

Fifth Sunday in Lent
March 21, 2021
Cross of Glory Lutheran Church
Brooklyn Center, MN

This Lenten season, we're using Holden Evening Prayer, a worship music setting that blends traditional and contemporary styles together in a contemplative liturgy. Please join us in singing!

PRELUDE

GREETING

Welcome to worship on this last Sunday of Lent. Throughout this season, we've explored Paul Tillich's definition of sin as "separation," confessing the ways we separate ourselves from God, from creation, and from our neighbors. Today, however, we're looking at the ways we've *been separated* from one another this year as a result of Covid-19. While grieving this year of physical separation is not something that can be done in just one day, and while we'll need to work together to find ways in the coming months and year to mark all that has been lost, we begin that process today with a service of lament.

Today we read a passage from 1 Corinthians in which Paul talks about the church as a body. It's a beautiful metaphor, especially on this day when we're lamenting that our church building has been closed this past year, because this metaphor invites us to see that while our *building* may have been closed, the church itself (the body of Christ) has never been closed! It's been living and moving out in the world. As one pastor puts it, "the body of Christ has lived in the hymns we've hummed and prayers we've sighed and the sermons that have grown hands and feet and have risen up in the brutal trenches of this world. The body of Christ has lived the expansive holy ground of hospital rooms and store aisles and makeshift closet workspaces and dining room tables and wooded paths. The body of Christ is not found only in a sanctuary of a building, but in the living, breathing, walking sanctuaries that no building can contain" (Pavlovitz).

In my first year as your pastor here, I have watched and witnessed you all faithfully find new ways of being the church, of living as a body, of noticing the body of Christ in the sanctuaries of the world. The cross pictures you all have shared this Lent have been such a powerful testament to that. God's presence has shown up and maybe even surprised us in new places this year.

And yet...we do lament the ways that we haven't been able to experience God's presence in *this place*. You should have gotten a letter this past week announcing that we are moving into Level 3 of our Covid-19 Response Plan, meaning that starting next week, we'll be able to have larger on-site gatherings. We'll be sharing more about that at the end of the service. But as we anticipate what is to come in the days ahead, today we focus our attention to what has been and what still is—to grieve, to mourn, and to lament the physical separation from one another, and to worship a God from whose love nothing can separate (Rom 8:39).

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, the giver of life, the source of steadfast love, our rock and our redeemer. **Amen.**

Let us take a moment of silence to confess our sin and return to the one who is full of compassion.

Silence for reflection.

Merciful God, **we have rejected your gift of life in order to be our own gods, clinging to death-dealing idols of our own making. We have distanced ourselves from those who are different. We have turned away from the groans of creation and the cries of our neighbors in need. Mend what we have broken. Join together what we have torn apart. And make us alive to your love, that we may experience and share the life you offer us now.**

Beloved, nothing in all of creation can separate us from the love of God. So hear this good news: in the name of Jesus Christ, your sins are \mp forgiven. Live now in the freedom of forgiveness and in the joy of life together. Amen.

OPENING SONG

Joyous light of heavenly glory, loving glow of God's own face,
you who sing creation's story, shine on every land and race.
Now as morning breaks around us, we shall raise our songs to you,
God of daybreak, God of shadows, come and light our hearts anew.

In the stars that grace the darkness, in the blazing sun of dawn,
in the light of peace and wisdom, we can hear your quiet song.
Love that fills the night with wonder, love that warms the weary soul,
Love that bursts all chains asunder, set us free and make us whole.

You who made the heaven's splendor, every dancing star of night,
make us shine with gentle justice, let us each reflect your light.
Mighty God of all creation, gentle Christ who lights our way,
loving spirit of salvation, lead us on to endless day.

THANKSGIVING

Leader: May God be with you all,

All: And also with you.

L: Let us sing our thanks to God,

A: It is right to give God thanks and praise.

L: Blessed are you, Creator of the universe, from old you have led your people by night and day.
May the light of your Christ make our darkness bright, for your Word and your presence are
the light of our pathways, and you are the light and life of all creation.

