

40 DAYS



LENT

March 5 – April 20, 2025



ST PAUL'S CATHEDRAL
EPISCOPAL

Love Christ • Serve Others • Welcome All

A note from an editor:

Thank you to all our writers this year! We had the healthiest number of respondents in my few years of leading this effort, so it seems this project is getting more attention from would-be contributors, and I couldn't be happier about that. I also couldn't do this without my fellow editors, Donna Perdue, Calvin Johnson, and some extra help from the Rev. Vesta Kowalski. All contributors and their days are listed towards the end of the booklet, along with the liturgies of Lent and Holy Week.

Regrettably, due to my misreading a few lines of the Excel file I use to track all of this, I missed a couple of folks who offered to write this year. *Mea culpa*, I hope you will sign up again next year, and I will be sure you are afforded the opportunity to write.

Whether you wrote, are simply reading, or are contemplating writing your own reflection next year, please know that your attention to this labor of love by the community is deeply appreciated. I hope that it helps focus our prayers, expand our understanding, and deepen our enjoyment of this Lenten journey. Have the holiest of forty days, and happy reading!

~ Rev. Cn. Richard Hogue

Ash Wednesday, March 5

Jonah 3:1-4:11; Psalm 32; Hebrews 12:1-14; Luke 18:9-14

There is no other time during the church year when our mortality is more evident than Ash Wednesday, the gateway into the season of Lent:

Remember that you are but dust, and to dust you will return. In many ways these words, which we hear when ashes are imposed—the sign of the cross on our foreheads—are the bookends of our human existence. Our human bodies are formed from primeval elements into something, someone, unique. And ultimately they return to those elements. We live. We die.

I have seen some absolutely beautiful bookends in my life, but ultimately the substance and purpose of any set of bookends is in what lies between them. Likewise, the substance and purpose of human existence is not in the fact that people are born and then die, but rather what happens in-between.

Starting with Ash Wednesday and then through the season of Lent, we are called upon to reflect on this in-between-ness. To acknowledge the truth of our lives, with grace, and take stock of where we have been, what we have done, those whom we have affected, for good or for bad, and then begin the process of repentance. To make amends when necessary and then turn away from those things we do, or even think of doing, which remove us from God and each other.

This is not a time to focus on outward acts so much as inward sacred work. As the author of the Book of Hebrews says, “let us also lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith . . .”

However, while this can seem daunting, God does call us to engage in this sacred inner work in a spirit of clarity, honesty, humility, hope and love.

As followers of Jesus, we are living in-between; between human life and death, between who we are and are becoming, between now and the eternity promised us by God. And because of that, we come to see how the bookends of our lives are really only the beginning.

Remember you are but dust, and to dust you will return.

Thursday, March 6

Deuteronomy 7:6-11; Psalm 37:1-18; Titus 1:1-16; John 17:1-8

Anyone who is fretting about the politics dividing the discourse of the United States must read these passages. You will be more settled and hopeful.

We are given clear instructions from both the Old and New Testaments that by staying with our common understanding of the Bible, all will be OK. I believe this is true, regardless of which side of the discourse you find yourself. The passages from Deuteronomy and Psalm 37 tell us that “God is the faithful God, keeping his covenant of love to a thousand generations of those who love him and keep his commandments” and “Better the little that the righteous have/than the wealth of many wicked; for the power of the wicked will be broken,/but the LORD upholds the righteous.”

Titus instructs: “An Elder... must be hospitable, one who loves what is good, who is self-controlled, upright, holy and disciplined. He must hold firmly to the trustworthy message as it has been taught...” Those supplications apply both to those in Power and to Us. We must decide how we will apply them in our lives, both at St. Paul’s and in the world. We learned these truths also in our recently completed Strategic Plan.

How will we better serve the less fortunate? How will we uphold our righteous duties to the world without judging? How will we become more hospitable and show love for what is good? We must continue our striving to follow Jesus’ words. For, as John tells us, “(Jesus) ...is the one who will baptize with the Holy Spirit. I have seen, and I testify that this is God’s Chosen One.” Following His words of instruction and example will help us to keep the Commandments of both the Father and the Son. Showing Love to our “enemies” will also bring us comfort and closer to God, as God fulfills the promises spoken in these passages and beyond.

Friday, March 7

Deuteronomy 7:12-16; Psalm 31; Titus 2:1-15; John 17:9-19

Andrew finds his brother Simon and tells him breathlessly, “We have found the Messiah!” But what did they imagine that to mean? Despite later Christian retconning (a term from comic books: to change the backstory of a character) of Hebrew scriptures, it is hard to believe these Galilean fishermen foresaw the agony and terror of Good Friday, or the resurrection complete with brass horns on Easter morning.

Today’s readings center on covenantal relations, the expectations between God and His people. But some of these verses weigh uncomfortably on those of us brought up on “God is love.”

In Deuteronomy, the Lord promises great things for His people—and, almost casually, instructs them to carry out genocide. The Psalmist, who makes far more enemies than friends, unctuously begs God to tip the scales in his favor and to silence those who slander him. Paul’s advice to Titus is to behave conventionally, including for wives to meekly subject themselves to their husbands and for slaves to obey their masters without protest.

I would prefer to read about Abraham who tries to talk God out of destroying Sodom and Gomorrah, Jacob who wrestles with the angel, Esther who outwits her people’s persecutor, Jesus who calls out the men about to stone a woman caught in adultery, Jesus who overturns the tables of the moneychangers. I squirm when instead I read about subjugation and suppression, and lectures about modesty and obedience in others strikes me as more about the lecturer’s convenience than God’s desire.

Yet Lent is a time to put aside our desires and our egos. Rather than shrugging it off—*Well, that’s what God wants!*—or excusing or explaining away unpleasant passages, perhaps we should examine the stories we tell ourselves about our lives and how our faith plays out. Are we truly living up to our covenant with God? When we find the Messiah, who will He be? What will He ask of us?

Saturday, March 8

Deuteronomy 7:17-26; Psalm 30; Titus 3:1-15; John 17:20-26

Today's readings challenged me. Was there a profound thread to find running through them we could apply to our lives? Then I let the text speak to me. The gospel author wrote of finding and being found. I reflected on how this encompasses outreach and a call to respond: God finds us and we are called to respond. The gospel text uses the same Greek word εὕρισκο (heuriskō) multiple times to describe finding and being found, but other possible meanings of the word include to discover, acquire, obtain, win, gain, comprehend, or recognize. There are unlimited ways God can find us, and for our wide bandwidth of possible responses.

Today's readings can deepen our understanding of God's many ways to find us, and for our response. The psalmist tells of being found by God many times and ways—among them being lifted out of the depths, being healed, being comforted after sorrow, and being clothed with joy. The psalmist responds by recognizing God in the times of weeping and the times of joy and then gives thanks for all of it.

The authors of Deuteronomy repeatedly wrote God's commands to not be ensnared by desires to destroy and covet. The repetition may be read as an admission that God's people—in the past and in our day—often fail in our response to God finding us. Titus reminds us that God found us “not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy.” We can respond by turning from living “in malice and envy, being hated and hating one another” to trusting in God and “devoting themselves to doing what is good.” In the gospel, Jesus finds Philip, who responds by following Him. Philip finds Nathanael and announces, “we have found the one of whom Moses wrote in the law, and the prophets.” Nathanael initially answers with snark. But after Nathanael is found by Jesus, he responds by following Him.

When have we been found by God, and how did we respond? When have we helped someone feel found by God? How can we be open to new and unexpected ways of being found by God? How can we grow in our capacity to respond?

Sunday, March 9

Deuteronomy 8:1-10; Psalm 63:1-11; 1 Corinthians 1:17-31; Mark 2:18-50

A time of uncertainty, impending chaos,
Powerlessness in the face of maliciousness,
And bankrupt power.

We are sinners in your sight O lord,
Our foundations have been shaken.

St. Paul preaches Christ crucified,
A stumbling block to some, foolishness to others
But the foolishness of God is wiser than
The ways of the world
The weakness of God stronger than
The ways of the world

How can this be? We are overcome, overwhelmed!
Millions of people losing aid, people losing
Their livelihood, safety nets being threatened,
Refugees, migrants abandoned

The musical documentary drama 3 Summers of Lincoln
Opened last night, well done in every way.
Tolstoy describes Lincoln, his eyes full of tears,

His lips with secret sorrow
Lincoln combined a deep awareness of the world's
Brokenness with a profound energy to be agent
Of its mending.

Forgive them for they know not what they do
Miraculously we are forgiven, loved utmost
To be a strength to others in need
A counselor in perplexity, a comfort in sorrow,
A companion in joy.

O Lord, make us agents of the world's mending.
God's weakness and foolishness heal us

Monday, March 10

Deuteronomy 8:11-20; Psalm 41; Hebrews 2:11-18; John 2:1-12

Here we are on the first Monday in Lent, and the reading from John's gospel takes us to a party. It's not just any party, but a wedding feast where the celebrating guests have consumed all the wine long before the festivities have begun to wind down. Jesus is among the guests, along with his disciples and Mary. Mary (who, I think, somehow seems to know that Jesus can remedy the situation) turns to him and says, "They have no wine." Jesus rebuffs his mother, but then proceeds to perform his first "sign," or miracle, wherein six stone jars of water become wine of a higher quality than any which the wedding guests had already consumed. And so, the wedding feast continued, and the wine flowed abundantly.

God's gift to us through the life and death of his son, Jesus, is abundance. Not necessarily wine for a feast, nor monetary or temporal riches, but abundance of spirit and the fulness of hope, the awareness of divine love that is always with us when we are at a low spot or are sorely tried by life's contingencies.

