



Light Wave | Lisle Gwynn Garrity
Acrylic painting with gold leaf on canvas

READ John 3:14-21

FROM THE ARTIST | Rev. Lisle Gwynn Garrity

My first memory of this passage is from writing “John 3:16” on my basketball shoes when I was in seventh grade, joining many of my teammates in blending our sport with our faith. I don’t remember knowing what the verse really meant, but my display of it was to make a statement about who I was—or at least who I desperately wanted to be. Like the branded clothes I wore, or the way I styled my hair, this was just another way to curate my middle school self-image. I wanted to show that I was good, that I fit in, that I believed in God. Later that basketball season, I added another Sharpie pen tattoo to my basketball shoes: my mother’s initials and the dates of her birth and death, marking the 44 years she lived. After her funeral, my teammates added her initials and the dates of her life to their sneakers in solidarity.

Now I know that Jesus originally spoke these famous words to Nicodemus, perhaps whispering them amidst the hushed noises of the night. I wonder why Nicodemus came to Jesus in the first place? Had Jesus’ teachings uprooted his religious self-image, one carefully curated to project propriety and adherence to the law? Or had death recently left a sharp sting, unraveling his tidy beliefs, creating in him a well of desperate questions about eternal life?

Jesus speaks to him with poetry of promise: God didn’t send his son to judge the world, but so the world might be restored through him. For God so loved. For God so loves, that like light, God keeps traveling to reach us with that redeeming love. In this abstract painting, the gold leaf marks become like a wave gliding through the cosmos, moving endlessly until it reaches everything.

As I think back to those Sharpie pen inscriptions on my basketball shoes, perhaps “For God so loved... so that everyone... will have eternal life” was the perfect companion to my mom’s initials.

PRAY

Breathe deeply as you gaze upon the image on the left. Imagine placing yourself in this scene. What do you see? How do you feel? Get quiet and still, offering a silent or spoken prayer to God.



Prevenient | Hannah Garrity
Paper lace

READ Ephesians 2:1-10

FROM THE ARTIST | Hannah Garrity

In our group study of the lectionary scriptures for Lent, Lisle was quick to tell me that this text matters a lot to Reformed theologians. I needed that theological and historical context. My first reading had brought nothing deep or important. I had completely missed what our Reformed thinkers had contemplated for centuries. Here are my notes from our conversation:

*"This Ephesians text is really important to Reformed theologians. The idea in Paul's words is all about God's grace, not works. Prevenient grace—we are given grace and we live our lives in response to that grace. This makes me think of the Paul Simon lines,
'And as I watch the drops of rain
Weave their weary paths and die
I know that I am like the rain
There but for the grace of you go I.'²
I imagine a flow of water; it speaks of baptism. The ripple represents the expansive effect of God's prevenient grace."*

Repetition in art is important. When I first created this piece, it appeared to me to be three different images. The sky, the distant water, and the ripple in the foreground. As I stared at the three patterns, I desired unification. Perhaps I'd repeat the ripple in the sky, or maybe add thin lines in the foreground to tie it in. But maybe, metaphorically, this separation can represent the idea of prevenient grace. The sky and the distance appear separated from the present. God's grace—represented in the water ripple in the foreground—will eventually connect us to it all.

PRAY

Breathe deeply as you gaze upon the image on the left. Imagine placing yourself in this scene. What do you see? How do you feel? Get quiet and still, offering a silent or spoken prayer to God.

² This is the last stanza of "Kathy's Song" by Simon and Garfunkel. © 1965 words and music by Paul Simon.

THE FIFTH WEEK OF LENT
AGAIN & AGAIN, WE ARE REFORMED

KEEP DIGGING

I can feel change inside of me.
It's a slow burn.
Change usually starts out hot—
Defensive and angry,
A self-righteous blanket
Of, "I am right and here's why . . ."
I wrap it around my shoulders
Like a barricade.
I fight the temptation to lean forward,
To play the challenger,
To argue with confidence.