A: Amen

PSALMODY

This song, drawing on the words of Psalm 144, begins in unison then breaks into two parts and is sung as a round. In our recorded worship service, there will be a leader for both parts. If you're last name begins with A-M, follow part I. If your last name begins with N-Z, follow part II.

Refrain (begins in unison):

Let my prayer rise up as incense before you,
the lifting up of my hands as an offering to you.

Part I & II sung in round:

O God, I call to you, come to me now;
hear my voice when I cry to you. *Refrain.*

Keep watch within me, God;
deep in my heart may the light of your love be burning bright. *Refrain*

All praise to the God of all, Creator of life;
all praise be to Christ and the Spirit of love. *Refrain*

Silence for meditation

PRAYER

Let us pray together . . . **May our prayers come before you, O God, as incense, and may your presence surround and fill us, so that together with all creation, we might sing your praise and your love in our lives. Amen.**

FIRST READING: Romans 8:18-26, 31-39

¹⁸ I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory about to be revealed to us. ¹⁹For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God; ²⁰for the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope ²¹that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and will obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. ²²We know that the whole creation has been groaning in labor pains until now; ²³and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies. ²⁴For in hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what is seen? ²⁵But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

²⁶ Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words.

³¹ What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? ³²He who did not withhold his own Son, but gave him up for all of us, will he not with him also give us everything else? ³³Who will bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. ³⁴Who is to condemn? It is Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us. ³⁵Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? ³⁶As it is written, 'For your sake we are being killed all day long; we are accounted as sheep to be slaughtered.' ³⁷No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. ³⁸For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, ³⁹nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

SECOND READING: 1 Corinthians 12:12-26

¹² For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. ¹³For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.

¹⁴ Indeed, the body does not consist of one member but of many. ¹⁵If the foot were to say, 'Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body', that would not make it any less a part of the body. ¹⁶And if the ear were to say, 'Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body', that would not make it any less a part of the body. ¹⁷If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole body were hearing, where would the sense of smell be? ¹⁸But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. ¹⁹If all were a single member, where would the body be? ²⁰As it is, there are many members, yet one body. ²¹The eye

cannot say to the hand, 'I have no need of you', nor again the head to the feet, 'I have no need of you.' ²²On the contrary, the members of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, ²³and those members of the body that we think less honorable we clothe with greater honor, and our less respectable members are treated with greater respect; ²⁴whereas our more respectable members do not need this. But God has so arranged the body, giving the greater honor to the inferior member, ²⁵that there may be no dissension within the body, but the members may have the same care for one another. ²⁶If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honored, all rejoice together with it.

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

MUSIC

I Am not Alone

When I walk through deep waters
I know that You will be with me.
When I'm standing in the fire
I will not be overcome.
Through the valley of the shadow
I will not fear.

In the midst of deep sorrow
I see Your light is breaking through.
The dark of night will
not overtake me.
I am pressing into You.
Lord You fight my ev'ry battle
And I will not fear.

You amaze me, redeem me,
You call me as Your own.
You amaze me, redeem me,
You call me as Your own.

I am not alone.
I am not alone.
You will go before me.
You will never leave me.

Worship Team

I am not alone.
I am not alone.
You will go before me.
You will never leave me.

I am not alone.
I am not alone.
You will go before me.
You will never leave me.

You're my strength.
You're my defender.
You're my refuge in the storm.
Through these trials
You've always been faithful.
You bring healing to my soul.

REFLECTION I Rev. Ali Tranvik

The tradition of lament runs deep within our biblical bones. We read about the lament of God's people in the wilderness, we see whole books of the Bible like Job or Lamentations taking on the task of lament, we even see Jesus himself lamenting ("My God my God, why have you forsaken me?"). Some of the richest passages of lament in all of scripture, though, are found in the book of Psalms. Some psalms are individual laments, but many of them are communal, psalms of shared suffering, for as Paul reminds us in today's text, "if one member of the body suffers, all suffer together with it" (1 Cor 12:26).