Lent is that season of the church year when we focus on turning our lives more fully toward God (theologians call that "repentance"). The human race has been in need of repentance for thousands of years, and the writer of Deuteronomy 8 was moved to admonish the Israelites to that end in today's reading from the Hebrew Scriptures. Reminding them that God had brought them out from bondage in Egypt, protecting and feeding them on their wanderings, they must not forget God's abundant gifts now that they have prospered in the land they were promised by the Lord God. God's "commandments, ordinances, and statutes" are to be kept.

And that, for me, is the Lenten paradox. It's not all self-denial and lamentation. We are to continue rejoicing in God's abundant gifts to us, while at the same time turning our lives, in love, back to the One from whom all gifts come.

Tuesday, March 11

Deuteronomy 9:4-12; Psalm 45; Hebrews 3:1-11; John 2:13-22

“The Passover of the Jews was near, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. In the temple he found people selling cattle, sheep, and doves and the money changers seated at their tables. Making a whip of cords, he drove all of them out of the temple, with the sheep and the cattle. He also poured out the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables. He told those who were selling the doves, ‘Take these things out of here! Stop making my Father’s house a marketplace!’”

Jesus, embodying both divine and human perspective in this scene from John's Gospel, sees contemptuous corruption in high places, and he resists it. It's the sort of public defiance that will get him crucified. But still, he speaks out, even lashes out. He resists.

When public officials, whether religious or political are untrumpable in corruption, bearing witness to the reality of God (a higher power) requires the courage to do something. Jesus resists institutional corruption, defies "the powers and principalities who rule this present age," and lashes out to bear witness to a higher, more hopeful power.

Will we dare follow this holy troublemaker all the way to the cross? If we do, God is with us, through it all and with every cross we have to bear and even if we die on a cross or two along the way. However surely and terribly we suffer, however distant a higher power may seem, the Good News is that the power and presence of God's in-breaking reign is with us.

Hopelessness adapts. Hope resists.

Wednesday, March 12

Deuteronomy 9:13-21; Psalm 119:49-72; Romans 5:12-21; John 2:23-3:15

I always wondered what Nicodemus was thinking on his night walk on the way to see Jesus. He may have been scared, and so coming to Jesus in the evening was a wise choice lest another Pharisee see him and report back. But to me, his curiosity and wonder about who Jesus was eclipsed, shall we say, his better judgement.

When they meet, again, what wonder he must've had at Jesus' mysterious words. "Do not be astonished that you must be born from above. The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So, it is with everyone born of the Spirit." Jesus sounds like a poet and a prophet here because the metaphor of wind as the spirit, its transparency and ubiquity, sort of resets the way we may think of God's closeness. That the spirit is air that we cannot see and yet is our foundation, our key to life and love.

In the history of philosophy Immanuel Kant uses the term "noumena" that is the part of a person that cannot be examined or measured or empirically proven, but we are obliged—along with his moral imperatives—to be guided by it "as if" it existed. As people of faith, though, "we know" because *we feel* the spirit in us, and we feel it in us in exactly those moments where we should have anxiety but instead abide in an inexplicable peace.

In the Hebrew readings I must admit that I too was one of those rebels the writer speaks of, having fallen into the illusion of separation our western culture frequently promotes. Now, though, and having been baptized and ordained, there is always connection; always a bond leading me to the hurt this world inflicts on those that don't fit. I see in Jesus' words today the balm to those wounds.

Thursday, March 13

Deuteronomy 9:23-10:5; Psalm 50; Hebrews 4:1-10; John 3:16-21

In Psalm 50 we are reminded that Earth—and all therein—is the Lord’s. Not the purview of the so-called powerful, not those who think they can purchase resources and not suffer the consequences of despoiling what God has brought to life. That we should offer our gratitude to God for all of this beauty and the cycles of living presence, that we should honor and love God through our care of God’s creation and for one another in love is all that God desires of us.

In Deuteronomy 9:23-10:5 God sets before us God’s “rules of the road.” Isn’t it interesting how all ten boil down to love, either for God or for our neighbors? Or sometimes both. It seems simple to follow them: if we want to use a word to bring ourselves back to center whenever we are confronted with a choice, we can say love. And we are confronted with such choices daily. Much of what blocks us from following God’s commandments relates to how we respond to those options. We just repeat love. Say it again: love.

John 3:16-21: Ah, John 3:16. The brief passage that has been used by many to divide us, even more so right here, right now at this pivotal time in the history of our country and in the history of our faith.

My only reflection here (pun somewhat intended) is that, in order to be truly illuminating, light does not have only one entry point. One light shining forth is increased by another. In my mind, God makes space for all the light that leads to love, and not only through our Christian faith. “God so loved the world....” In my mind, that includes all of God’s good creation and all of God’s beautiful people, all of those who live in love, who are called to live in love, and who are finding a path to live in love. All. Amen.

Friday, March 14

Deuteronomy 10:12-22; Psalm 40; Hebrews 4:11-16; John 3:22-36

“I delight to do your will, O my God; your law is within my heart.” (Psalm 40:8)

This is going to be a different kind of Lent for a lot of us. I think many people feel as though we are in some sort of an alternate universe, especially in the United States right now. I have been reading *How We Learn to be Brave* by the Rt. Rev. Mariann Budde and one thing she said in her book hit me. Paraphrasing her, we may not like where we are right now, but this is where we happen to be. I take this to mean that we can still be faithful followers of Jesus, regardless of our circumstances; and we must be.

The world must not dictate how we behave, or how we view our own faith. The quote above from Psalm 40 must be taken to heart, quite literally. God’s law must be and must *stay* in our hearts.

In the reading from Deuteronomy, we are told what the Lord requires of us. “Only to fear the Lord your God, to walk in all his ways, to love him, to serve the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, and to keep the commandments of the Lord and his decrees, for your own well-being.” This is, of course, echoed in the words of the prophet Micah, “He has told you, O mortal, what is good, and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice and to love kindness and to walk humbly with your God?” Kindness. Kindness equals mercy.

Mercy is something all living creatures deserve, and we are seeing a lack of mercy from our government these days. For a people who claim Christianity as the basis for our country, this is confusing for true followers of Jesus.

This Lent, we must absolutely reflect on ourselves and hold fast to the people we know we are. As Episcopalians, we strive to fulfill the Two Great Commandments by loving God, fully, and loving our neighbors. This is the essence of the Law.

No matter what happens or where we find ourselves in the world, we are the vector for the Holy Spirit. We must continue to spread love and mercy to *all* people. Let us make this Lent the holiest of all and be faithful to our Lord.

Saturday, March 15

Deuteronomy 11:18-28; Psalm 55; Hebrews 5:1-10; John 4:1-26

Psalm 55 tells of the torment of a person who feels persecuted and wronged by an unidentified enemy. They feel helpless to combat the tormentor and are experiencing great anguish and pain from the relentless assault they feel inflicted upon them. They pray to God for mercy and relief. Wishing to escape, they want to fly away and find a place to be at rest. They ask the Lord to silence those that wish evil upon them. At verse 12 we learn that the tormentor is not an evil unknown enemy but is actually a companion, a friend, making the pain even more acute and causing the person to wish death upon them for the evil in their heart. Then they put their trust in the Lord and call upon God for salvation from this evil. They know that God will sustain them and cast down those that torment the righteous.

The reading from Deuteronomy tells us that we have choices in this life. If we learn, believe, teach and live by the word, we will be rewarded. Conversely it is clear that our choices will have consequences. We can choose rather to obey or not obey, and our choices can result in prosperity or curses.

In Hebrews we learn that when called by God, the role of a priest is to advocate for the people not as a god but as a human that knows weakness and sin. This is just as Christ was sent by God as an advocate and learned obedience and became the high priest yet knew human faults.

When Jesus visits Samaria in the reading from John, we see him as a man of all people regardless of their race, sex or station in life. In his interaction with the woman at the well, he explains the difference between physical thirst and spiritual thirst and how worship does not depend on specific locations but on spirit and truth. His kindness and attention to this woman who likely was not respected by her peers leaves her forever changed.

Sunday, March 16

Jeremiah 1:1-10; Psalm 24; 1 Corinthians 3:11-23; Mark 3:31-4:9

The story of Jeremiah's call is often read at ordinations, where the focus is on what it feels like to be called by God to a particular ministry—as I think we all are. However, the other lessons for today seem to shine a spotlight not on the fact of being called, but on the kind of work Jeremiah is being called to do—and, by extension, the kind of work God calls us to do.

Jeremiah is called “to pluck up and to pull down...to build and to plant.” In other words, he is called to be both destructive and constructive. And since we will have readings from Jeremiah nearly every day for the rest of Lent, we will have an opportunity to see how, during his very long life and ministry, he was called on to operate in both modes, being destructive with the complacent who thought living in Jerusalem was enough to keep them safe, and, when Jerusalem had been destroyed, encouraging the hopeless with a vision of a God who was very different from what they had thought, a God with the power and the will to restore them to a new Jerusalem

As I read these lessons in the present context of a world full of what often appears to be wanton destruction, it seems to me that we are probably not being called to add to the chaos, but might live out our own callings best by concentrating on furthering, in our own individual ways, whatever they may be, the building and planting aspects of God's work.

This is bound to be hard work, and it is bound to be uncertain work. It requires us to be creative, without any assurance that the building we are doing will last, or the seeds we are planting will germinate.

And this is where today's other lessons offer some reassurance.