But in time,
Almost always,
The heat fades.
The air leaves the balloon.
The audacity of it all
Starts to wear off.
And eventually,
What I am left with
Is myself
And a big, open sky.
It's colder here.
It's quieter.
I can hear my thoughts.

And in this big, wide openness
I am able to say out loud,
"Maybe I wasn't right.
Maybe I need to learn.
Maybe it's time for change.
Maybe that's okay."

And if I'm quiet, and if I'm paying attention,
I can usually hear God whisper inside of me,
"Good work, my child. Now keep digging."

Poem by Rev. Sarah Are

READ John 12:20-33

COMMENTARY | Rev. T. Denise Anderson

The year 2020 will be remembered as one of pestilence, pressure, and protest. Even as a global pandemic disproportionately affected marginalized people, Breonna Taylor, Tony McDade, Ahmaud Arbery, George Floyd, and others joined the already-long litany of Black lives lost to police violence and the imaginations of armed civilians. Everything was changing, but too much remained the same. The unrest was almost constant.

Consider then what must have been brewing in Jerusalem the week Jesus was crucified.

Our reading jumps ahead to that week and the moments after Jesus' protest march into Jerusalem (more on that next week). Imagine that the air is charged as an occupied people remember God's liberation of their ancestors from another empire. They're aware of Jesus' wonders and are anxious for restoration.

As his lore grows and visiting Jews from the diaspora seek him out, Jesus telegraphs the vision. In order for the seed to bear fruit, it must die. Those who follow him must go where he goes. Whoever tries to retain their life will ultimately lose it. This is troubling because the Messiah was expected to live forever. Jesus is again defying expectations. But for those who were worried, a voice from heaven confirms Jesus' identity.

Change, even when welcomed, means death. I once had the unenviable task of pastoring a church through dissolution. We realized that change would happen either with us or to us. We could die to some things so that we could live to others, or we could hold onto what is and die with it. Only one of these is a faithful way forward.

Again and again, we are being reformed. The process is uncomfortable, but the status quo is untenable. When change happens *with* us, what could possibly take root and flourish?



Drawn to Love | Hannah Garrity
Paper lace

READ John 12:20-33

FROM THE ARTIST | Hannah Garrity

I love borders. I place them in my artwork so that I can break them. They set up a reiteration of balance; they allow for a secondary or tertiary focal point. They introduce a conversation. In this image, the border allows for variation in the foreground and separation in the sky. The wheat breaks through the border. The horizon continues past the border. What are the metaphors within this imagery?

People are drawn to Jesus, drawn to love. I portray God's voice with cumulonimbus clouds, the clouds of thunderstorms. As they move upward toward the heavens, they become wheat and doves. The image incorporates a border representing the loving constraints that Jesus' ministry places on our lives and choices. What would Jesus do? Jesus would love.

The wheat grows beyond the border of life; the wheat brings forth a standard of daring love. "Those who love their life lose it" (John 12:25). The wheat breaks the border, it dances with the voice of God, it is not cautious, it is not scarce. It is love.

PRAY

Breathe deeply as you gaze upon the image on the left. Imagine placing yourself in this scene. What do you see? How do you feel? Get quiet and still, offering a silent or spoken prayer to God.



Written on our Hearts | Lauren Wright Pittman
Digital drawing

READ Jeremiah 31:31-34

FROM THE ARTIST | Rev. Lauren Wright Pittman

The events of 2020 have made me keenly aware of the brokenness of humanity. We can't seem to see past ourselves, neglecting our neighbor and undoing creation. We repeat past patterns, and the low moments of history keep echoing again and again. We point fingers, shrug responsibility, and we turn our back on God, widening the chasm between this world and the coming Kin-dom. God's frustration and disappointment are palpable in this text: "a covenant that they broke, though I was their husband" (v.32). I think it's important to sit with that for a bit. God has gifted us everything—our lives, this wonderful world—and we can be so forgetful and ungrateful.