This past week, I invited *you* to share your laments, a thing or two that you have grieved during this time of separation from one another. The following are responses you shared to be anonymously lifted up in worship today. Let us lift up our shared suffering, let us hear now our own communal psalm of lament:

- I lament all of the lives lost
- I miss not seeing smiles under the masks of family, friends, and people I pass by in a store
- I miss the community and fellowship of visiting Cross of Glory members, and the emptiness inside me that this separation has created
- I miss hugs and what they convey: love, support, a physical way to tell someone "I'm here for you"
- I've grieved not being able to see my grandkids, or have family gatherings, dinners with friends, sleepovers with my grandniece and nephews
- I have missed our church sanctuary, and the peace it gives us to gather as a community in it
- I miss coffee fellowship
- I miss Claudia's hugs
- Psalm 122 reads "I was glad when they said unto me let us go into the house of the Lord." I lament not being able to go into the House of the Lord each Sunday. The fellowship and friendship of others gives us spiritual enrichment, and encourages us in our spiritual journey.
- I've grieved not being able to cook for or eat with other people
- I longed to commune from the railings at church, kneeling alongside everyone else who is hungry
- I lament the sense of peace I took for granted prior to Covid, not worrying about getting so sick I may die or infecting someone else unknowingly
- I am afraid to go to out anywhere. This fear has become deeply lodged in my spirit and I worry that I will have difficulty trusting that I will be safe again in the future
- I lament the ways the pandemic has further separated our country instead of bringing us together
- I grieve the ways the pandemic has revealed our fear of one another, greed, and indifference
- I'm afraid that our world will never return to the way things were, and I am also afraid that it will
- I miss singing with the choir and congregation
- I miss harmonizing with other people on hymns, even when we're out of tune
- I grieve the abrupt quieting of the performing arts like live music, dance, and theater
- I miss just going out. I love going to dinner, to a show at the Guthrie, or to a brewery
- I've grieved not celebrating holidays, missing milestones, like our granddaughter's wedding
- I've longed for the chance to fully share my daughter's first months of life with family and friends
- I've grieved not being able to hold babies that have been born to family members during this time
- I lament the inability to visit people in assisted living and care centers. And I grieved that I wasn't able to visit my grandfather in the nursing home before he passed away from COVID-19
- I grieve postponed funerals
- I've longed for physical connection, sometimes so much that it makes me cry
- I lament that we haven't been able to lament in person

CROSS MEDITATION: PowerPoint Cross Images from the Cross of Glory Family

Throughout the season of Lent, you are invited to take part in a communal spiritual practice of paying attention to the crosses or cross shapes that appear in the sanctuaries of your home or work. Take a picture of the crosses you notice and email them to Pastor Ali. A few of these crosses will be shown during this time of prayerful reflection in our recorded worship service each week.

REFLECTION II Rev. Ali Tranvik

"Wounds are not healed by slapping a bandage on them: they need to be cleansed, infections removed, and sometimes even endure the pain of stitches. Simply binding a wound that has not been cleaned will only make the body more ill. That is no way to heal the body of Christ" (Cuddeback-Gedeon).

Healing, in other words, can only take place once we've lamented. Wholeness in the body can only occur once we've grieved the brokenness of the body. It can only happen once we've *remembered*. And according to our passage in 1 Corinthians, we are to specifically remember the parts of the body that are the weakest, the most vulnerable, giving them greater attention and honor. We must remember

the poor, those who have lost work this year, those who aren't sure where their next meal or next month's rent will come from. We must remember our members who have been quarantined to their rooms in nursing homes and who are dying from loneliness. We must remember those who have lost loved ones, who have had to delay funerals, who haven't been able to be hugged or held by community in their grief. We must remember those among us whose depression or anxiety have been exacerbated by this isolation, whose pain has felt too weighty to bear. We must remember our neighbors who are trapped in abusive relationships, our neighbors trapped by addiction. We must remember the ways this pandemic has exacerbated the deep-seeded oppression and evils that have already long plagued our most vulnerable neighbors: poverty, racism, homelessness, hunger. We must remember the needless destruction and devastation and despair this past year has wreaked on our world. And we must remember our own complicity in it—our sins of both commission and omission. For is only when we remember the body—especially the parts we see as “inferior” or “dispensable” as Paul writes—that the body can be re-membered. Let me say that again: **It is only when we remember the body that the body can be re-membered**...that what has been separated can be brought together again.