In Corinthians, where we are called builders, we are also told that the value of our contribution to the master building will become apparent—although perhaps not until further destruction happens. Mark's parable of the sower reminds us that when we plant, we may or may not see positive results. In either case, the point is to do the work and let God take care of the results.

Like Jeremiah, we are assured that God can make sure that God's work is done through us, even if that work is scary and we don't really see results. But we are promised that God is with us—and perhaps that is good enough!

Monday, March 17

Jeremiah 1:11-19; Psalm 56; Romans 1:1-15; John 4:27-42

There is an interesting God reflected in these four readings. In Jeremiah, God is preparing Jeramiah for a hard time and imploring him to hang in and even threatening him, but at least promising to rescue him (maybe after a bad time).

In John, Christ does some up-close conversion work with the Samaritan woman and then seemingly chastises his apostles, suggesting that that is what they need to be doing. That they are “reaping what they have not worked for.”

In the psalm, someone is being abused, and he even asks for God to record the tears of his misery so those torturing him might turn back and God will remember him and help him.

So, what do we make of these? I know these days I often ask God if he is going to rescue the people of this country from those who prefer to arbitrarily eliminate jobs, leave more people needy, speak openly in racist ways without any need to be apologetic. How is God going to deal with this situation and what should we be doing this Lenten season?

Unfortunately, in these biblical situations, God never says there won't be suffering or chastisement for actions. How do we keep the faith? How do we keep the trust going. It may sound weird, but for me attending morning prayer and reading and then discussing readings like these on a daily basis is a comforting thing. If nothing else, we are reminded daily that we are not alone in our attempts to understand and strengthen our faith. I think it clarifies for me my relationship with God and Christ.

Tuesday, March 18

Jeremiah 2:1-13; Psalm 61; Romans 1:16-25; John 4:43-54

Then Jesus said: “Unless you see signs and wonders, you will not believe.”
John 4:48

Where are these “signs and wonders”? Are these the miracles that Jesus performs? A miracle is defined as a surprising and welcome event that is not explicable by natural or scientific laws and is therefore considered to be the work of a divine agency, but I know that I can’t just turn on my faucet and fill up my wine glass with wine. So maybe I don’t believe that Jesus can, or did, violate the laws of physics. And yet, there are many things that we human beings don’t yet understand, and may never understand, except within the context of belief without explanation. Take, for example, the beauty of a sunset. While we understand (largely) the physics behind how the sun makes light, the refraction and scattering of light, and how the oxygen in the atmosphere makes the sky look blue, this does not capture the feeling of awe when we look at a spectacular sunset. These feelings are not explicable by natural or scientific laws, except in the abstract. Perhaps it is in this way that we experience miracles.

So, what miracle does Jesus perform that we are witness to? I say that it is to love one another. Love is a complicated and deeply personal experience that defies our attempts to write about it, categorize it, or otherwise quantify it. The experience of love is, indeed, a miracle, and the miracles that Jesus and his disciples performed were acts of love. Perhaps these acts of love are the signs and wonders we seek. And here they are, right in front of us. Moreover, Jesus has commanded us as his disciples to go out and do it. (John 13:34).

So, go out and perform a miracle today. Make someone you meet smile. Make a new friend. Show that you are a disciple and love another.

Wednesday, March 19

Jeremiah 3:6-18:11; Psalm 72; Romans 1:28-2:11; John 5:1-18

South of Hebron, north of Ziph, lies a narrow, fertile strip
Where the tribal lord sojourns
With multitudinous kin and flock,
Wiry goats, fat-tailed sheep, the herds of asses rufous, sleek.
From one well-pegged and spacious tent,
The lord comes out aggrieved and spent.
“My feckless wife,” he says, “has fled.
She, with perverse agency, cavorts among the rocks and trees.
And in odious pagan rites, strangers sample her delights.
She is but a shame to me.”
As salacious gossip mounts, rumor flavors all accounts.
Jeremiah the seer proclaims, “The judgment of the patriarch is plain.”
If the prodigal returns,
No tinkling bracelets will be given, no ululations of the tongue.
One voice only in the air, itemizing her deceits,
Prostrate at her master’s feet, not revealing what sore grief
Prompted her to such relief.

Where is Gilead's precious balm, its fragrant, efficacious salve?
Who will bring the resonance of Grace, so sorely needed in this place?

Thursday, March 20

Jeremiah 4:9-10,19-28; Psalm71; Romans 2:12-24; John 5:19-29

The readings of today seem to be dark and dreadful. They warn of how the earth will shake and people will be unjust. However, the bottom line is that we will get through this. We place our trust in the loving and merciful God who is our rock of refuge.

To me the national scene we are watching unfold seems to be a lot of dark and dreadful. I've been a follower of national politics from an early age and what we see now is nothing like what we've seen before. It is painful to watch. And I know we cannot just pretend it will get better in time and on its own.

There are no easy answers, but I think the reading from John holds the promise; to trust in God and His Son, Jesus. That is, to love others despite all that is going on. It doesn't mean to roll over and accept all that is happening. No! It means we still make our voices heard when we need to and object in the strongest way we can to injustice and oppression.

May the love of God our maker, the Son Jesus our redeemer, and the wisdom of the Holy Spirit lead our way through the remainder of these 40 days of Lent. And may that love live in our hearts always.

Friday, March 21

Jeremiah 5:20-31; Psalm 75; Romans 3:19-31; John 7:1-13

Are you feeling overwhelmed? I am, and when I initially read the Psalm, I think, “This just makes me feel worse. People judge me when I did not do what they are accusing me of.” My other favorite is, “**I** am the problem.” I might even think, “God, I am doing this all for **you**.” Even under the care of God, life will still have good and challenging times.

Then I think these complaints are really helping me to focus on what God leads me to do. If I talk to people, I may find that they don’t judge me, they were just having a bad day. The problem wasn’t me; in fact, I was part of the solution by changing my mindset!

Just like the lame man that Jesus healed with some simple instructions, we too can gain the courage to get into the healing water. This is Jesus’s metaphor for encouraging us to join people who can love, nurture and help us grow and thrive. I too can listen to Jesus and others, and speak to an ECS convention with 500 attendees, or counsel someone who is dealing with a problem. Who knows, I might even be able to preach another sermon!

Instead of looking for problems, I will spend this Lent looking for solutions. This will allow me not to focus on the judgment of others. I can now shift attention to being healthy and helping others. Will you join me?

Saturday, March 22

Jeremiah 5:20-31; Psalm 75; Romans 3:19-31; John 7:1-13

In the Jeremiah reading, God is angry with his people. What I read reminded me of what is happening today. Not only is God angry, but I am angry at the situation that seems to get worse each day as more and more people are hurt in many different ways.

Stubborn and rebellious people are in every part of the government. Wicked people set traps to catch people. Many of those doing the sinful things are very rich and famous. They are not defending the fatherless, the poor or others in great need. The last part of the Jeremiah reading, the end of verse 31, reads, "But what will you do in the end?"

Bishop Mariann Budde confronted the one that is causing the great chaos and asked him to think about the poor, those who need medical care and do not have their own funds. Also, to protect the many people that are important to our country by the jobs they do: harvesting the crops, cleaning hotel rooms, hospitals, taking care of children. The people that will and are being deported do not have a safe situation to return to in their homeland.

What does this mean to me? I can sit and wring my hands and moan, or I can take action. I am choosing to take action. I marched in the Interfaith March on February 9. I am participating in the task force for sanctuary status for St. Paul's with Kimberley Fernandez and others.

At the end of her sermon on February 9, The Reverend Canon Allisyn Thomas said, "Love God, love your neighbor as yourself. End of story."

Back to Jeremiah: "What will you do in the end?"

Sunday, March 23

Jeremiah 6:9-15; Psalm 93; 1 Corinthians 6:12-20; Mark 5:1-20

Mark 5:1-20

My very broad summary.

Jesus frees a man who had been long oppressed by demons and excluded from his family and community.

The demons would prefer to be in the pigs than be banished.

The pigs would rather die and do.

The people are amazed but overwhelmed at Jesus's power.

The swineherds are wiped out, having lost 2,000 pigs.

Everyone but the man (who was previously bound by the demons) begs Jesus to leave. He does but won't take the man. The man is back in his right mind and is given the mission of telling the story to his neighbors.

Have you known someone who is "different"—who is neurodivergent, who does not speak English fluently, who has a problem with substance abuse, who is different in any way—be excluded or pushed to the margins? Have you been that person?

Sometimes those people on the margins can become "monsters" to the wider community. We try to blame them for any or all the things that make us afraid.

Jesus freed the man from his demons, but the community was not grateful. His healing upset the status quo. There was more work to be done.

Our work as disciples of Jesus is to bring people from the margins to the center, then stick around when there is deeper and wider healing needed.

Monday, March 24

Jeremiah 7:1-15; Psalm 80; Romans 4:1-12; John 7:14-36

I'm looking at Jeremiah 7:4: "Do not trust in these deceptive words: This is the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord." I am struck by the emphasis of stating it three times. We could say, "This is St. Paul's Cathedral!" three times. We are a good church, a place of beautiful worship, progressive preaching, many caring programs. And yet, perhaps more is required of us in these days.

The climate is chilling right now, and not just because it's still winter as I write. The country is in chaos. I think we have to step up our game. As people of faith, we cannot just count on our church and what it is doing in our name. I think we have to get out there more. I confess, this is not usually my comfort zone.