Despite humanity's constant breaking of covenants, God continues to seek reconciliation and pours out grace upon grace. Why not let this grace transform us? It is in receiving God's grace, responding in gratitude, and offering grace to others that God forms us into who we were made to be. God saves us from ourselves, writing the way on our hearts, and gives us unlimited chances to get it right. It's clear we can't keep the covenant on our own, so God steps in, offering and fulfilling the covenant at once. What a gift!

In this image, I drew an anatomical heart with the words, "I will be their God, and they shall be my people." The heart is surrounded by covenantal imagery—including the stars imaging the vastness of Abraham's descendants, the parted seas on the journey to the land flowing with milk and honey, and the rainbow signaling God's promise to all of creation. It creates a beautiful kaleidoscope of stories that define our pilgrimage with God. The common thread throughout these narratives is that when we mess up, God is ready with a promise, again and again.

PRAY

In quiet contemplation, color in the page on the left, reflecting on how the imagery illuminates what you find in the scripture and artist's statement. Conclude with a silent or spoken prayer to God.

HOLY WEEK PALM SUNDAY
AGAIN & AGAIN, WE DRAW ON COURAGE

PEACEFUL PROTEST

I wonder if Jesus could feel his heartbeat
In his throat, the way I do when I'm afraid.
I wonder if he had to take deep breaths,
In through his nose, out through his mouth,
Tricking his body into a state of calm.
I wonder if he was nauseous, like I am
When I'm headed into a hard conversation.
I wonder if he had to summon his courage,
Tucking fear away so that he could hold onto
What mattered most with both hands.

I wonder, because time has taught us
That it is not uncommon
For a peaceful protest
To start or end
With an unjust death.

So I wonder,
Did he know?
Was he afraid?
Did anyone see it?

I want to hold what matters most with both hands.

Poem by Rev. Sarah Are

READ John 12:1-19

COMMENTARY | Rev. T. Denise Anderson

Lights. Camera. Action!

We begin the high drama of Holy Week with a reading in three parts.

Lights: In John's gospel, the role of the sometimes mysterious woman who anoints Jesus before his death belongs to Mary, sister of Martha and Lazarus, whom Jesus resurrected from death. Judas objects to the act's expense, but Jesus points out there are still opportunities to address poverty, if that's Judas' desire (it's not). The spotlight is on someone we now understand as a scoundrel and who'd later play a major role in the crucifixion plot. Everyone's motivations are exposed and the week's events foreshadowed.

Camera: The word "photography" comes from the Greek words for "light" and "writing." Essentially, photography "draws the light," and cameras are modeled after the construction of the human eye. All eyes right now are on Jesus. That's a problem for the chief priests, who then set their eyes on Lazarus to undermine Jesus. We witness what is both secret and open.

Action: Everything is now set in motion. Jesus' entry into Jerusalem is a spectacle. It's a protest, a counternarrative to the Empire's extravagance and repression. It happens opposite the Roman governor's own parade into Jerusalem for the Passover. It's the people's declaration of a different reign. The use of a donkey is Messianic imagery. This is political theater, and it would ramp up the plots against Jesus' life.

"Courage" derives from Latin word "cor," which means "heart." When we consider the full Palm Sunday picture, these are frightful times. So much is happening that is both hopeful and terrifying. Tensions and tears are plentiful. But the Word will remind us to "take heart."

Again and again, we take heart amid the drama. The script is unsettling, but we have not yet reached "The End."



Through the Palms | Lauren Wright Pittman
Hand-carved block printed with oil-based ink on paper

READ John 12:1-19

FROM THE ARTIST | Rev. Lauren Wright Pittman

Jesus lies down on the donkey's back, steeling himself before his journey through the palms. He has a target on his back—he's a disruption to the status quo upheld by the Pharisees and Chief Priests, and a threat to the power of the empire. His friend Lazarus is caught up in it all too. I imagine as he closes his eyes and strokes the donkey's hair, he hears the anguish in Mary and Martha's voices as they cried out to him, wondering why he took so long. I imagine he smells the pungent fragrance of the burial perfume poured on his feet, bringing into clarity the reality of his impending death. I imagine he sees the judgment on Judas' face as he was scrutinized for wasting perfume and neglecting those in desperate need.

