith?

Dear God, Help me do the right thing even if others are against me. Don't let fear stop me, and supply me the courage to do your work.

Marie Burk

Good Friday Worship Service: The Way of the Cross
5:30 pm, at the Corpus Christi Center, corner 120th & Quincy
7:00 pm, at the Church Farmhouse & Outdoor Worship Center, corner 112th & Quincy

Scripture readings, simple songs, a wooden cross carried along a candle lit path - this night we share Jesus' journey the final day of his suffering and death. We pause along the way for each to drive a nail into the cross, as a sign of our own sins for which Jesus died. Again, we depart in silence and there is no benediction, for this is not the end; our worship service continues Easter morn.

Both worship services are intended for all ages. The 5:30 pm service is held within the Corpus Christi Chapel. Please note, however, that 7:00 pm service is held entirely outdoors - be sure to dress for the weather and wear shoes for the terrain.

Saturday of Holy Week, April 7, 2007

Isaiah 60:1-3 *Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you. For darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples; but the LORD will arise upon you, and his glory will appear over you. Nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn.*

We've come to the end of a long journey, haven't we? Some of us probably hurried along the way and read this booklet from cover to cover the day they received it - then reread it again, day by day, throughout Lent. And some of us probably made ourselves wait, fought the temptation to see what tomorrow's readings would bring, patiently contemplating each devotion one day at a time. In either case, we've come to the same point in the life of Christ: he is dead and buried and his body lies in a stone cold tomb, a borrowed grave at that. If the story ended here you'd have to believe there was never room in this world for Christ - no room in the inn when he was born, no room among the people he came to save, no room for his body even in death. You'd have to believe that there was no room for love, if the story ended here.

But this isn't where Jesus' story ends. His friends and followers couldn't have known that, kept in the dark themselves for three long days. There was no reading ahead for them, no hurrying along the journey to get to the happy ending. There were the words of Christ foretelling his own death and resurrection, for sure, so very like the promise of both suffering and victory from prophets like Joel and Isaiah. But I'll bet that at this point in the story of their lives, those words left a bitter taste in their mouths, if not in their hearts.

But this isn't where Jesus' story ends - and it's not where our story ends, either. Some of us are dwelling in the light of spring by now; we can almost smell lilies. But for some of us, thick, deep darkness has covered the earth; and we're beginning to doubt that we're going to get out of this one alive, beginning to believe that there's no room for us. Sooner or later we each come to that same dark place. I came there when Jared was a little boy, hospitalized with pneumonia; and I came there again the first time Ben left home. I came there when my father died, and when my mother was diagnosed with dementia. I came there every time I lost a job or was passed over for a promotion. I come to darkness now whenever I hurt or fail or am hurt or failed by someone I love.

What carries me through those times of deep, thick darkness is the light of Christ. It is the light I see reflected in my children's eyes, the light that bathes me in the love of my wife, the light that beckons to me Sunday mornings when we share the peace, that glistens off the water of the baptismal font, that guides us to the bread and wine, that sparkles in the Word of God alive in our midst. It is the light that reminds me that because I have been forgiven and I can afford to forgive. It is the light I do not deserve but cannot live without. It is the light that raises me up with the promise that there is room for me, room for us, room for love, room forever.

Good and gracious God, we have been saved at such great cost, through the death of our Lord, Jesus Christ. Teach us to make room in our lives for Jesus, that we may each be so shaped by the cross he carried that we share without ceasing the love from you that never dies. Amen

Pastor Jim

The Resurrection of Our Lord, Easter Sunday, April 8, 2007
Worship with Holy Communion, 10:00 am, Corpus Christi Center, corner 120th & Quincy

It's not the end of the story - it's the beginning of new life! Share this Resurrection Celebration of powerful readings and the best of traditional and contemporary song, celebrating Jesus' empty tomb and the fresh start his new life offers!

For more information about Good Shepherd contact:

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