

Tenebrae
A Service of Shadows

St. Michael's Episcopal Church

March 31, 2021 7:00 pm

Ricercar # 1 *(Domenico Gabrielli)* *David Runnion, cello*

First Lesson The Uses of Sorrow

The Gospel of Mark 14: 32-36

They went to a place called Gethsemane, and Jesus said to his disciples, "Sit here while I pray." He took Peter, James and John along with him, and he began to be deeply distressed and troubled. "My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death," he said to them. "Stay here and keep watch." Going a little farther, he fell to the ground and prayed that if possible the hour might pass from him. "*Abba, Father,*" he said, "everything is possible for you. Take this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will."

"Pandemic"

by Lynn Ungar 3/11/20

What if you thought of it
as the Jews consider the Sabbath—
the most sacred of times?
Cease from travel.
Cease from buying and selling.
Give up, just for now,
on trying to make the world
different than it is.
Sing. Pray. Touch only those
to whom you commit your life.
Center down.
And when your body has become still,
reach out with your heart.
Know that we are connected
in ways that are terrifying and beautiful.
(You could hardly deny it now.)
Know that our lives
are in one another's hands.
(Surely, that has come clear.)
Do not reach out your hands.
Reach out your heart.

Reach out your words.
Reach out all the tendrils
of compassion that move, invisibly,
where we cannot touch.

Promise this world your love –
for better or for worse,
in sickness and in health,
so long as we all shall live.

Reader: And they all forsook him and fled

People: Lord have mercy

Second Lesson The Shadow of Grief

“Please Call Me By My True Names” *by Thich Nhat Hanh*

Do not say that I'll depart tomorrow—
even today I am still arriving.

Look deeply: every second I am arriving
to be a bud on a Spring branch,
to be a tiny bird, with still-fragile wings,
learning to sing in my new nest,
to be a caterpillar in the heart of a flower,
to be a jewel hiding itself in a stone.

I still arrive, in order to laugh and to cry,
to fear and to hope,
the rhythm of my heart is the birth and death
of all that are alive.

I am the mayfly metamorphosing
on the surface of the river,
and I am the bird which, when Spring comes,
arrives in time to eat the mayfly.

I am the frog swimming happily
in the clear water of a pond,

and I am the grass-snake
that silently feeds itself on the frog.

I am the child in Uganda, all skin and bones,
my legs as thin as bamboo sticks.
And I am the arms merchant,
selling deadly weapons to Uganda.

I am the twelve-year-old girl,
refugee on a small boat,
who throws herself into the ocean
after being raped by a sea pirate.
And I am the pirate,
my heart not yet capable
of seeing and loving.

I am a member of the politburo,
with plenty of power in my hands.
And I am the man who has to pay his
"debt of blood" to my people
dying slowly in a forced labor camp.

My joy is like Spring, so warm
it makes flowers bloom all over the Earth.
My pain is like a river of tears,
so vast it fills the four oceans.

Please call me by my true names,
so I can hear all my cries and laughter at once,
so I can see that my joy and pain are one.

Please call me by my true names,
so I can wake up
and so the door of my heart can be left open,
the door of compassion.

Reader: And they all forsook him and fled
People: Lord have mercy

Taize Chant "Nada Te Turbe"

Please join in

*Christopher Wesolowski
12 string guitar + vocals*

*Nada te turbe, nada te espante
Quien a Dios tiene, nada le falta.
Nada te tube, nada te espante;
Quien a Dios tiene, nada le falta.
Nada te turbe, nada te espante:
Soli Dios basta.*

Third Lesson The Shadow of Neglect

Luke 22:43-44

An angel from heaven appeared to him and strengthened him. And being in anguish, he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was like drops of blood falling to the ground.

Reader: And they all forsook him and fled.
People: **Lord have mercy**

Fourth Lesson The Shadow of Sleep

Matthew 26:44-46

He went away from them the third time and prayed the same prayer. Then He came to His followers and asked them, "Are you still sleeping and getting your rest? As I speak, the time has come when the Son of Man will be handed over to sinners. 8 Get up and let us go. See! The man who will hand Me over is near."

"Everyday Grace" by Stella Nesanovich

It can happen like that:
meeting at the market,
buying tires amid the smell
of rubber, the grating sound
of jack hammers and drills,
anywhere we share stories,
and grace flows between us.

The tire center waiting room
becomes a healing place
as one speaks of her husband's

heart valve replacement, bedsores
from complications. A man
speaks of multiple surgeries,
notes his false appearance
as strong and healthy.