We have to be more active: if possible, care for the alien, the orphan, the innocent, the oppressed, the hungry, immigrants. For months a group made sandwiches for migrants. They are no longer coming across our border. But the Cathedral has formed a Sanctuary Task Force. We still offer showers and breakfast to our unhoused neighbors on the second Saturday of the month (except in April, it will be April 5).

There are many opportunities to take a stand for justice: rallies and protests for climate change, for migrants, for those facing indiscriminate job loss. Contact your Congress people and Senators as bills arise that concern our rights and justice for all. SD 350.org sponsors climate actions. Seek out the truth.

More opportunities will emerge within our congregational life. We can participate in Sunday forums, attend the Listening Hub on the 2nd and 4th Thursdays at 4:30 p.m., support Voices of our City events. There is often an article in the weekly e-bulletin from the Simpler Living Creation Care Ministry: read the entire article, and take action if you are able!

As Jeremiah says, "If you truly act justly with one another, I will dwell with you in this place." (Jeremiah 7:7).

Tuesday, March 25

Jeremiah 7:21-34; Psalm 78:1-39; Romans 4:13-25; John 37-52

It is sobering that Jeremiah foresaw the destruction coming for Israel. And now the four horsemen have saddled up. What can I do?

Jeremiah begs the people to keep faith with God, warning them of the evil of their materialism and mindless acceptance of traditions, such as the burnt offerings and sacrifices which demonstrate that the law has become infused with cruelty. In Romans, Paul also points out that the law can bring wrath. The powerful Pharisees, keepers of the law in John's gospel, declare that it is impossible that Jesus can be the Messiah. Nicodemus challenges them: how can they judge Jesus without a proper hearing?

When it seems humanity has gone off the rails, the voices and acts of individuals like Jeremiah and Nicodemus, who do what they can in times of crisis, resonate through the ages as key parts of the story, expressing a higher law above earthly power. Many names can be added to the list: Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Dag Hammarskjöld, Rosa Parks, Martin Luther King, Jr., Alexei Navalny. These are people we remember. However, I am also reminded of the depiction in George Eliot's *Middlemarch* of obscure lives facing the reality of lowered expectations, yet aware their actions are still important.

In his book *The Power of Grace*, David Richo suggests we consider ourselves a Communion of Humanity, in which the good work we do, including our meditation or prayer practices, benefits all of us. He sees a timeless accumulation of acts supporting us as we labor toward a better future. Pierre Teilhard de Chardin expressed this process as each work of ours becoming part of the evolving universe. "Process theology" invites participation from everyone in all places, creeds, and situations. Let me be confident that what I can do benefits this world. Let me keep my lamp trimmed and summon my individual creativity as I act as an irreplaceable part of this divine world.

In California in times of drought, stones are exposed on the dry riverbed. May they sparkle in the darkness, like the much-persecuted Jeremiah, reminding me, as the psalmist suggests, that God's grace is unpredictable, and that compassion remains with us.

Wednesday, March 26

Jeremiah 8:18-9:6; Psalm 119:97-120; Romans 5:1-11; John 8:12-20

In the final days of the crumbling nation of Judah, the “weeping prophet” Jeremiah laments. For decades he had been crying out to the people of the Southern Kingdom to keep the covenant and get right with God. No one listened. They misunderstood everything and followed the wrong leaders. Having already sacrificed it all—no wife, no children, no family, no home—he grew evermore discouraged. Jeremiah’s pain was the pain of one left out in the cold. It was the pain of realizing that those in power, and the fools who support them, cleave close to a cruel and indifferent ethos that violates everything you know to be good, and right, and true.

The unknown Psalmist, writing after the Babylonian Destruction and Exile, speaks with the clarity only abject suffering affords. No longer interested in niceties, subtleties, or euphemisms, he, with unabashed confidence, calls out evildoers and the damage they inflict. How can we interrupt cruelty and thwart harm-doing unless we call it what it is? Does not our sacred work in the world begin with simple truth-telling?

In his letter to the Romans, Paul rings a bell of hope that calls us out of our despair. “Suffering produces endurance,” he writes, “and endurance produces character, and character produces hope.” Like his contemporary the Roman Stoic philosopher Epictetus, who wrote, “The hardships we endure introduce us to our strengths,” Paul knows from personal experience that suffering is a fire that forges steel—steel we need to survive the storm ahead. In Paul’s curious manner of speaking, he says that we are “justified by faith,” and that through faith we gain the peace and grace of God. The word “justified” is a stretched-thin translation of the Koine Greek word *dikaiōsis*, which generally means to be acquitted of all charges and found innocent. (Paul often frames spiritual matters in the language of the courts.) Perhaps a more expansive or culturally inclusive way to express this teaching would be to lace it together with similar ideas from other wisdom traditions like enlightenment, awakening, or integration in the Jungian sense, i.e., to become whole. Or to come clean—so clean that the light within us shines out to illumine the whole world. As Jesus models for us in John 8:12, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.”

Thursday, March 27

Jeremiah 10:11-24; Psalm 42; Romans 5:12-21; John 8:21-32

Where indeed is your God? These scriptures ask or at least hint at that very question, a question that we may from time to time ask ourselves. Where is our God when we see death and destruction and mayhem and injustice and illness and all of the problems we face through life?

The Psalm doesn't give us direct answers, but says, "Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you disquieted within me? Hope in God: for I shall again praise him, my help and my God."

Jeremiah warns us against putting our trust in worldly things or in ourselves, and says, "I know, O Lord, that the way of human beings is not in their control." He calls us to acknowledge the infinite power of the God who made us and to adhere to God's word.

Jesus echoes that exhortation, and tells his disciples, "If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples; and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free."

Who among us has not wavered in our faith, has not doubted that God is with us, that the Holy Spirit lives within us? Many people think that religious belief is some sort of magic, or they see it as folly, having been beaten up by their church at some point in their lives. True religion begins with faith, continues with the words of Jesus, and it takes maintenance from time to time. Lent gives us that opportunity, to look again at ourselves and rid ourselves of earthly pride, envy, greed, and all of the other sins that keep us from the love of God and instead plant within us the notion that God isn't looking or caring anyway. Now is the time to repent, to rethink our place before our Creator and ask for divine forgiveness for that sin against our neighbor that we have been harboring, for that evil thought about that person who perhaps acted against us. God and his son Jesus Christ await our admissions of guilt, and they wait to give us newness of life, adorned once more in God's grace and love and clothed in the knowledge that we have been reborn. That is what Lent gives us.

Friday, March 28

Jeremiah 1:1-8,14-20; Psalm 88; Romans 6:1-11; John 8:33-47

Whatever kind of day you're having, hopefully it's not a Psalm 88 day. If you were the psalmist, your mood could be expressed succinctly as: "Hello, darkness, my old friend. Life is hell, and then you die."

The only thing that could possibly make your day worse would be to meet Jeremiah. As you teetered on the edge of the abyss, clinging to one last slender thread of consolation – "At least the God who saves me will hear my laments" – Jeremiah would give it the final snip: "No. God isn't listening to you, and even if you had any friends left to pray for you, God wouldn't listen to them either. And you brought all this on yourself. Your life is hell because you're a sinner, therefore you die."

But once you had plunged screaming into the abyss, you would find Paul there waiting for you. "Welcome," he might say. "You thought this would be the end, but what if I told you it's a new beginning? You thought of it as destruction, but only in the sense of tearing down a ramshackle old house to build a cathedral. Life is hell when you're a slave to sin. Then you die to sin, rise to a new life of freedom, and never have to fear death again."

"He's right," a new voice might add, and you would look and see that it came from Jesus. "Your old life in sin was slavery. Your new life in me is liberation, and then adoption as a beloved child in the family of God."

And once you had passed through the abyss, you might find yourself back where you started, but this time, with words of hope ringing in your heart and nothing further to fear. If you were the psalmist, you might say, with reference to one of your later works (Psalm 139:11-12): "Hello, darkness, my old friend. In the eyes of the God who loves me, you are as bright as the day."

Saturday, March 29

Jeremiah 13:1-11; Psalm 87; Romans 6:12-23; John 8:47-59

I focused on the reading from John 8:47-59 for my Reflection:

I believe this passage reminds us to remember that when we believe in God, or belong to God, we hear what He says. And when we obey God, we will never see death. During Lent and these troubled times, I attempt to remain present in God's realm, believing in Him intensely.

I'm reminded to be a faithful Episcopalian, following Jesus and his teachings, God's words to be obedient, not straying from our beliefs, *i.e.*, I obey the Commandments, respect the dignity of every human being, and pray for the courage to follow and obey what I profess on Sundays, and every day.

Terry, "Be a good and faithful Episcopalian and citizen and do and behave in the righteous ways I'm continuously taught." Not sometimes, but all the time, eternally.

Laetare Sunday, March 30

Jeremiah 14:1-9,17-22; Psalm 66; Galatians 4:21-5:1; Mark 8:11-21

The final verse of the Gospel assigned to this Sunday is, “Do you still not understand?” How often Jesus asked this question of his disciples. How often Jesus asks this question of us. In spite of all the blessings I have received from God through Jesus, why do I often let my focus dwell on that which seems lacking, that which is upsetting to me, that which does not fit into my view of how the world should be? While I often prefer to be in control, I also know that some of the most moving, inspirational, uplifting moments have been when I “let go and let God” ... be that in answering the call to ministry or in a much more mundane action of adapting a recipe to what is on hand. Sometimes just exploring a new city or hearing a new piece of music or “wasting” time with a friend can reveal to me the wonders of God’s love for me and for the world. And yet the question remains, “Do you still not understand?”