I want to share a story with you about Linda, a beloved member of our church who's currently in AZ for the winter. Linda recently told me (and gave me permission to tell you) about a new spiritual practice she's doing this Maundy Thursday, the Thursday of Holy Week, when we remember the story of when Jesus broke bread and gave it to his friends, saying, “This is my body. Do this in remembrance of me.”

This year, at a time when we are not able to break bread together, Linda decided that she would find a new way to share Jesus' body. Linda made a list of 18 friends and neighbors in her community who she thought may like some bread, and come Maundy Thursday, she plans to deliver a loaf to each of them. “I hope that sharing bread will make me feel closer to people,” Linda told me, “and I hope it makes people feel closer to me and to others. I hope it makes them feel less alone.” During this time when the body of Christ can't gather for this sacred ritual, Linda is finding new ways of re-membering.

How might we share bread—the body of Christ—with members of our own communities this Holy Week? How might we *be* bread—the body of Christ—to those who are hungry for food or for friendship? How might we remember the members of Jesus' body who are separated, that we too might be re-membered?

MUSIC Come As You Are Worship Team

Come out of sadness from wherever you've been
Come broken-hearted let rescue begin
Come find your mercy O sinner come kneel
Earth has no sorrow that Heaven can't heal
Earth has no sorrow that Heaven can't heal

Lay down your burdens lay down your shame
All who are broken lift up your face
O wanderer come home
You're not too far
So lay down your hurt lay down your heart
Come as you are

There's hope for the hopeless
And all those who've strayed
Come sit at the table come taste the grace
There's rest for the weary
Rest that endures
Earth has no sorrow that Heaven can't cure

Come as you are
Fall in His arms
Come as you are

There's joy for the morning O sinner be still
Earth has no sorrow that Heaven can't heal
Earth has no sorrow that Heaven can't heal

Come as you are
Come as you are
Come as you are

CONFESSION OF FAITH Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

THE ANNUNCIATION + MAGNIFICAT

Leader: And angel went from God to a town called Nazareth to a woman whose name was Mary. The angel said to her, "Rejoice, O highly favored, for God is with you. You shall bear a child, and his name shall be Jesus, the Chosen One of God most high." And Mary said, "I am a servant of my God, I live to do your will."

All: My soul proclaims your greatness, O God,
and my spirit rejoices in you,
You have looked with love on your servant here,
and blessed me all my life through.
Great and mighty are you, O Holy One,
strong is your kindness evermore.
How you favor the weak and lowly one,
humbling the proud of heart.
You have cast the mighty down from their thrones,
and uplifted the humble of heart,
you have filled the hungry with wondrous things,
and left the wealthy no part.
Great and mighty are you, O Faithful One,
strong is your justice, strong your love,
As you promised to Sarah and Abraham, kindness forevermore.
My soul proclaims your greatness, O God,
and my spirit rejoices in you,
You have looked with love on your servant here,
and blessed me all my life through.

PRAYERS of the PEOPLE

Refrain (*sung by all after each verse*): **God of mercy, hold us in love.**

Leader:

1. In peace, in peace we pray to you.
2. For peace and salvation, we pray to you.
3. For peace between nations, peace between peoples.
4. For we who are gathered to worship and praise you.
5. For all of your servants who live out your gospel.
6. For all those who govern that justice might guide them.
7. For all those who labor in service to others.
8. Grant weather that nourishes all of creation.
9. Keep watch on our loved ones and keep us from danger.
- 10: For all the beloved who rest in your mercy.

Leader: Help us, comfort us, all of our days:

All: Keep us, hold us, gracious God.

L: Great and merciful God, Source and Ground of all goodness and life, give to your people the peace that passes all understanding, and the will to live your Gospel of mercy and justice, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

A: Amen

LORD'S PRAYER *Lord, remember us in your love, and teach us to pray:*

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

FINAL BLESSING

Leader: Let us bless our God.

All: Praise and thanks to you.

L: May God, Creator, bless us and keep us, may Christ be ever light for our lives, may the Spirit of love be our guide and path, for all of our days.

A: Amen.