I share my sister's death
from breast cancer, her
youngest only seven.
A woman rises, gives
her name, Mrs. Henry,
then takes my hand.
Suddenly an ordinary day
becomes holy ground.

Reader: And they all forsook him and fled

People: Lord have mercy

Fifth Lesson The Shadow of your Image

Matthew 27:46

About three in the afternoon Jesus cried out in a loud voice, "*Eli, Eli lema sabachthani?*" (which means "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?").

"The Word That Is A Prayer" by Ellery Akers

One thing you know when you say it:
all over the earth people are saying it with you;
a child blurting it out as the seizures take her,
a woman reciting it on a cot in a hospital.
What if you take a cab through the Tenderloin:
at a street light, a man in a wool cap,
yarn unraveling across his face, knocks at the window;
he says, Please.
By the time you hear what he's saying,
the light changes, the cab pulls away,
and you don't go back, though you know
someone just prayed to you the way you pray.
Please: a word so short
it could get lost in the air

as it floats up to God like the feather it is,
knocking and knocking, and finally
falling back to earth as rain,
as pellets of ice, soaking a black branch,
collecting in drains, leaching into the ground,
and you walk in that weather every day.

Reader: And they all forsook him and fled

People: Lord have mercy

Ricercar #7

(Domenico Gabrielli)

David Runnion, cello

Sixth Lesson The Shadow of Violence

The Gospel of John 20:13

And they say to her, "Woman, why do you weep?" She said to them,
"Because they have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they
have laid Him."

"A Small Needful Fact" *by Ross Gay*

Is that Eric Garner worked
for some time for the Parks and Rec.
Horticultural Department, which means,
perhaps, that with his very large hands,
perhaps, in all likelihood,
he put gently into the earth
some plants which, most likely,
some of them, in all likelihood,
continue to grow, continue
to do what such plants do, like house
and feed small and necessary creatures,
like being pleasant to touch and smell,
like converting sunlight
into food, like making it easier
for us to breathe.

"There is a Balm in Gilead"

sung by Jayne Fritz

Reader: And they all forsook him and fled

People: Lord have mercy

Seventh Lesson The Shadow of the Cross

“Lockdown”

by Brother Richard Hendrick

Yes there is fear.

Yes there is isolation.

Yes there is panic buying.

Yes there is sickness.

Yes there is even death.

But,

They say that in Wuhan after so many years of noise

You can hear the birds again.

They say that after just a few weeks of quiet

The sky is no longer thick with fumes

But blue and grey and clear.

They say that in the streets of Assisi

People are singing to each other

across the empty squares,

keeping their windows open

so that those who are alone

may hear the sounds of family around them.

They say that a hotel in the West of Ireland

Is offering free meals and delivery to the housebound.

Today a young woman I know

is busy spreading fliers with her number

through the neighbourhood

So that the elders may have someone to call on.

Today Churches, Synagogues, Mosques and Temples

are preparing to welcome

and shelter the homeless, the sick, the weary

All over the world people are slowing down and reflecting

All over the world people are looking at their neighbours in a new way

All over the world people are waking up to a new reality

To how big we really are.
To how little control we really have.
To what really matters.
To Love.
So we pray and we remember that
Yes there is fear.
But there does not have to be hate.
Yes there is isolation.
But there does not have to be loneliness.
Yes there is panic buying.
But there does not have to be meanness.
Yes there is sickness.
But there does not have to be disease of the soul
Yes there is even death.
But there can always be a rebirth of love.
Wake to the choices you make as to how to live now.
Today, breathe.
Listen, behind the factory noises of your panic
The birds are singing again
The sky is clearing,
Spring is coming,
And we are always encompassed by Love.
Open the windows of your soul
And though you may not be able
to touch across the empty square,
Sing

Reader: And they all forsook him and fled.
People: **Lord have mercy**

Eighth Lesson The Shadow of Betrayal

The Gospel of Mark 14:44-45

Now the betrayer had arranged a signal with them: "The one I kiss is the

man; arrest him and lead him away under guard." Going at once to Jesus, Judas said, "Rabbi!" and kissed him.

Reader: And they all forsook him and fled

People: **Lord have mercy**

Ninth Lesson The Shadow of Mercy and Knowing

The Gospel of John 18:4-9

Then Jesus, knowing all that would happen to him, came forward and said to them, "Whom do you seek?" They answered him, "Jesus of Nazareth." Jesus said to them, "I am he." Judas, who betrayed him, was standing with them. When Jesus said to them, "I am he," they drew back and fell to the ground. So he asked them again, "Whom do you seek?" And they said, "Jesus of Nazareth." Jesus answered, "I told you that I am he. So, if you seek me, let these men go." This was to fulfill the word that he had spoken: "Of those whom you gave me I have lost not one."