Psalm 66 begins, “Shout for joy to God, all the earth! Sing the glory of his name, make his praise glorious. Say to God, ‘How awesome are your deeds!’” True, but sometimes my heart is hardened. Sometimes my eyes fail to see and my ears fail to hear. Things are not like I want them to be, I hoped for them to be, I prayed for them to be. Perhaps my heart is focused only on me and not on us. Perhaps my vision is limited to what my eyes see at this moment and not the bigger picture—the long arc of the moral universe. Perhaps my ears are filled with the cacophony of the world rather than the quiet whisper of God’s Spirit. How awesome indeed are God’s deeds when I open my mind and heart and eyes and ears to the good news of Jesus, the good news that proclaims we all are God’s creation, that God loves each one of us unconditionally, that all of us are called to participate in God’s great mission of reconciliation.

May we answer Jesus’ question, “Do you still not understand?” by striving to live a life worthy of the calling we have received from God through Jesus.

Monday, March 31

Jeremiah 16:10-21; Psalm 89:1-18; Romans 7:1-12; John 6:1-15

In the Gospel reading from John 6:1-15, we are invited to trust in God's abundant care. Jesus takes the boy's meager provisions, just as God takes our gifts, blesses them, and uses them to bring about abundance. John describes the shared experience of a large community hearing the words "Bread of Life." As Episcopalians, we come to the table in scarcity, share the Eucharist, and leave in the fullness of love. We remember his death, proclaim his resurrection, and await his coming in glory. In this season of Lent, may we approach Jesus with our own loaves and fishes, no matter how small they may seem, and allow Him to multiply them for His kingdom. And may we also be open to receiving the bread of life that He offers us—Jesus Himself, the sustenance that never runs dry.

Tuesday, April 1

Jeremiah 17:19-27; Psalm 97; Romans 7:13-25; John 6:16-27

This set of readings is a great example of something I think about often when engaging with the Bible. There are so many *tensions* present in the text. As Episcopalians, we stress that God is Love, and I think this is true. But if that's so, how can we understand the anguish Paul feels, caught between what he feels is weakness in his flesh and the nobility of his spirit? How can we grapple with what Jeremiah prophesies: that God will burn down Jerusalem in fire if the Law is not kept? Even our Psalm seems to be exalting God's might rather than Her mercy. Surely, we might first think, such anguish, such punishment, such forceful might must give us a different image of God than the image of Love we so badly want Them to be.

I think it's necessary to sit with these tensions before seeing their resolution. So often in the Bible, if we sit with the parts that seem strange and uncomfortable, we see bits of ourselves reflected. Maybe that's why they're uncomfortable to read and sit with. We have probably all felt like Paul, knowing what we ought to do, but wanting so badly to do otherwise, and letting those desires win out. We have probably also felt the fear prophesied in Jeremiah, and the pride sung in the Psalm.

As is often the case, Jesus, wandering with and teaching his friends, points us toward some resolution. "The sea became rough because a strong wind was blowing. When they had rowed out about three or four miles, they saw Jesus walking on the sea..." (John 6:18-19). Jesus often appears in unexpected places, and in ways that seem mysterious or even, as in this case, impossible. But He is there just the same. In the rough seas of Paul's frustration, Jeremiah's anxiety, and the Psalmist's pride, Jesus waits to arrive, walking calmly across the water to remind us that it is not loaves that will fill us—not even those offered by Moses—but Jesus Himself (as is revealed in 6:32 a little further on). And, knowing a little bit about how the rest of the story goes—what Jesus's life, death, and resurrection reveal to us about God's mercy—we begin to see the way that Love will come to resolve textual and emotional tensions, all in the fullness of time.

Wednesday, April 2

Jeremiah 18:1-11; Psalm 101; Romans 8:1-11; John 6:27-40

Psalm 101 starts with joy. “I will sing of loyalty and justice; to you, O Lord, I will sing.”

In verse 3, David pivots to what and who he hates. I start to squirm. One of our patriarchs is talking about who he will destroy morning by morning! This isn't what we're supposed to be about.

After another reading, I really squirm. The very human David is speaking for me. He's verbalizing the part I have trouble saying but feel—fear, anger, and sometimes hate, seeing people's lives, some I know, turned upside down by a group of would-be despots, vs. my beliefs that living in a state of anger or hate fills up space in me that belongs to God and that only love can truly conquer hate. I consider this my current main-event spiritual struggle.

How do I stand with people who are powerless to counteract cruel policies while still being able to hold to the certainty that those who tear down social supports and demean large groups are fellow children of God?

There are a few moments I've experienced a sense of those opposites simultaneously—it is truly a place of peace and hope.

A friend anonymously wrote his own *A Twenty-First Century Psalter*. His translation reads like a prayer. King David's condemnations morph into pleas for God's help. A snippet starting about verse 3:

“May I focus on the divine and not on worthless things . . .

May my eyes see faithfulness all around;

May I serve you as you abide in others.”

Do you remember the story in a sermon by Rev. Richard Lief about the African bishop who calmly spoke to a group of young soldiers who were about to execute him and his fellow priests. The leader of the group of soldiers ended up saying, “I want what you have.” (Richard tells it better.)

Father, please turn my anger into prayer. Please help us be strong in our support for all those in need while we leave our foes wanting the love, serenity and joy you've made available to all.

Thursday, April 3

Jeremiah 22:13-23; Psalm 69:1-38; Romans 8:12-27; John 6: 41-51

Jeremiah 22: 13-23

Today's political atmosphere comes to mind when I meditate on this passage. History repeats itself, it seems, and the problems we face regarding those who "have" and those "who-do-not" widens.

The frustrations of the people are also historic: they feel similar, to the point that the verses give us guidance we can utilize today to help us cope and find strength in God in times that try our mettle. The Lord says here, "They will not mourn for him..." (Jer 22: 18). To me, this implies that things will be resolved by God ultimately, to stay strong in your faith. The verse, "Go up to Lebanon and cry out, let your voice be heard..." (Jer 22: 20). Do not sit idly by, speak up if you feel a certain way about things. The Lord seems to say, to me, "you will only regret not doing so."

Friday, April 4

Jeremiah 23:1-8; Psalm 102; Romans 8:28-39; John 6:52-59

Bad, arrogant, self-serving, even evil leadership on a national scale is nothing new. As I look around a world that seems plagued with such leaders, Jeremiah's words—meant in part to offer hope to the people of Israel—don't necessarily sound more hopeful today than they might have when he spoke them some 2600 years ago. Being brought back after exile doesn't ease the pain of exile. Even if the Israelites had known that their exile would last a mere 50 years—just a snap of the fingers in historical terms—that would hardly have offered hope to someone who could not realistically expect to live that long, even safely at home. The promise of a good shepherd, if fulfilled, would come to pass generations hence.

But Jeremiah's primary job was not to offer hope to the Israelites, but rather to speak truth to power. It is a job that some of us may also be called to do—in recent weeks, two courageous women have made national news and risked their own comfort and safety to do so, perhaps setting an example for others. However, prophets have always been rare, and most of us probably need to look elsewhere for positive contributions we can make in a world suffering from the lack of good leadership.

“Elsewhere” could be chapter 34 of the book of Ezekiel, where the slightly later prophet, riffing on this passage from Jeremiah, describes the work of a good shepherd as strengthening the weak, healing the sick, binding up the injured, bringing back the strayed, seeking the lost.

Perhaps we, as followers of the Good Shepherd, could be good shepherds ourselves. Perhaps in our own lives we could practice these positive skills as a way of counteracting some of the negative consequences of widespread poor leadership.

It wouldn't need to be on a national scale. All of us have at least small circles where our actions make a difference—friendship circles, families, work environments, living situations—groups of other human beings with whom we can both provide and model the compassionate, life-promoting attributes of good shepherding. And if enough of us do that, perhaps when these troubled times end—as they surely will—we will have helped create a reservoir of potential leaders who understand how a good shepherd leads.

Saturday, April 5

Jeremiah 23:9-15; Psalm 107:33-43; Romans 9:1-18; John 6:60-71

Overall, these passages emphasize God's justice, the importance of faith, and the reality of divine election in salvation.

Psalms describes God's power to transform the land and people's fortunes based on righteousness and wickedness. He blesses the faithful, yet the wicked suffer consequences. The wise will realize His lovingkindness. Having faith in God's power guides me in all ways.

Jeremiah expresses grief over corrupt prophets and people who lead others astray. Because of their deceit and wickedness, God declares judgment upon them, likening their fate to the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. This is softened somewhat in the New Testament. but the result is still strong.

Paul's deep sorrow for Israel is expressed in the Letter to the Romans, recognizing that true descendants of Abraham are those chosen by God's promise, not merely by lineage. He affirms that God's will and mercy determine salvation, using examples to illustrate divine election. For me, the expectations of God are clear, and I do my best to achieve them by praying daily and treating people as God expects and deserves.

As John highlights Jesus's challenging teachings, that leads many disciples to abandon Him. When asked if they will leave, Peter affirms faith in Christ as the Son of God. Jesus, however, reveals that one among them, Judas Iscariot, will betray Him. God allowed that to happen, and we have faith that we benefit from the result.

The passages collectively emphasize God's sovereignty, justice, and mercy, as well as the consequences of faithfulness and disobedience. Each passage highlights different aspects of God's relationship with humanity, demonstrating His power to bless, judge, and redeem.

The power of faith sustains us through all difficulties.