Go in peace and serve the Lord. **Thanks be to God!**

POSTLUDE

WORSHIP LEADERSHIP

Lead Pastor: Rev. Ali Tranvik

Pianist, vocalist, worship team director: Mark Trease

Vocalist, choir director: Keith Williams

Cantor: Kris Simon

Lector: Steve Ferley

Technical directors: Ryan Bailey and Mike Edstrom

Ministers: The people of Cross of Glory

MUSIC CREDITS:

Holden Evening Prayer: Text and Music: Marty Haugen, b. 1950; © 1990, GIA Publications, Inc.

WEEKLY PRAYER LIST:

Given our Prayers of the People are sung this season as part of the Holden liturgy, we're printing the names of those requesting prayer each week throughout Lent. Please keep these sisters and brothers in prayer, and email the church office if you'd like to add/remove any names: Gil Hartlage, Mavis Wold, Vicky Jacobson, Jeannie Kuzmich, Bill Bailey, Trevor, relative of Cheryl and Gail Anderson, Kevin, relative of Carol Sjoquist, Rick, nephew of Iva Stockdill, and the Roth family as they continue to grieve the loss of Bob.

OFFERING

We invite you to make an offering by sending a check to the church or by visiting our secure online giving page which can be found at the bottom of our home page:

www.crossofglory.us. Thanks for your generosity!

Congregational Support as of 2/28/2021

Annual Budget: \$230,000.00

Year to Date Budgeted: \$38,666.70

Year to Date Received: \$50,977.98

Difference: \$12,311.28

Community Announcements:

- Following Zoom worship, all are welcome to join us for Virtual Coffee Hour, a short time of small-group fellowship. Council will have its monthly meeting to follow.
- This afternoon (Sunday 3/21), you're invited to swing by the front door of the church (off Brooklyn Blvd) between 2-4 pm to pick up a Holy Week Worship Bag, lovingly created by the Worship, Music, and Arts Committee. Bags include worship and devotional materials, including the new Christ in our Home booklet and take-home communion kits. Please let the church office know if you're unable to pick up your bag and we'd be glad to arrange a home delivery.
- A group of Twin Cities churches came together to create a virtual service of lament and remembrance to mark the one-year anniversary of Covid-19. To view this service of song, prayer, and reflection, visit <https://tinyurl.com/szyd58d5>.
- Please see the enclosed letter from the Covid-19 Task Force announcing the upcoming transition into Level 3 of our Covid Preparedness & Response Plan. Level 3, which allows for in-person worship gatherings of up to 180 people and fellowship gatherings of up to 50 people in the sanctuary and fellowship hall, begins next Sunday, March 28. Please see the letter for more info about the new worship protocols, and below for more details about what this means for this year's Holy Week schedule.
- Given we will be beginning the transition into in-person gatherings next week, Table Talks (our monthly Adult Ed session), originally scheduled to follow worship on 3/28, will be postponed. Stay tuned for further information!
- If you have an article you'd like to share in next month's Glory Banner, please send it to svukelich@crossofglory.us by March 22.
- Please reach out to Pastor Ali with any other announcements or pastoral care concerns by email (atranvik@crossofglory.us) or phone (763-533-8602).

2021 Holy Week Schedule

As we transition into Level 3 of our Covid-19 Response Plan in the coming days, which allows for larger in-person gatherings, please join us for the following Holy Week services. Please note: Maundy Thursday and Good Friday services will be virtual this year. Holy Week Sundays will have in-person options, in addition to continued virtual offerings.

- **Palm Sunday**, March 28 - In-person worship and living-streaming to Zoom offered at 9:30 am. Recorded service will be posted online to follow.

- **Maundy Thursday**, April 2 - Virtual worship on Zoom at 7 pm with guest preacher Rev. Cheryl Mathison. Recorded service will be posted online to follow.
- **Good Friday**, April 2 - Virtual worship on Zoom at 7 pm led by Wildfire churches. Recorded service will be posted online to follow.
- **Easter Sunday**, April 4 - In-person and live-streaming to Zoom offered at 8:30am & 10:30 am. Both services will feature a guest organist. Recorded services will be posted online to follow.

As long as local Covid-19 case rates continue to decrease and vaccinations increase, we will operate under Level 3 for the foreseeable future, offering an in-person worship option on Sundays at 9:30 am.