Jesus plans to enter the city in a way that symbolically subverts power, taking a route opposite of the military leaders who oversee the festival celebrations. His entry would make a definitive statement, imaging an alternative kind of power, a servant leader riding an humble donkey. He knew this act would inch him closer to state-sanctioned torture and death.

We are in a time when we need to draw on courage to call into question the structures that uphold systems of oppression. We are in a time when we need to subvert the powerful and protect the vulnerable. The crowds close in on Jesus. Some lift their hands in praise, others point accusingly. I hope this image serves as a reminder to call upon God for the courage you need, to rest and recharge for the work ahead. But I hope it also heartens you to move forward in courage, even in the midst of great resistance, toward the work God is calling you into.

PRAY

Breathe deeply as you gaze upon the image on the left. Imagine placing yourself in this scene. What do you see? How do you feel? Get quiet and still, offering a silent or spoken prayer to God.

HOLY WEEK MAUNDY THURSDAY
AGAIN & AGAIN, WE ARE HELD TOGETHER

UNTIL THAT DAY *(Written in December, 2020)*

We cannot shake hands right now.
We cannot hug or kiss cheeks.
We cannot lean in to tell stories
Or draw close to pray.
We cannot pass the peace
Or even pass the time in each other's homes.
We cannot eat together,
Because the world is sick.
So instead of holding each other,
We hold distance.
We hold masks.
We hold statistics on the tips of our tongues.
We hold fear,
We hold space,
We hold tense conversations.
Maybe by the time you're reading this,
The day will have come
For all God's people to be gathered at Table.
Maybe by the time you're reading this,
We will be eating together.
Maybe we'll be hugging.
Hopefully there will be dancing
And laughing and kissing
And leaning in to tell stories,
And throwing our heads back to laugh.
But until that day,
I will wiggle my toes,
And think of footwashing.
I will eat sweet bread,
Ravenously,
And remember Communion.
I will close my eyes,
And picture your face.
I will clasp my hands
And know—
As sure as one palm knows the other—
That we are being held.
We are being held together.

Poem by Rev. Sarah Are

READ John 13:1-17, 31b-35

COMMENTARY | Rev. T. Denise Anderson

One of the holiest duties of pastoring is coming alongside families at the end of a life. No two experiences are identical, and a few are exceptionally difficult. Some people are the glue of the family and act as a linchpin for their relatives. When they go, the family scatters. That can be due to bad blood, or it can simply be that Aunt Mae was the one who always called everyone together. It's harder now without her initiative and good cooking.

In the best cases, people prepare their folks for their departure. It doesn't stop grief, but hopefully preparation makes grief manageable. This is Jesus' work on this day.

Mandatum, the origin of "Maundy," is Latin for "commandment." As crucifixion nears, Jesus gives his remaining disciples a commandment related to the time they've spent together. They're to love one another as Jesus has loved them. Not dissimilar from the *Shema Yisrael*² from which the greatest commandment comes, it points to Jesus' divinity and engages his disciples' memory.

How did Jesus love them? They'll have to draw from their encounters. The acts of love and healing, the teaching, the signs and wonders—all of it needs to be recalled. Throughout John, the disciples are said to have remembered certain events after Jesus' resurrection. John's gospel emphasizes memory and its role in belief, and we see Jesus constantly preparing them for this time. They could keep each other close by emulating the one who kept them close.

Additionally, Jesus has already promised to leave them with the Advocate who'd step in when memory and faculties fail. Yes, he'd have to leave them, but they wouldn't be alone.

Again and again, we are held together, even in our deepest grief and greatest danger. Remember that, and believe.

² As the centerpiece for Jewish prayer services, the *Shema Yisrael* opens with the verse, "Hear, O Israel: the LORD our God, the LORD is one."



You, Too, Must | Lisle Gwynn Garrity
Digital painting with collage

READ John 13:1-17, 31b-35

FROM THE ARTIST | Rev. Lisle Gwynn Garrity

"You will never wash my feet."

