lenten guide 2024 new community spokane, washington you can tell a lot about an event by how deliberately people prepare for it. the attention to detail and anticipation is obvious as you observe them prepare for the prom, ready themselves for a wedding or gather together for a formal occasion. the scrutiny and awareness in their approach speaks volumes about the event's importance to them.

this is why we embark on the journey of lent, a season all about preparation. we journey together with followers of Jesus worldwide to prepare for the day we remember and celebrate — the amazing resurrection of Jesus Christ.

may we prepare well....





we will be offering a time to repent, pray and receive the ashes with leaders, pastors and elders. we will utilize stations, corporate reflections, confessions, and a devotional thought.

the doors will be open at 6:30pm. the gathering starts at 7pm.

repent and believe the gospel.

Almighty and everlasting God, you hate nothing you have made and forgive the sins of all who are penitent: create and make in us new and contrite hearts, that we, worthily lamenting our sins and acknowledging our wretchedness, may obtain of you the God of all mercy, perfect remission and forgiveness; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen.

Almighty God, you have created us out of the dust of the earth: grant that these ashes may be to us a sign of our mortality and penitence, that we may remember that it is only by your gracious gift that we are given everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

#### psalm 51

Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin! For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight, so that you may be justified in your words and blameless in your judgment. Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me. Behold, you delight in truth in the inward being, and you teach me wisdom in the secret heart. Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones that you have broken rejoice. Hide your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from your presence, and take not your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and uphold me with a willing spirit. Then I will teach transgressors your ways, and sinners will return to you. Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God, O God of my salvation, and my tongue will sing aloud of your righteousness. O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth will declare your praise. For you will not delight in sacrifice, or I would give it; you will not be pleased with a burnt offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise. Do good to Zion in your good pleasure; build up the walls of Jerusalem; then will you delight in right sacrifices, in burnt offerings and whole burnt offerings; then bulls will be offered on your altar.

#### communal prayer

Most holy and merciful Father: we confess to you and to one another, and to the whole communion of saints in heaven and on earth, that we have sinned by our own fault in thought, word and deed; by what we have done, and by what we have left undone.

We have not loved you with our whole heart and mind and strength. We have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We

have not forgiven others, as we have been forgiven.

#### (Have mercy on us, Lord)

We have been deaf to your call to serve, as Christ served us. We have not been true to the mind of Christ. We have grieved your Holy Spirit.

#### (Have mercy on us, Lord)

We confess to you, Lord, all our past unfaithfulness: the pride, hypocrisy and impatience of our lives,

### (We confess to you, Lord)

Our self-indulgent appetites and ways, and our exploitation of other people,

Our anger at our own frustration and our envy of those more fortunate than ourselves,

Our intemperate love of worldly goods and comforts, and our dishonesty in daily life and work,

Our negligence in prayer and worship and our failure to commend the faith that is in us.

Accept our repentance, Lord, for the wrongs we have done: for our blindness to human need and suffering and our indifference to injustice and cruelty,

(Accept our repentance, Lord)

For all false judgments, for uncharitable thoughts toward our neighbors and for our prejudice and contempt toward those who differ from us.

For our waste and pollution of your creation and our lack of concern for those who come after us,

Restore us, good Lord, and let your anger depart from us,

(Favorably hear us, for your mercy is great)

Accomplish in us the work of your salvation,

(That we may show your glory to the world)

By the cross and passion of your Son our Lord,

(Bring us with all your saints to the joy of his resurrection)

The peace of God be with you. And also with you.

## liturgy

God, good beyond all that is good, fair beyond all that is fair, in you is calmness, peace, and concord. Heal the dissensions that divide us from one another, and bring us back to a unity of love, bearing some likeness to your divine nature. Through the embrace of love and the bonds of Godly affection, make us one in the Spirit by your peace which makes all things peaceful. We ask this through the grace, mercy, and tenderness of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen. (Written by Dionysius of Alexandria)

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace: Where there is hatred, let me sow love; Where there is injury, pardon; Where there is doubt, faith; Where there is despair, hope; Where there is darkness, light; Where there is sadness, joy.

O divine Master, Grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console, To be understood as to understand, To be loved as too love. For it is in giving that we receive, It is in pardoning that we are pardoned, and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life. Amen. [Saint Francis of Assisi]

"Almighty Father, maker of Heaven and Earth, set up your Kingdom in our midst. Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, have mercy on us sinners. Holy Spirit, Breath of the Living God, renew us and all the world." N.T. Wright New Community; this lenten season:

May God bless you with discomfort at easy answers, half-truths, and superficial relationships so that you may live deep within your heart.

May God bless you with anger at injustice, oppression, and exploitation of people, so that you may work for justice, freedom, and peace.

May God bless you with tears To shed for those who suffer pain, rejection, hunger and war, So that you may reach out your hand to comfort them and To turn their pain into joy.

And may God bless you with enough foolishness To believe that you can make a difference in the world, So that you can do what others claim cannot be done To bring justice and kindness to all our children and the poor. Amen.