Sunday, April 6

Jeremiah 23:16-32; Psalm 118; 1 Corinthians 9:19-27; Mark 8:31-9:1

Like many people, I have been puzzled by Jesus's words in Mark 9:1: "Truly, I say to you, there are some standing here who will not taste death before they see the kingdom of God come with power." In its immediate context, it seems to refer to the Second Coming (Mark 8:38). And if that's the case, then, logically, Jesus was mistaken, because we're still waiting for his return. That's more or less what I have read is the scholarly consensus.

I'm now rethinking that simplistic conclusion. The broader context, beginning with Mark 8:31, is Jesus's announcement of his imminent suffering, death, and resurrection. Then, Jesus rebukes Peter for rejecting such a fate for the One he has just declared is the Messiah. Unsurprisingly, in his wildest nightmares Peter cannot imagine this.

Having revealed his own future, Jesus makes it uncompromisingly clear that all his followers must accept the same future for themselves. The cross belongs to every disciple. This is the core of the Gospel, which Mark emphasizes by placing it in the very middle of his account along with Peter's confession.

The Cross stands at the beginning and the middle of the whole passage. Why not at the end as well? The climax of Mark's gospel is certainly Jesus's death as a condemned criminal, utterly powerless. Yet his death is accompanied by the tearing of the Temple veil and the centurion's confession, "Truly this was the Son of God" (Mark 15:37-39), the first a Jewish witness, the second a Gentile witness, to God's mighty work of reconciliation.

So Jesus is telling the truth: Peter and the other apostles (excepting Judas), and the women at the cross, are alive to see "the kingdom of God come with power." Not as we identify power in this world, but its antithesis, visible only to faith. As Paul puts it in 1 Corinthians 1:23-24, "We preach the Messiah crucified, a stumbling block (Greek: scandal) to Jews and foolishness (Greek: moronic) to Greeks, but to those who are called, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God." Thanks be to God.

Monday, April 7

Jeremiah 24:1-10; Psalm 31; Romans 9:19-23; John 9:1-17

In the gospel of John, chapter 9, there is a common phrase we have all heard in various settings, which is, “I was blind, but now I can see.” This phrase is interesting, as it is always important to consider what comes after the word “but.” “Now I can see.” Some consider this as a representation of Jesus being able to cure us of our disease of sin, and others associate it moving from darkness to light. I’m going to focus on the idea of sin, because as a human I’m good at sin.

It's hard to tackle a subject like sin in an ever-increasingly secular society, wondering what it means to confess our sins and our faith in Jesus. Many readings leading up to Easter week focus on how Jesus came for the sick and not the well. I find comfort and hope for those of us that may be sick with addiction, hunger, loneliness, in despair, or obsessive self-interest. Because after all, look at what we are bombarded with on social media that is both personal and political nonsense. It is good to remember we are part of a very old story throughout scripture. We have the Gospel to be preached and meditated on. I believe scripture can be helpful in times of anxiety and the political landscape is bonkers right now. Those who have come before us have lived through war, social upheavals, grief and death. We learn that we are not alone in our story or sin. I don't mean this to be a naïve hope. It is a reminder that we are not alone in our struggles. Like our ancestors before us, our hope and faith is in God.

In fact, I believe we are engaging in prayer when reading scripture and discerning the stories. There are times when I read scripture or spiritual books and find myself moved by the faith of these ancestors. There are times after reading the Gospel, I exclaim aloud “Jesus, you rock!” When I say aloud all the prayers in a service, I am moved by the faith of this community. And when we sin, there is forgiveness of our sin. Because this is who we are, beloved by God. It is a humbling thing to have God, who is so mighty to save us and so mighty to forgive. When asked why I read scripture, pray and attend church, I share with them the importance of seeking a deeper relationship with God.

Tuesday, April 8

Jeremiah 25:8-17; Psalm 121; Romans 10:1-13; John 9:18-41

The world is asking us once again to take a stand in the ongoing struggle for justice and peace. Are you able to perceive the divine spark in your neighbor, whom you might dislike or disagree with?

Paul teaches that the Lord is Lord of all, Jew and Greek, and that the Lord actively lives in your heart when you not only see and hear the words of the Gospel, but understand and openly declare your allegiance to Christ. In the Gospel of John, Jesus restores sight to a young man who had been blind from birth. The Pharisees had a policy of expelling people who proclaimed Jesus as the Messiah. They considered themselves to be experts in matters of the Law and it was customary to consider those who were blind to have been born in sin. They pressed the formerly blind man about who restored his sight. He responded, "We know that God does not listen to sinners, but he does listen to one who worships him and obeys his will. Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a person born blind. If this man were not from God, he could do nothing." They expelled him, nevertheless. Jesus heard this and tracked him down, then revealed himself as the one who healed him. The blind man was spiritually awakened. He recognized and acknowledged Jesus as the Son of Man.

Jesus challenged the orthodoxy of the time, arguing that the (metaphorically) blind are ignorant of sin and therefore blameless. The Pharisees, however, claim to know the law and have "spiritual sight," but don't perceive. To "see" is to know right from wrong. Knowing the right thing to do and not doing it is their sin.

Today's readings reveal the potential for a universal inclusion of divinity in all life. This is what Paul meant when he said, "...if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved." It is my hope for this Lent that we make a conscious effort to seek Christ in all persons. It is that spark that resurrected Jesus and continues to do so.

The times we live in are dangerous and our form of activism as Christians is to be a light in the darkness for everyone.

Wednesday, April 9

Jeremiah 25:30-38; Psalm 119:145-176; Romans 10:14-21; John 10:1-18

“I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.” (John 10:11) I want to use this reflection to engage two texts: this text from John, and the novel that I am currently reading, *Enemies: A Love Story*, by Isaac Bashevis Singer. I will not try to summarize the novel’s plot, but a key question which runs all through it is: how could a loving God allow the Holocaust to happen? Years ago, I wrestled with this question and the only suitable answer I could come up with was that God wished us to be absolutely free both to do radical good *and* radical evil, and that for us to have any real dignity as creatures, we *must* have that freedom. I also concluded that God was not like a human parent, for what parent would let their children annihilate each other like that? God chose to let the Holocaust unfold without stepping in directly to stop it. The last piece that I took away from this period of wrestling with God’s morality was that God *must* suffer with us, really suffer, because only then was God’s love worthy. And that brings me to Jesus.

“The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.” Jesus the GodMan loved us so much that He was willing to be crucified for us. Note that this quote, indeed the whole passage, does not say that the good shepherd will always protect the sheep from evil or violence, but the good shepherd will confront both evil and violence all the way unto death. I imagine Jesus present and crucified every time a Jew was beaten or gassed OR every time a bomb falls upon a Palestinian child (Muslim or Christian) in Gaza OR *whenever* humans do evil to each other. The God I believe in must be in the heart of that situation and suffer with us exactly there, or to my mind that God is deficient in love. Over and over again, Christianity has gotten this wrong and been on the wrong side of the sword or the gun or the bomb. Over and over, Christianity has re-crucified Jesus. That is hard to face, and it is far from the whole story, but I think it must be faced. All religions are imperfect because they reach for the divine while shackled to the human (and that is as it should be—we will not be perfect in this life). Jesus does not solve this problem, He lives it out. He stands for good, for love, for compassion, for humility. And He bids us to follow Him all the way to the cross. I pray that when it counts, I/we have the courage to do so.

Thursday, April 10

Jeremiah 26:1-16; Psalm 131; Romans 11:1-12; John 10:19-42

There were different phrases or just one word in these readings that brought me to this:

In 2012, during Lent, I took time every day to consciously search for three “gratefuls.” When the day was challenging, I went to things like: I could take deep breaths, filling my lungs, or, I was alive one more day. One time during that year I was taking a walk with my head down and heart heavy when I noticed some tiny beautiful purple flowers growing at my feet. The Holy Spirit rushed in and reminded me that not only was I never alone, but that love surrounded me. Tears came to my eyes and this experience remains one of my treasures. I still do this exercise every day (well, most every day).

In the last thirteen years my listening has become easier; witnessing is clearer; my “red flags” have become blessings; guidance in changing my ways can be filled with laughter; I have become able to examine the motivations behind my actions; my faith and beliefs have gone from my mind to my heart and into the nourishment that my soul craves. So much has been opened up within me from this simple practice.

As human beings we will stumble many times during our life, yet there is a place in our hearts that we courageously hold onto: that we will never fall beyond recovery. Maya Angelou said, “Do the best you can until you know better. Then, when you know better, do better.”

So let us calm and quiet ourselves as we continue to take steps, adjust our stride, perhaps even turn direction. Yes, we will fall, but with God’s help, the Holy Spirit’s guidance, and Jesus’s life examples, we will get up again. Their love is unconditional and inexhaustible.

What stood out for you in the readings for today? Listen to what you are being guided to ponder, think of what you have been being prepared for as events in your personal life story come into focus, and then begin to understand that you are traveling a path of knowing better so that you, too, can do better.

Friday, April 11

Jeremiah 29:1,4-13; Psalm 22; Romans 11:13-24; John 11:1-27

I have heard and read the story of Lazarus many times. For this reflection I must have read it five times, searching for something I'd missed before, a new understanding, a fresh perspective.

What I kept noticing had to do with time. Time seemed to stretch on in this story without an urgency of action or words.

Jesus was told of Lazarus's illness, and then, two days later, made the short trip to see him, knowing he was already dead. Martha went to meet Jesus and walked with him. Though grieving her brother, she speaks with calm and sureness of heart. Martha knows Jesus will raise Lazarus, and she knows Jesus is the Messiah.

Both Jesus and Martha speak and move with the kind of unhurried peace that comes with trust in what you know to be true.