"If I don't wash your feet, what share will you have with me?"

(John 13:8)

The first time my dad took me to visit her in the hospital, I walked in to find a slouched figure sunken below a bundle of blankets. Short brown hairs collected in clumps along her shoulders and pillowcase. A cotton beanie grasped the edges of her yellowing, swollen face. I averted my eyes at the sight, tricked by cancer's devouring disguise. Pale walls drained the room of energy; even the blue curtains in the window drooped lethargically against the wall. As we came close, my mother's shrunken torso grew, her familiar, honey-rich voice filled like liquid in my ears.

"Take off your shoes. Let me rub your feet."

I paused. Death pressed in on us like an unrelenting fog. I was scared, unsure of how to play daughter to a mother whose life was slowly slipping away.

"Let me rub your feet."

Reluctantly, I climbed up onto the hospital bed. Reaching through the blanketed layers, she removed my shoes, the sweat from my middle school basketball practice still lingering on my skin. Without hesitation, she peeled off my socks and gently massaged away the anxieties building within the room.

In the face of the cancer that would soon take her, my mother was determined to hold us close. In the fading and fullness of life, she savored moments of service to others. Her gentleness continues to startle and soothe me.

"You, too, must wash each other's feet."

(John 13:14)

PRAY

Breathe deeply as you gaze upon the image on the left. Imagine placing yourself in this scene. What do you see? How do you feel? Get quiet and still, offering a silent or spoken prayer to God.

HOLY WEEK GOOD FRIDAY
AGAIN & AGAIN, WE FIND OURSELVES HERE

HERE

There are places that our bodies know—
The curve of the couch, the creak of the porch swing,
The number of steps to our love's front door.

There are places that our bodies know,
And then there are places our souls know—

Waiting rooms and sanctuaries,
Nurseries and bedrooms,
Open roads and dinner tables.

These are the travel routes,
The many destinations of a well-lived soul.

And while my soul would always prefer
To stay in the sun, living on the
Front porch swings where life is easy,
From time to time,
We all find ourselves at grief's front door,
In love's waiting room,
Or on the long and treacherous road to justice's house.

So when you do,

Remember:

Your body can be in a familiar space
While your soul can feel a long way from home.

Go easy on her.

She is traveling.

Being here has never been easy.

Poem by Rev. Sarah Are

READ John 19:1-30

COMMENTARY | Rev. T. Denise Anderson

"A MAN WAS LYNCHED YESTERDAY"

These words were stitched onto a flag that flew outside the Manhattan headquarters of the NAACP between 1920 and 1938. When a Black person was lynched, the flag was raised the following day. This began after the 1916 lynching of Jesse Washington. The NAACP distributed the grotesque photos of Washington's lynching to raise awareness and rally support to fight racial terror.

Thirty-nine years after Washington's lynching, Emmett Till met a similar end. His mother insisted on an open-casket funeral. Photos of the 14-year-old's mutilated body were published widely, catalyzing a movement.

In 2018, the National Memorial for Peace and Justice opened in Montgomery, Alabama. Eight hundred markers carry the names of thousands of victims of racial terror (including a relative of mine). Their "offenses" included protesting low wages, refusing to be undercut in a business deal, and "standing around."

You should understand that what happened to Jesus was a lynching.

I don't say this to shock. The late Dr. James Cone deftly made the connection in *The Cross and the Lynching Tree*.³ While the word is a Revolutionary War relic, the practice of publicly punishing dissidents to discourage and terrorize their community is much older. Lynching can be state-sanctioned or extrajudicial. For Palestinian Jews under Roman occupation, the cross was a tool of repression and terror. Know your place, or you're next!