"By the waters of Babylon"

sung by Jonah Johnson

"Small Kindnesses" *by Danusha Lameris*

I've been thinking about the way, when you walk
down a crowded aisle, people pull in their legs
to let you by. Or how strangers still say "bless you"
when someone sneezes, a leftover
from the Bubonic plague. "Don't die," we are saying.
And sometimes, when you spill lemons
from your grocery bag, someone else will help you
pick them up. Mostly, we don't want to harm each other.
We want to be handed our cup of coffee hot,
and to say thank you to the person handing it. To smile
at them and for them to smile back. For the waitress
to call us honey when she sets down the bowl of clam chowder,
and for the driver in the red pick-up truck to let us pass.
We have so little of each other, now. So far
from tribe and fire. Only these brief moments of exchange.
What if they are the true dwelling of the holy, these
fleeting temples we make together when we say, "Here,
have my seat," "Go ahead — you first," "I like your hat."

Reader: And they all forsook him and fled

People: **Lord have mercy**

The Gospel of Luke 22: 49-51

When Jesus' followers saw what was going to happen, they said, "Lord, should we strike with our swords?" And one of them struck the servant of the high priest, cutting off his right ear. But Jesus answered, "No more of this!" And he touched the man's ear and healed him.

"The Brightness That You Bear"

by Jan Richardson

This blessing
hardly knows what to say,
speechless as it is
not simply

from grief
but from the gratitude
that has come with it —

the thankfulness that sits
among the sorrow
and can barely begin
to tell you
what it means
not to be alone.

This blessing
knows the distances
you crossed
in person
in prayer
to enter into
days of waiting,
nights of long vigil.

It knows the paths
you traveled
to be here
in the dark.

Even in the shadows
this blessing
sees more than it can say
and has simply
come to show you

the light
that you have given

not to return it
to you
not to reflect it
back to you
but only to ask you
to open your eyes
and see
the grace of it,
the gift that shines
in this brightness
that you bear.

Reader: And they all forsook him and fled

People: Lord Have Mercy

Eleventh Lesson

The Shadow of my Pain

"Mary Speaks"

by Madeline L'Engle

O you who bear the pain of the whole earth,
I bore you.
O you whose tears give human tears their worth,
I laughed with you.
You, who, when your hem is touched, give power,
I nourished you.
Who turn the day to night in this dark hour,
light comes from you.
O you who hold the world in your embrace,
I carried you.
Whose arms encircled the world with your grace,
I once held you.
O you who laughed and ate and walked the shore,
I played with you.

And I, who with all others, you died for,
now I hold you.

May I be faithful to this final test:

in this last time I hold my child, my son,
his body close enfolded to my breast,
the holder held: the bearer borne.
Mourning to joy: darkness to morn.
Open, my arms: your work is done.

A moment of silence

Reader: And they all forsook him and fled

People: Lord Have Mercy

Pie Jesu (*Gabriel Faure*)

Margery McCrum, Soprano Soloist

Reader: And they all forsook him and fled

People: Lord Have Mercy

Twelfth Lesson The Shadow of Darkness

Luke 22:52-53

Then Jesus said to the chief priests, the officers of the temple guard, and the elders, who had come for him, "Am I leading a rebellion, that you have come with swords and clubs? Every day I was with you in the temple courts, and you did not lay a hand on me. But this is your hour—when darkness reigns."

"Born Again"

by Lynn Ungar, 12/20/16

Let's be clear about this:

It isn't the same as being sick
and getting better. It isn't
changing your mind at the last minute
or pushing away from the brink.
The only way to be born again
is to die. The Phoenix doesn't just
go up in a blaze of glory. It
feels the fire lick up and sizzle
every feather, until each quill becomes
a column of flame carried straight to the core.
Whatever the legend of re-birth, there is always
time in the fire, under the ground,

hanging on the cross or the tree.
Don't skip over that part of the story.
If you would be reborn, you have to die.
But what then? After the dying
how are we to rise again into new life?
The earth, the hero, the god, you and I—
how does any of us find our way back
from the Valley of the Shadow?
The same way we die:
Walk into the light.

Reader: And they all forsook him and fled
People: **Lord have mercy**

Taize chant , "Jesus remember me"

*Christopher Wesolowski
12-string guitar and vocals*

Blessing

The Rev. Mary Lindquist

Participants This Evening

*Julia Fedoruk
Jayne Fritz
Jonah Johnson
Tori MacKay
Callan McDowell
Zadie Olmstead
Tian Ragle
Julian Siegel
Asa Taggart*