This is where the lesson is for me is, at this reading and this time in my life. It's about stepping back from the frantic pace we keep in modern life, the constant chirping and ping-pong, the overextended commitments and impossible schedules that can leave us (me) feeling brittle and tired.

Lent offers us an opportunity to stop and recalibrate. What is true? What is just noise?

I know that when I am acting with a clear head, and from a place of choice rather than fear, I am confident and calm, and I know what to do.

What are the things in our lives that we know to be true? How can we let go of perceptions and worries and hold on to what is good and true? What does it take to slow down, to release the urge to act and speak quickly?

With this passage we are given permission to experiment with time. We can settle into the sensation of trusting our faith in God, our love for each other, and the unlimited potential each of us holds in this beautiful and sacred life.

Saturday, April 12

Jeremiah 31:27-34; Psalm 137:1-9; Romans 11:25-36; John 11:28-44

Reading the scripture in today's Psalm, I couldn't help but thinking how much it feels like we are in a "strange land." How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land? The Psalmist emphasizes the importance of not forgetting God and His people. It is easy in these challenging times of chaos and confusion to get so busy that we forget God for long periods of time. Now is the time more than ever to frequently think of God, tell Him that we love Him, and thank Him for all He does for us. The more we think about God, the closer we will be to Him. Although He is always with us and has promised to never leave or forsake us (Deuteronomy 31:8), if we don't remember this truth, it won't benefit us.

God is with you right now, and He has a good plan for you. He is working on your behalf, and all He asks is you don't forget him. God is never more than one thought away from you. Simply thinking about Him brings you into His presence, so think of Him often. I love today's verse in Romans that tells us God's gifts and His call are irrevocable. He never withdraws them once they are given, and He does not change His mind about those to whom He gives His grace or to whom He sends His call.

Let us daily turn our eyes and our hearts to God in these troubled times, think of Him often and know that He is always with us. Listen for the call of the Teacher, He is close at hand and is asking for you. (John 11:28)

Palm Sunday, April 13

Zechariah 9:9-12; Psalms 24, 29; 1 Timothy 6:12-16; Matthew 21:12-17

Palm Sunday is, to say the least, a complicated day. To start with, every Sunday is to be regarded as a “little Easter,” a day of celebration: that’s why we don’t count the Sundays in the forty days of Lent. But this Sunday is the first day of Holy Week: it doesn’t feel right to be too celebratory, as we look ahead to the dark days of Jesus’s suffering.

On Palm Sunday, the Church invites us to go from triumph to tragedy, as we try to cram in both the entry of Jesus into Jerusalem, accompanied by cheering crowds, and his arrest and public execution. Why don’t we hold off on the latter until Good Friday? Because the church in her wisdom determined decades ago that people are less likely to attend church on Good Friday, given work schedules, and it is a crucial part of our faith practice to fully commemorate the solemn day of Jesus’s crucifixion.

Today we will run the gamut of emotions, and the Daily Office readings for the day set us up for this. Zechariah calls us to rejoice, to shout and sing as our king arrives in triumph. We can imagine Jesus and his followers walking down the steep hill from the Mount of Olives into the Old City of Jerusalem, a rowdy mob enjoying the spring day, singing hymns and waving palm branches. Any authoritarian regime tries to suppress public expressions of joy, as they may encourage an oppressed people to rise up against the tyrant. The palm procession in itself is a threat to those who fear change, and the prophet’s words make it clear that our God is on the side of the peace lover and the prisoner of conscience.

The Epistle exhorts the faithful to keep fighting the good fight of the faith, while the Psalms celebrate the arrival of the King of Glory and remind us of God’s awesome power. The Gospel describes the turning over of tables in the Temple, the moment when Jesus’s righteous anger overwhelms him and his actions precipitate the events of the Triduum.

Today we witness publicly to our faith in the procession around the cathedral neighborhood, and then we gather in the “ark” of our holy space to re-experience the horror of the Passion, giving full honor to the sacrifice Jesus made for us, and holding in faith to the final verse of the Psalm: “The Lord shall give strength to his people; the Lord shall give his people the blessing of peace.”

Monday, April 14

Jeremiah 12:1-16; Psalm 51:1-20; Philippians 3:1-14; John 12:9-19

“You desire truth in the inward being;
therefore teach me wisdom in my secret heart.”

There’s the thing: “my secret heart.” What’s in your secret heart? We live in agonizingly polarizing times. We know or hear or learn information about outward events or circumstances that are incredibly painful to try and square with our vision of a just world: “You see me and test me.” How can we believe that this can ever happen in a world of our loving God? Yet, we must have faith in God’s faithfulness and redemption: “And after I have plucked them up, I will again have compassion on them, and I will bring them again to their heritage and to their land, every one of them.” What sort of wisdom does your secret heart need today?

These forty days of Lent call for action and steadfastness in resolve, to “put a new and right spirit” within ourselves, coming from our faith in Christ; to trust our belief that the communion with others of like heart will begin to heal the wounds around and within us. If we band together, the Pharisees of today may also say of us, “You see, you can do nothing. Look, the world has gone after him!”

“Teach me wisdom in my secret heart.”

Tuesday, April 15

Jeremiah 15:10-21; Psalm 6; Philippians 3:15-21; John 12:20-26

Today we find Jeremiah at the very lowest point of his life, feeling betrayed by the God whom he has served faithfully, if sometimes reluctantly, for many years and already through many terrible times. In Jeremiah's part of this argument with God, he reminds God of his call ("Your words were found and I ate them and they became to me a joy"), and then speaks of his sense of betrayal with a particularly poignant image. The prophet who once likened the Israelites' worship of other gods to "forsaking the fountain of living waters for broken cisterns that can hold no water," now says to God, "you are like a deceitful brook, like waters that fail." God is, Jeremiah insists, being too faithful to God's nature, exercising patience toward those who want to kill Jeremiah to the point that it might be too late to rescue him.

And God's answer could hardly be less satisfying. No apology, not even a hint of consolation or comfort. Instead, God seems to be telling Jeremiah that quitting his job is not an option. "If you try to turn away," God says, in a translation somewhat different from the usual one, "I will bring you back." God still needs Jeremiah to speak God's words and stop his own worthless complaining. The only thing God promises—yet again—is rescue, quite possibly only at the last minute—when Jeremiah is already in "the hand of the wicked, the grasp of the ruthless."

The problem might be summarized in a few words: Jeremiah wants God to play by Jeremiah's rules, or the rules of Jeremiah's culture, and God will not do that. And when Jeremiah finally realizes that, he becomes open to a new vision of a God who can do something entirely new—who can, in fact, bring life out of death, new life to the people who feel God has abandoned them.

Isn't this the God we are all seeking as we walk step by step through the darkest days of Holy Week? Isn't this the God that Jesus is speaking of when he reminds us that seeds must die to bear fruit, and that the fruit they bear looks nothing like the seed?

For many of us, these are particularly dark times. Perhaps we should rejoice in that. Jeremiah and Jesus both remind us that it is precisely in the darkest times, when our old ideas do not seem adequate to find solutions to our problems, that God can do something entirely new. Isn't that exciting?

Wednesday, April 16

Jeremiah 17:5-10,14-17; Psalm 55; Philippians 4:1-13; John 12:27-36

Tenabrae—Latin for “darkness”—is one of the more obscure but wonderful services of the church year and Holy Week. It takes place the evening of Holy Wednesday (Wednesday of Holy Week). Its emphasis is on the shadows, sorrow, and the slow dying of light. From John’s gospel for today: “Jesus said to them, ‘The light is with you for a little longer. Walk while you have the light, so that the darkness may not overtake you. If you walk in the darkness, you do not know where you are going. While you have the light, believe in the light, so that you may become children of light.’”

While we await the resurrection, we cannot forget that Jesus, our light, did go out. His death was not merely a thing of transition, it was final, definitive, and complete. Death came to God, and God said “yes” to death. Tenabrae and Good Friday are the only two days that really take that reality fully seriously in the calendar and imagination of the church. It’s so easy to skip to the brighter Easter dawn, but Jesus descends into the pitiless grace, the fate of all people, as one of us, our own kin, yet divine as the first day of Creation. How fascinating that the one who uttered those first words, “Let there be light,” now succumbs to the brooding chaos which they once illumined and organized.

And that’s the rub, isn’t it? The reason why we can’t spend too much time thinking about the death of the one who gave us all life. We need to skip to the brighter side of the story because the darkness of the moment is so messy, overwhelming, and ultimately disorienting.

But maybe, at least twice a year, we need to sit in it. Maybe it’s in the darkness of this space, where God is truly dead, that we can hear the voice God always wanted us to hear. It’s never too late, but it can be quite dark. Seeds need the dark of the ground to die and become something new. What’s growing in that place?

Maundy Thursday, April 17

Jeremiah 20:7-11; Psalm 102; 1 Corinthians 10:14-17, 11:27-32; John 17:1-26

Jeremiah is the last of the great prophets in the Hebrew Bible, and he gets the most ink of all of them. In his time, the great Southern Kingdom of Judah was a lost cause—it's all falling apart. So it isn't hard for Jeremiah to "speak truth to power," especially when those in power—and the misled masses who support them—present such a disastrous front of incompetence and cruelty. Jeremiah's voice speaks to any of us who live in times when the values of kindness, inclusion, and truth-telling are derisively mocked by those on the throne.