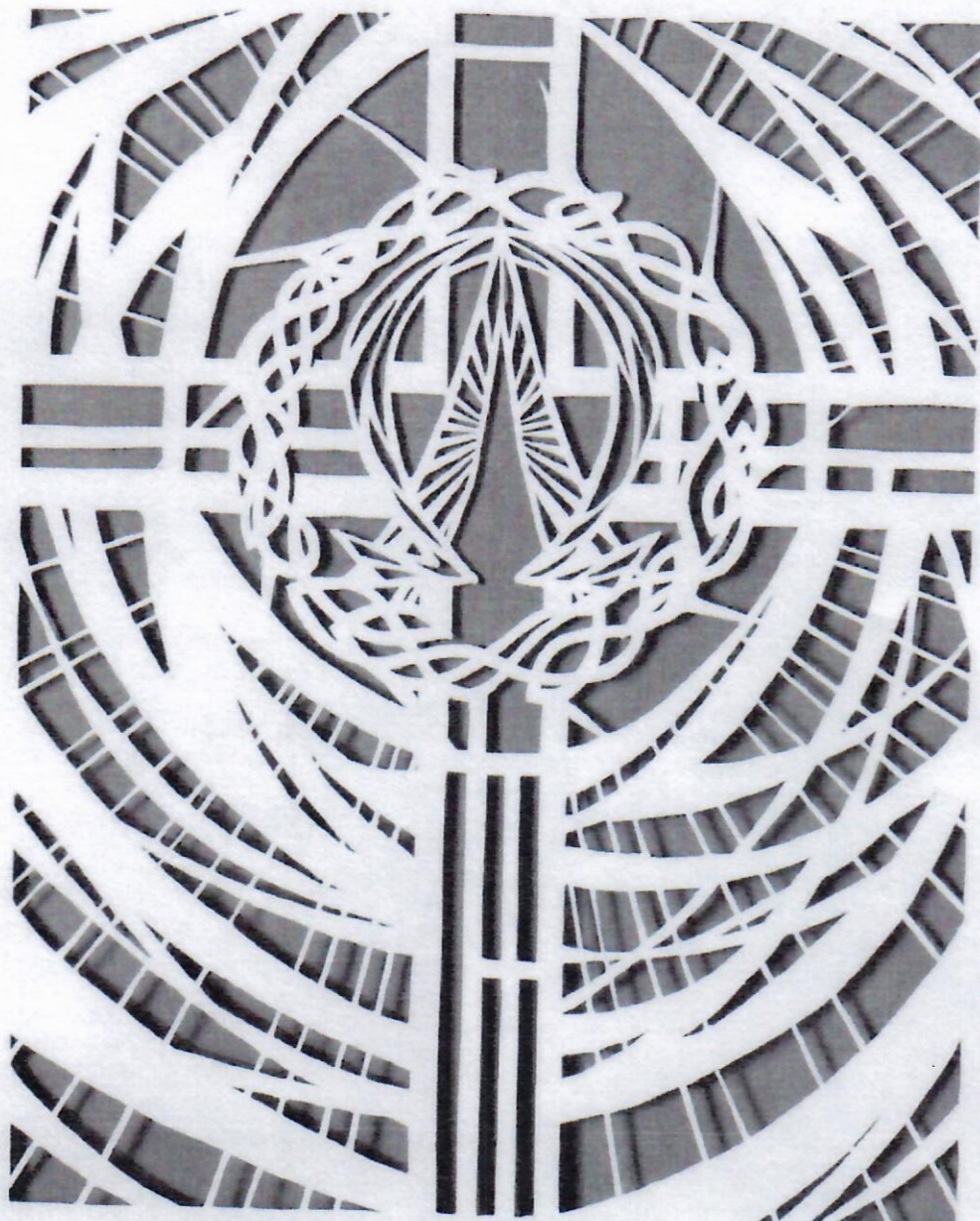
Today a mob handed over an innocent man to be tortured and killed. Members of his own community chose Empire, while Empire feigned innocence. His mother, like Sybrina Fulton, Lesley McSpadden, and Mamie Till-Mobley after her, witnesses. Behold your son... brutalized.

Do not look away and do not rush to redeem this violence.

A MAN WAS LYNCHED TODAY.

