

The Little Church on the Prairie Lakewood Grace



*Lenten Devotional
Booklet
2021*

A Look Back To See Forward

Monday, March 29, 2021

JESUS PREDICTS PETER'S DENIAL

READ: Matthew 26:31-35; Zechariah 13:7

OPENING PRAYER: Dear Lord, help us to understand your precious words so that they may guide us as we try to walk your path. Amen.

MEDITATION: Jesus predicts Peter's denial using the language of the prophet, Zechariah, who lived over 500 years before Christ (Zechariah 13:7). Peter and the other disciples declare their faithfulness to Jesus. It is easy to understand the terror that the disciples felt at the impending crucifixion and their desire to scatter.

Our faith can waver in difficult times. Our lives are filled with distractions and confusion, but that is exactly when we must hold on to the Messiah's hand.

CLOSING PRAYER: Savior, like a shepherd lead us;
be the Guardian of our way.
Keep thy flock, from sin defend us.
Seek us when we go astray. Amen.

(From the hymn: Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us.)

Helen Amsbary

Tuesday, March 30, 2021

THAT'S ENOUGH

READ: Luke 22:35-38; Isaiah 53:10-12

OPENING PRAYER: Lord, please help us to trust you in all things. Amen.

MEDITATION: In this passage, Jesus is warning the disciples that some of the harsh passages from the prophets are about to come true. They can't expect things to go as easily as before. Then the disciples get all excited about having two swords. In most translations Jesus responds, "that's enough". I always thought he meant that two would be plenty, but in the translation (paraphrase) of The Message, Jesus says; "Enough of that. No more sword talk." That may be a more correct interpretation. After all, in only a short while Jesus rebukes Peter for using his sword to cut off the ear of the chief priest's servant.

He wants his followers to be aware that they are now in danger just because they follow him, but this has all been predicted. When we see bad things happening today, we need to remember that God is not surprised. Scripture promises bad times will happen, but the final outcome is good.

CLOSING PRAYER: Lord, help us not to over-react to bad things with our own strength, but to trust in you. Thank you, God, for the hope you promise through your Word. And thank you, Jesus, for accepting a criminal's death so that we could have this hope of eternal life with you. Amen.

Beth Carter

Wednesday, March 31, 2021

BETRAYAL

READ: Mark 14:17-21; Zechariah 11:12-13

OPENING PRAYER: Dear God, today as we read about your name, we pray that you would fill our hearts, our minds, and our souls. Transform us Lord, and make us more like you. Amen.

MEDITATION: If you've ever been betrayed, you know it's not a good feeling. It's that feeling when they stab you in the back after trusting them. It also implies that the breach of trust was intentional. An accident is one thing, but betrayal implies a conscious, knowing, deliberate act of using the trust someone has placed in you against that person.

So how is it that God loved and cared for Judas Iscariot even after knowing he betrayed him? As humans, most of us would feel angry, and love would probably be the last thing we'd feel. But no matter what we do, God will never stop loving us. In his eyes, we can do no wrong. We can "betray" God and the Commandments, and he will still love us. This is something we can learn from. Instead of feeling angry and acting on our feelings, we should try to love those who betray us, and forgive them.

CLOSING PRAYER: Dear God, let us be more like you. Guide us as we go through our everyday lives and help us to keep your word in our hearts that we may not sin against you. We are forever thankful for your everlasting love. Through Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Noah Fields

Maundy Thursday, April 1, 2021

BUT THEY ALL DISOWNED HIM

READ: Mark 14:27-31; Zechariah 13:7

OPENING PRAYER: Dear Lord, help us to be more thoughtful in our deliberations: not jump to conclusions. Help us to realize our shortcomings and to be patient when making judgments. Help us to realize the difference between statements that are deeply felt and those that are realistic. Amen.

MEDITATION: Remember this about Peter: His heart was in the right place. Better a Peter with a flaming heart of love than a Judas with a heart of hate. Condemn Peter if you've never broken a promise, never had a disloyal thought or action to a pledge. Peter loved Jesus even if his love failed.

There was nothing that Jesus was not prepared for: opposition, misunderstanding, the orthodoxy, Judas's betrayal, the agony of the Cross. But what hurt him most was the failure of his friends. The worst time is when we need friends most. There was nothing mentally or physically that Jesus did not endure.