[franciscan prayer]

quote for the week of reflection

"Our job is to love others without stopping to inquire whether or not they are worthy. That is not our business and, in fact, it is nobody's business. What we are asked to do is to love, and this love itself will render both ourselves and our neighbors worthy." Thomas Merton

thursday [psalm 32] [luke 18:9-14]

friday [deuteronomy 7:6-11] [john 1:29-34+43-51]

> saturday [psalm 30] [hebrews 12:1-17]

genesis 9:8-17 psalm 25:1-10 1 peter 3:18-22 mark 1:9-15

[sunday, february 18th]

Lord Jesus, we forget too easily that you are for us. We forget that you were tempted in every way, and that you overcame. We thank you for your faithfulness-then and now-to the will of the Father.

We call you Emmanuel, God with us, and yet we often hold you at a distance. We say, "You never felt these struggles, this pain, this isolation. You don't understand the stress in my life."

Forgive us, Lord. Forgive us for the times we fail to recognize that you have committed yourself to live in solidarity with us, to share our joys and pains, to defend and protect us, and to suffer all of life with us.

We confess that you are our helper and our refuge, and that you are with us-always. Grant us hearts that dwell in your presence in all circumstances. Amen.

ask

how has God revealed Himself as being Emmanuel ("God with you") recently? in what way are you holding God at a distance? list two ways that God is "for you" as you wrap up your prayer time. quote for the week of reflection

"For a very long time I considered low selfesteem to be some kind of virtue. I had been warned so often against pride and conceit that I came to consider it a good thing to deprecate myself. But now I realize that the real sin is to deny God's first love for me, to ignore my original goodness. Because without claiming that first love and that original goodness for myself, I lose touch with my true self and embark on the destructive search among the wrong people and in the wrong places for what can only be found in the house of my Father." Henri Nouwen monday [psalm 63] [1 corinthians 1:17-31]

tuesday [deuteronomy 8:1-10] [matthew 3:1-17]

wednesday [deuteronomy 8:11-20] [john 2:13-22]

thursday [deuteronomy 10:12-22] [john 3:1-14]

friday [deuteronomy 11:18-28] [john 3:15-21+31-36]

> saturday [psalm 55] [john 4:1-26]

genesis 17:1-7, 15-16, 22:23-31 romans 4:13-25 mark 8:31-38

[sunday, february 25th]

Eternal God, our heavenly Father, from whom comes every good and perfect gift, we thank and praise your name for all your mercies, and for every blessing we have received from you.

We give you thanks, O God, for your Son, our Savior, Jesus Christ. No one in all history compares with Him.

He is the Good Shepherd – the One who has guided us each step of the way.

He is the Rock of Ages – the One who has held us when all around was sinking.

He is the Bread of Life – the One who has satisfied our soul's hunger.

He is the Light of the World – the One who has delivered us from spiritual darkness.

He is the Resurrection – the One who is our life and our life to come.

And so Lord, for the supply of our needs, and the preservation of our lives, for all the good you have bestowed upon us, and all the evil you have averted – we thank you, Father.

We praise you, O God. We will bless your holy name forever and ever. Amen

ask

of the qualities listed above, what description of God currently resonates with you the most? in what ways are you allowing your life to reflect back your praise?

quote for the week of reflection

"If you start with instructions and commands, people might be mistaken into thinking that God loves us because of what we do or how religious or moral or good we are. That's not gospel. Gospel is the announcement of who God insists you now are because of Christ. You're a child of God, not because of how great you are but because God has all kinds of kids and you're one of them.

But if you tell people who they are, who their best selves are, if you remind them of their true identity, there's a good chance they'll know what to do as they live out of that good news." [bell] monday [psalm 24] [jeremiah 1:4-19]

tuesday [hebrews 3:1-15] [1 corinthians 3:10-23]

> wednesday [jeremiah 3:6-18] [psalm 72]

thursday [hebrews 4:14-5:10] [matthew 5:1-11]

#### friday

[psalm 69] [jeremiah 18:1-11]

#### saturday

[psalm 40] [matthew 5:5-15] exodus 20:1-17 psalm 19 1 corinthians 1:18-25 john 2:13-22

[sunday, march 3rd]

We are counted your people. We are grateful to be called by you, and glad for our special way of faith in the world. You have marked us and named us and signed us, and we are different, different memories, different hopes, different fears. different commands. different ways of being. The difference we find glorious, but at times a burden too severe. We yearn to be like the others, like the others in power, in money, in freedom, in certitude. in security, like the others. uncalled, unburdened, unembarrassed. We come to you in that deep trial of difference and likeness. Engage us in our difference, Give us courage for our different vocations, and energy for our different hope. In the name of your crucified,

### ask

in what ways are you yearning to be like the others? where has that difference become severe in your life?

the above prayer mentions our difference in memories, hopes, fears, and ways of being. are you presently in community with people who share those same ways of being? if not, what can you do to begin to engage in that type of community? quote for the week of reflection

The love of God is who you are. The compassion of Christ is the only solid identity you will ever apprehend. All thoughts of identity apart from this single, magnificent truth are shadow and illusion. The love that God unwaveringly holds for you, received within your immortal soul, is your real identity, your true self. The love of God is everything, and you are nothing apart from this one love. Immersed in your compassionate God, you live and move and have your being (Acts 17:28). Because the love of God is who you are, the most accurate way to think about your true self, the one phrase that can resonate deep within your being is, "I am the beloved of Christ." Can you open yourself to this wondrous truth? You are the beloved. The glory of God is at home in you. Judy Hougen