Again and again we find ourselves... here, where even Jesus is groping for God.

3 Cone, James H. *The Cross and the Lynching Tree*. (Orbis Books: Maryknoll, NY, 2011).



Status Quo | Hannah Garrity
Paper lace

READ John 19:1-30

FROM THE ARTIST | Hannah Garrity

Pitiful, sad, scary. The continuous repetition of history is so poignant with our yearly reading of this text. As I drew and cut the layers of this work, I contemplated the ways in which I play the role of Pontius Pilate or the crowd in my daily life. Where do I perpetuate hate? Where do I forward injustice? Where do I join the voice of the wayward crowd?

Pontius Pilate depicts the weakness of the status quo. Structures—what holds them up? What makes them fall? Windows are the lenses through which we see the world. In this image, we look through the window of my favorite architectural style, Arts and Crafts, to the cathedral window style. I portrayed layers of architecture and symbol. The cross is a contentious symbol. I repeat it again and again. The cross is the instrument that murders God incarnate. The crown of thorns shames Jesus. I have placed the Alpha and Omega within the crown of thorns on the cross, reminding us that the crowd put God to death and shamed God. The cross I drew was modeled after Celtic crosses made of nails.

Again and again, we meet Pontius Pilate, knowing Jesus to be innocent, refusing to protect him from the hate of the masses, refusing to do the right thing. As I look around me now, I see the same things happening in our daily lives, in the life of our nation, in the life of the world. How can I pivot those places in my life where I resemble the crowd and crucify the righteous, or where I resemble Pontius Pilate and perpetuate the injustice of the status quo?

PRAY

Breathe deeply as you gaze upon the image on the left. Imagine placing yourself in this scene. What do you see? How do you feel? Get quiet and still, offering a silent or spoken prayer to God.

EASTER SUNDAY
AGAIN & AGAIN, THE SUN RISES

LIGHT

In Italian, the phrase, "to give birth"
Literally means, "to bring into the light."
A mother will labor for hours and days,
Breaking herself for you,
Whispering between fractured breaths,
"This is my body, broken for you."

A mother will do this as long as it takes
So that you, her beloved,
Have a chance at life.
So that you, her beloved,
Can feel the warmth of the light.

And after all that pain,
The sun will rise.
The doctor will put a baby on her chest.
The mother will hold her child as if
Letting go is indeed physically impossible.
She will breathe easy,
And then she will whisper softly,
"All this time,
All these deep breaths...
It was love, again and again and again."

It is childbirth,
But it is also resurrection.
A body broken.
Breath fractured.
A long night.
A sunrise.
Breath returned.
New life,
And a love that won't let go.

Friends, maybe Easter is just God whispering,
"All this time,
All these deep breaths...
It's been love, again and again and again."
I think we've been standing in the light all this time.
Now that I think of it, isn't it warm?

Poem by Rev. Sarah Are

READ Mark 16:1-8

COMMENTARY | Rev. T. Denise Anderson

Do we ever consider the mechanics of a sunrise? The earth spinning at 1000 mph, traveling an orbit of 584 million miles around a star that's about 1 million times the size of our planet is dizzying. But because we've come to expect sunrises every day, we're not always impressed by them. Often we sleep right through them. That doesn't make them any less awesome or miraculous.

Easter is as familiar to Christians as a sunrise. We know the story—at least one variation—and we likely expect to greet the day the same way every year. But if we've been sitting in the tension of last week, we may be able to experience this day differently.

Mark's gospel is, again, straightforward. There are no frills in this resurrection account. There's not much joy in it, either. Sunday morning was a time of profound grief for those closest to Jesus. Consider those first few days after you've lost someone and the liminality between their death and funeral. There's no closure yet, and mornings are reminders that the nightmare is real. It's hard to imagine how you'll face the day.

Friday's terror gives way to new terror as the women arrive to find the stone removed and a strange young man with an outlandish story. Remember that nothing about this sight is recognizable to them. This isn't comforting. They run away terrified, unable to even speak of what they saw!

