

Holy Saturday

Matthew 27:57-66

<https://tinyurl.com/rqv2sft>

Ponder

Here is a story in which we see two responses to Jesus's death. Joseph of Arimathea's responds with deepest compassion. The religious leaders however feel the fear felt by the guilty, and knowing their own devious hearts, project that onto the disciples. Meanwhile the ones who loved Jesus mourn, some in hiding. What is our response to suffering? Do we respond with mourning and compassion, or do we try to find reasons justifying suffering and rejection?

Pray

O God, we grieve for Jesus with his friends. We grieve also for our world and the deep suffering in it. Lift up our hearts so we may respond with compassion not suspicion, even when the news is dreadful. Amen

Act

How can you accompany someone with compassion, even while practicing social isolation? Next time you hear complaint, concern, fear, offer empathy. "Thank you for telling me."

Family

Watch this short video by Brene Brown.



GOBIN CHURCH
A United Methodist Community for All

Monday, April 6, 2020

Isaiah 42:1-9

<https://tinyurl.com/qmrakz3>

Ponder

In this passage, the Servant of the Lord in all complexity is presented. Here we can first see that the one who pursues justice is doing the work of God's kin-dom. This work bringing justice heals and frees the injured and isolated folk of the world, no matter what we believe, but simply because it is just to do so. This saving work is done with such gentleness that not even a reed is broken. It has nothing to do with fairness, or belonging to the right state or country. This justice is a merciful response to our weakness and need. How we long for this kind of servant leader! How terrible to realize the Holy Week of suffering ahead for Jesus.

Pray

Most Gentle One, we long for justice in this world. We realize this justice is the recognition of all persons as your beloved children. Amen



Act

Bring a donation to the Dry Food Pantry Box by Bryan's office window at Gobin. You bring justice alive to the world with your gift.

Family

Reflect on gentleness together. Where could you help each other make the world right without harming anyone? This could involve noticing moments of need and responding kindly to one another. At a shared meal, share the moments in which you were just and kind today.

Tuesday, April 7, 2020

John 12:20-36

<https://tinyurl.com/yx54bytb>

Ponder

Jesus's soul is troubled, and he tells us how he faces the darkness ahead. He acknowledges wanting to say, "Father, save me from this hour," but chooses instead "Father, glorify your name." My prayers include plenty of the former, often interchanging "me" with the name of someone I love or care for or hear about who is in need. With that prayer I hope to extend God's care myself and am often exhausted by the effort. When I say the latter, "Dear God, glorify your name." I am paradoxically freed to serve within my small sphere, and free to rest knowing God is at work even without me.

Pray

Dear God, I have spent enough time telling you how I want things to go in my own life and in the world. Today, I say, "Glorify your name!" Amen

Act

Forgive me for this. Take a moment to make a Pandemic Plan if you haven't done so already. Talk with loved ones about how to care for each other at home if someone gets sick. Buy the over the counter medicines that will bring comfort for fever, cough and fatigue. Make a list of what must go with anyone heading to the hospital. Practice FaceTime and Hangouts and Meets and Skype for seeing one another's beloved face. Now, look forward in hope and glorify God's name.

Family

Write love notes today to each other. Real ones if possible. They can be very brief. "I love the way you pet our dog!" <https://tinyurl.com/ux38gne>

Wednesday, April 8, 2020

Psalms 70

<https://tinyurl.com/t5yme6h>

Ponder

This psalm is an urgent cry for help, and we can understand how natural it is to cry out to God in our distress. Jesus will also cry out in terror, pleading for his life, emotionally walking back and forth as all do between hope, fear and acceptance. This week, especially, we can make that walk with him.

Pray

Be pleased, O God, to deliver me. O Lord, make haste to help me!

Act

Who is asking for your help, these days? Who needs it but does not ask? Where is your heart guiding you to those who cry out? Think on these things today and respond as you are able. It doesn't hurt to offer....

Family

If you are willing to memorize again, having a collection of psalms in your head is a great gift in hard times. As a family, share the lines of this psalm around, and see if you can make it through together. <https://tinyurl.com/yx6s4ouy>

Maundy Thursday, April 9, 2020

John 13:1-17, 31b-35

<https://tinyurl.com/uyb35nl>

Ponder

How many of us have harmed or even betrayed the one we love? In thought or word or deed? It is exceedingly likely, even in times when we think we are doing our best. We can so easily fail to love or receive love. Have you ever accepted a gift and then wasted it or let it be destroyed? Judas took the bread, but it did not bring him to love.

Pray

This world has been a gift to us, O God. You created beauty all around, the sounds of the little stream, the blooming magnolia, the daffodils a bright yellow against a deepening green, a small purple flower lurking. Forgive us for ignoring so many signs of your great love, especially the gift Jesus gave. Amen

Act

Where can you let the bread of life change your heart? If you have the ingredients be brave and bake some bread. As you taste the first bite, receive it as if Jesus handed it to you. What choice do you have to make?

Family

If you have bread, or anything else that can be shared, take turns giving it to each other. And then wash each other's hands or feet. Talk about what it means to love someone enough to feed and comfort them. <https://tinyurl.com/wtduaqz> Sorry for the loud music.

Good Friday, April 10, 2020

Psalms 22

<https://tinyurl.com/t6nyt9t>

Ponder

It is so hard these days for us to be around death. Jesus uttered the opening words of this psalm, and in doing so underscored again for us the strong connection between suffering and glory. Holding those two truths together can feel impossible, tearing us apart. That's why it was a miracle for us when our Pastor was present as my father lay dying. He joined us in the suffering time, and we heard clearly in the prayers he spoke, that none of us were forsaken.

Pray

When we watch the news, and find ourselves shouting at the TV, and see the death in the world and all around us, we can cry out to you, O God, "Why have you forsaken us?" Help us as we speak, to remember you have not spoken your last word to us. Amen.

Act

Think of someone you have "forsaken." How can you join them again? (In ways that are safe for you, of course.) They may be in your life still, or long gone. Or ponder this....very grim though. <https://tinyurl.com/qts7pet>

Family

On a lighter note, Find a forsaken part of your home (surely everyone has this?). Spend some time reconnecting with it, whether by purging or cleaning or sorting or painting. We do not have to let decay win at least in this one place. (I know one teacher assigned cleaning the refrigerator to teens who were at home but learning to "adult".) <https://tinyurl.com/vur7vu2>