Written after the Babylonian Exile, the 102nd Psalm takes a similar tone. We are guided through a meditation on impermanence and suffering that leads ultimately to the deep realization of the changeless sacred presence beneath these ephemeral forms. In the dialectical model of knowledge, truth-claims arrive in the form of paradox—two contradictory statements that instead of cancelling each other out generate a dynamic tension that keeps the whole crazy world afloat. Everything is terrible, but there is something wonderful behind the mask. Everything is fleeting, but there is something eternal hidden from our sight. Life is unspeakably painful, but it is still a precious treasure to be defended, relished, and celebrated.

As Paul wrote in his 1st letter to the Corinthians, "flee from the worship of idols." Too easily are our affections caught up in the idolatry of con artists who, by appealing to our basest instincts and worst fears, promise so much and deliver so little. Instead, Paul counsels, search within yourselves, for only through self-examination does wisdom arise. Look behind the mask, beneath the foreground, to the depths within where the Real resides. And as Christians, when we share in the bread and the wine, we ritually join together with God and with one another. "Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread."

In his last prayer before his arrest, Jesus entreated God to safeguard his disciples, or any who would follow him. "Holy Father, protect them in your name...so that they may be one, as we are one." And when we know our oneness in these sacred depths, we are known.

Good Friday, April 18

Wisdom 1:16-2:1,12-22; Psalm 22; 1 Peter 1:10-20; John 13:36-38

About six months ago, I noticed something remarkable about our St. Paul's sanctuary. The focus of the chancel is, of course, the Christus Rex suspended above the altar. A theological symbol of the heart of the gospel, it portrays our Savior who rules, even from the cross: "destined from the foundation of the world," as 1 Peter 1:20 says. The apostle goes on to proclaim, "Through him you have confidence in God, who raised him from the dead and gave him glory." The Christus Rex shows Christ reigning in glory, arms outstretched to embrace the whole world, giving all those who trust him "confidence in God."

Here's the remarkable part. From the north (left) side of the main aisle, because of the sanctuary lighting, the Christus Rex throws a shadow on the back wall to its right. And that shadow takes the shape (at least to me) of a figure dying on the cross, the familiar pose of the suffering, crucified Jesus, the man who cries "My God, my God, what hast thou forsaken me?" (Psalm 22:1).

Having seen this, I can't unsee it. Now, every time I enter the sanctuary, I am confronted with the most profound and jarring and saving paradox of our faith. When we look at the cross, we encounter a brutal, ugly reality that at the same time heals our deepest wound—our alienation from ourselves and God. We come face to face with the true meaning of *agape*, or sacrificial love. As Isaac Watts wrote, "When I survey the wondrous cross, On which the prince of glory died, My richest gain I count but loss, And pour contempt on all my pride."

Christus Rex: Christ is indeed the King, the Supreme Authority in the universe (Phil. 2:9-11). His throne, however, is the instrument of his execution, which, in the Father's astonishing work, becomes the source of our salvation. The Hillbilly Thomists sing, "the tree of death becomes the tree of life."

So I love the presence of this paradox in front of me whenever I worship at St. Paul's: the Icon and its shadow, the King and the Forsaken, the Exalted and the Condemned, the Slain One and the Victor. Thanks be to God.

Holy Saturday, April 19

Job 19:21-27a; Psalm 88; Hebrews 4:1-16; Romans 8:1-11

Holy Saturday is often overshadowed by Good Friday and what follows. It's sandwiched in and it itself becomes buried. Our culture seems to steer clear of death and grief, to hide it under a rock or behind a stone.

Some have said Holy Saturday is a placeholder for them, a time to spend getting ready for Easter Day.

Do we avoid observing this time or do we honor it? I think these few hours when nothing happened can be valued because it allows time for pause and reflection. We traditionally associate this time with, "He descended into hell," in The Apostles' Creed. It's a vulnerable time for our emotions and feelings of distress. We may wonder about our faith, or feel as if God has forgotten us.

The Psalmist laments:

"Are your wonders known in the darkness,
or your saving help in the land of forgetfulness?
But I, O Lord, cry out to you;
in the morning my prayer comes before you."

I think Holy Saturday points to the challenges of being Christian. Between the great dramas of life, there is almost always a time of empty waiting — with nothing to do and no church service to help — there in that quiet cave where we wait to see how the God incarnate will choose to come to us in the dark...between one phase of life and the next.

"Let us therefore approach the throne of grace with boldness,
so that we may receive mercy
and find grace to help in time of need." (Hebrews 4:16)

Easter Day, April 20

Exodus 12:1-14; Psalm 148; John 1:1-18

Do we think it is real? I'll be honest, even as a priest, I have my days where I think: "Do I really believe this?" Maybe the better framing for the question is this: Do we take it seriously?

I take it entirely seriously. That's why I constantly wrestle with this idea of God, Jesus, rising from death, physically, as a human. It's the implications that come out of it that are no small thing, though we risk passing over them entirely when we simply accept it. Jesus's physical death is real, but to rise over death into life triumphant challenges the fundamental powers we as humans live with every day.

If God died a death at the hands of the state, capital punishment, and then overcomes it in three days, then what can Pharaoh, Caesar, or other "divine" leaders use to cudgel people into submission?

If God died a death at the hands of humans, deicide, and overcomes it in three days, then Nietzsche is more correct than any theologian. We killed God because God didn't fit our desires. And God exceeded even those low desires we have: power and control.

If God died a lonesome death, with friends abandoning left and right, and then overcomes in three days, does God ever truly leave anyone alone?

If God was betrayed to death by friends and fellow leaders, and overcame it in three days, does God ultimately forgive everyone who feels the pain of their betrayal in their hearts, heads, and bones?

If we don't take it seriously, but God can overcome even our lack of seriousness, can it only take three days to change any situation from disaster to hope?

Let's start taking the Resurrection seriously, instead of just asking, "is it real or not?" We may come to see it more clearly if we see it for what it is, beyond a miracle, beyond a matter of mere belief. Let your faith tell you how seriously to take it, and then live that faith. Alleluia!

Contributors

40 DAYS



LENT

March 5:	Rev. Cn. Allisyn Thomas	April 5:	Mary Tranbarger
March 6:	Blair Shamel	April 6:	Rev. Andrew Welch
March 7:	Calvin Johnson	April 7:	Stephanie Pierce
March 8:	Donna Perdue	April 8:	John Clemens
March 9:	Rev. Cn. Richard Lief	April 9:	Phil Petrie
March 10:	Mark Lester	April 10:	Deborah Kistler
March 11:	Christopher Atwood	April 11:	Elizabeth Fitzsimons
March 12:	Daniel McMillan	April 12:	Susan Jester
March 13:	Diane Lopez-Hughes	April 13:	Dean Penny Bridges
March 14:	Don Mitchell	April 14:	Cn. Lisa Churchill
March 15:	Jeff Erwin	April 15:	Rev. Vesta Kowalski
March 16:	Rev. Vesta Kowalski	April 16:	Rev. Cn. Richard Hogue
March 17:	Ellen Hargus	April 17:	Peter Bolland
March 18:	Frank Borik	April 18:	Rev. Andrew Welch
March 19:	Jane Batarseh	April 19:	Rev. Cn. Brooks Mason
March 20:	John Will	April 20:	Rev. Cn. Richard Hogue
March 21:	Joyce Vogel		
March 22:	Konnie Dadmun	Edited by:	Calvin Johnson, Donna Perdue, Rev. Vesta Kowalski, & Rev. Richard Hogue
March 23:	Rev. Cn. Andrew Green		
March 24:	Carolyn Lief		
March 25:	Mary Bowman		
March 26:	Peter Bolland		
March 27:	Robert Heylmun		
March 28:	Charles Kowalski		
March 29:	Terry Kelly		
March 30:	Rev. Thomas Wilson		
March 31:	Walker Shaw		
April 1:	Lorenzo Neruccio		
April 2:	Cindy Schuricht		
April 3:	Kathleen Burgess		
April 4:	Rev. Vesta Kowalski		



STATIONS OF THE CROSS

Fridays, March 7 – April 11, 6 pm, in the Cathedral

Each Friday during Lent join us in the Cathedral for Stations of the Cross. Stations of the Cross is a contemplative spiritual practice in which participants walk around the Cathedral stopping at 14 sculptures which depict Jesus's last days on earth.



Palm Sunday, April 13

8 am – Liturgy of the Palms, Passion, and Eucharist in the Cathedral.

9:45 am – Procession, Liturgy of the Palms, Passion, and Eucharist in the Cathedral or worship online.

5 pm – Choral meditation on the Passion in the Cathedral or worship online.



Holy Wednesday, April 16

7 pm – Choral Tenebrae in the Cathedral or worship online.



Maundy Thursday, April 17

7 pm – Liturgy of the Day and Eucharist in the Cathedral or worship online.

8:30 pm – Vigil in the Chapel of the Holy Family.

St Paul's Cathedral – 40 Days of Lent 2024 – February 14 – March 31



Good Friday, April 18

12 pm – Choral Music and Meditations on the Passion in the Cathedral or worship online.

7 pm – Good Friday liturgy.



Holy Saturday, April 19

9 am – Holy Saturday liturgy in the Chapel of the Holy Family.

7:30 pm – Great Vigil of Easter, Bishop Susan will preside and preach, in the Cathedral or worship online.



SUNDAY OF THE RESURRECTION, EASTER DAY

Sunday, April 20

8 am – Holy Eucharist in the Cathedral with the Dean preaching.

10:30 am – Festival Eucharist with the Dean preaching in the Cathedral or worship online.

Cathedral Closed, Monday and Tuesday, April 21-22

St Paul's Cathedral – 40 Days of Lent 2024 – February 14 – March 31