But resurrection still came, even if they weren't yet able to receive it. Things can be scary and okay at the same time.

Again and again, the sun rises on a new day, often without embrace or acknowledgment. The same is true of resurrection. Whether or not we discern what's happening, God is literally and figuratively turning the world around!



The Promise | Lisle Gwynn Garrity
Acrylic and gold leaf on canvas

READ Mark 16:1-8

FROM THE ARTIST | Rev. Lisle Gwynn Garrity

Just after sunrise, they come to the tomb. They come to do what far too many cannot do in the wake of COVID's rage—to touch and anoint the body of their loved one, to provide a proper burial, to honor the life lost with a memorial. However, the women at the empty tomb are left with what many who are grieving today are experiencing—dread and terror. Mark's gospel originally ends this way (we believe verses 9-19 were added later). Not with Mary running to tell the disciples, not with exuberance and joy, but with fear and silence. The women are numb.

How could it be this way? Who stole the body? Did we come to the wrong tomb? Jesus is going where? Galilee? How?

The young robed man's words probably feel like a mirage induced by their grief or lack of sleep—or both.

In this painting, I imagine what the women see in the moment before they turn to flee from the tomb. Instead of the dry, cracked desert, I imagine instead that they see the story of creation happening again before them. As the horizon breaks open, I imagine light and wind sweeping over a deep sea, giving shape to what was once a formless void. I imagine the heavens blooming like an iris, giving birth to glimmers of radiance. I imagine darkness that still lingers—for in these shadows, there is sacredness too. I imagine the winding path they followed to get to the tomb, previously lit only by starlight, now illuminated with promise.

They may be overridden with fear and trembling, but their story does not end here. There is a way forward. In this liminal space, once again, God proclaims that their fear—this new, uncertain way—is still held within the promise of resurrection. For this, I believe, is the promise of this life: that the story of creation happens again and again.

PRAY

Breathe deeply as you gaze upon the image on the left. Imagine placing yourself in this scene. What do you see? How do you feel? Get quiet and still, offering a silent or spoken prayer to God.

EPILOGUE

AGAIN & AGAIN, A LENTEN REFRAIN

BREAD CRUMBS

I used to make decisions with a
flip of a coin,
Or, "Eeny, meeny, miny, moe,
My mother told me so."

That was when the stakes
were small,
When I was small,
When the world was small;
Back when we thought
We knew it all.

But you grow up quickly
When you start to see
That not all have the freedom
To love equally,
Or to breathe freely,
Or to protest peacefully.

And you grow up quickly
When you start to see
That the Church is shrinking
And the world is sick,
And people are lonely,
And the news won't quit.
And no amount of
guessing games
Can right these wrongs.

So today I am going
To do my best
To tuck my ego
In the pocket of my chest.
Today I will listen
Louder than I speak,

And look for the tables
That Jesus is flipping.
For our God carved
Words into stone.
Our God led the people
In a pillar of smoke.
Our God was present
In the still, small voice,
In the middle of the storm,
And where people rejoice.
And if God was showing them
the way,

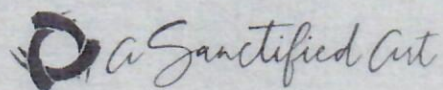
Then I am confident,
God is here today—
Dropping bread crumbs
And leaving signs,
Flipping tables
Where oppression dines.




So yes, I admit,
This is harder than before.
I cannot use games
To decide or keep score.
I have to use faith; I have
to believe
That even today, God is leading.
My mother told me so.

Poem by Sarah Are

A Sanctified Art LLC is a collective of artists in ministry who create resources for worshiping communities. The Sanctified Art team works collaboratively to bring scripture and theological themes to life through film, visual art, curriculum, coloring pages, liturgy, graphic designs, and more. Their mission is to empower churches with resources to inspire creativity in worship and beyond. Driven by the connective and prophetic power of art, they believe that art helps us connect our hearts with our hands, our faith with our lives, and our mess with our God.

Learn more about their work at sanctifiedart.org.



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