CLOSING PRAYER: Lord, help us to endure life's hardships using Jesus as a model. In these trying times bring us closer to you. Do not let us jump to judgment in the matter of Peter-like actions. Amen.

Clark Montgomery

Good Friday, April 2, 2021

FAITH ALONG WITH HOPE

READ: Mark 15:33-35; Psalm 22:1, 7-8, 14-18, Malachi 3:1, 4:5

OPENING PRAYER: Dear Lord, our heavenly Father, we as individuals and as a congregation, reach out to you on bended knee for your guidance, your love, your strength, and your compassion. Let us be reminded of your promises to trust us as we trust in you. Amen.

MEDITATION: As I am writing these comments for the Lenten Devotional Booklet, I am having deep concerns for our country, our community, our church, our children, and our families. My concerns stem from the cloud hanging over the country: politically and pandemically speaking.

We, as a country and community have fallen into a mode of fear, anger, suspicion, and guilt. All of these feelings cloud our want and hope for freedom: freedom from disease, freedom of discourse, and freedom from discouragement.

I truly believe that God has had a hand in these challenging times. It is his way to say to the world: "Be calm, be kind, be grateful, behave, and be focused".

CLOSING PRAYER: Dear Lord, our heavenly Father, may you hold our faithful hands as we walk with you on this journey. Amen.

Natalie Humphrey

Saturday, April 3, 2021

THE RESURRECTION BODY

READ: 1 Corinthians 15:45-49; Genesis 2:7

OPENING PRAYER: Dear Lord, please be with us as we try to live the life that you envisioned for us, but know that we will fail along the way, so please continue to guide us in the right direction. Amen.

MEDITATION: The first man, Adam, became a living being, the last Adam, a life-giving spirit. The spiritual did not come first, but the natural, and after that the spiritual. The first man was of the dust of the earth; the second man of heaven. As was the earthly man, so are those who are of the earth; and as is the heavenly man, so also are those who are of heaven. Just as we were born in the image of the earthly man, so too shall we bear the image of the heavenly man.

What the passage is telling us is that the first man had a natural body and was born of the dust of the ground. The other is the last Adam, Christ, the life-giving spirit, who through his death and resurrection will at his second coming give his redeemed people a spiritual body similar to his resurrected and glorified body.

CLOSING PRAYER: Dear Father, thank you for Jesus, the last Adam, who gave his life for us to save us from our sins, so that we might receive his everlasting life, for which I praise, in Jesus' name. Amen.

Bob Kagarise

Easter Sunday, April 4, 2021

THE DEAD WILL BE RAISED IMPERISHABLE

READ: 1 Corinthians 15: 51-57; Isaiah 25:8, Hosea 13:14

PRAYER: Dear Lord, thank you for your desire to have a close relationship with us. All you desire is for us to honor you, praise you, and for us to be repentant when we fall short. You are forever faithful. Thank you for not giving up on us. In your Holy Name. Amen.

MEDITATION: In this passage Paul was addressing the early church in Corinth which was made up of mostly gentiles. He said "We will not all sleep", meaning that Christians alive on the day that Christ returns will not have to die but that they will be transformed immediately.

This applies to us today. We no longer have to fear death because Jesus defeated death when he rose from the dead. Therefore, death is no longer a source of fear. Jesus paid the price for us. Death is defeated and we have hope beyond the grave.

All we have to do is love the Lord with all our heart, soul, and mind. We will have setbacks, but that is our opportunity to be repentant and get right back to loving God, and spreading the good news of the gospel.

CLOSING PRAYER: Dear Lord, you loved us so much that you went to the cross and died for us. You long for us to be close to you. Help us in our daily lives to praise, honor, and bring glory to you. When we fall short, let our first instinct be to pray, confess, and ask for your forgiveness. Keep us focused on life with you in eternity. In your precious Holy Name. Amen.

Lizza Lockett

THE CHARGE TO EACH OTHER

Go out into the world in peace;

have courage;

hold on to what is good;

return no one evil for evil;

strengthen the fainthearted;

support the weak, and help the suffering;

honor all people;

***love and serve the Lord,
rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit.***

From the Book of Common Worship