# monday

[psalm 56] [mark 3:31-4:9]

## tuesday

[psalm 61] [jeremiah 4:9-28]

# wednesday

[psalm 70] [jeremiah 5:1-9]

# thursday

[romans 1:1-15] [john 4:27-42]

### friday

[jeremiah 5:20-31] [john 5:1-18]

# saturday

[psalm 75] [john 11:17-27] numbers 21:4-9 psalm 107:1-3, 17-22 ephesians 2:1-10 john 3:14-21

[sunday, march 10th]

To you, O Lord, I lift up my soul. O my God, in you I trust; Let me not be put to shame; Let not my enemies exult over me. Let none who wait for you be put to shame. Make me to know your ways, O Lord; Teach me your paths. Lead me in your truth and teach me, for you are the God of my salvation; for you I wait all the day long. Remember your mercy, O Lord, and your steadfast love, Remember not the sins of my youth or my transgressions; Remember me, for the sake of your goodness, O Lord! Turn to me and be gracious to me, for I am lonely and afflicted; the troubles of my heart are enlarged; bring me out of my distresses. May integrity and uprightness preserve me, for I wait for you.

ask:

reflect on the above prayer. what phrase catches your attention?

for what do you need to ask God to allow you to more fully embrace or live into that phrase?]

quote for the week of reflection

"I want neither a terrorist spirituality that keeps me in a perpetual state of fright about being in right relationship with my heavenly Father nor a sappy spirituality that portrays God as such a benign teddy bear that there is no aberrant behavior or desire of mine that he will not condone. I want a relationship with the Abba of Jesus, who is infinitely compassionate with my brokenness and at the same time an awesome, incomprehensible, and unwieldy Mystery." Brennan Manning

# monday [psalm 93] [john 5:30-47]

# tuesday [jeremiah 6:9-15] [john 7:1-13]

#### wednesday [psalm 80] [1 corinthians 6:12-20]

# thursday

[john 7:14-36] [romans 4:1-12]

# friday

[john 7:37-52] [john 8:12-30]

# saturday [psalm 78:1-39]

[romans 4:13-25]

jeremiah 31:31-34 psalm 51:1-12 hebrews 5:5-10 john 12:20-33

[sunday, march 17th]

Grant, Almighty God, that as you see us so foolish in nourishing our vices, and also so ensnared by the gratifications of the flesh, that without being constrained we hardly return to you, grant, that we may feel the weight of your wrath, and be so touched with the fear of it, as to return gladly to you.

Grant that we may lay aside every deception and devote ourselves entirely to your service.

Grant that it may appear that we have from the heart repented, and that we have not trifled with you by an empty pretense, but have offered to you our hearts as a sacrifice.

Grant that we, and all our works, might be sacred offerings to you through our whole life, that your name

#### ask

what deception or vice has captured you lately and in what ways have you felt the weight of that sin?

to repent is to change direction. in what ways are you allowing the good news of Jesus to drive you to the cross?

how is this good news motivating you to reverse course?

quote for the week of reflection

"I do not believe that the good news is given to tell us that we have failed or been false. That is not news and that is not good. We already know much of that about ourselves. We know we have been false, even to those we most love in our lives and would want to be most true too. We know we have failed people and whole nations throughout the world today who are suffering or who are subjected to terrible injustices that we could have done more to prevent. The Gospel is not given to tell us what we already know. Rather, the Gospel is given to tell us what we do not know or what we have forgotten. And that is who we are; sons and daughters of the one from whom all things come." [Newell]

# monday

[psalm 66] [john 10:1-18]

# tuesday

[psalm 97 [jeremiah 23:1-8]

# wednesday

[psalm 101] [jeremiah 23:9-15]

# thursday

[psalm 102] [romans 8:1-11]

#### friday

[psalm 107:1-32] [romans 8:12-27]

### saturday

[psalm 89] [romans 8:28-39] PALM SUNDAY

as we enter Holy Week, these readings help us to focus on the grace and mercy of God demonstrated through the cross and new life through the resurrection of Jesus. readings of the psalms mark 11:1-11 psalm 118:1-2

readings of the passion isaiah 50:4-9a psalm 31:9-16 philippians 2:5-11 mark 14:1-15:47 mark 15:1-39

> PALM SUNDAY [sunday, march 24th]

King of glory, you did come. But when you did, the gates did not lift up their heads; you were not lauded for your power and might. You passed through the ancient doors at first unknown, later reviled, and finally to die with shame.

Those who cast you out of the holy city believed themselves to be a generation seeking you. We take warning from their example:

without your grace, we could never comprehend the need we have for you;

without your grace, we could never be drawn near.

We commit ourselves to you, asking that you would make us a generation that seeks you. Make our hands clean and our hearts pure. Fill us with hope and expectation for that day when every word of this psalm will unfold before our eyes: the totality of your creative power; the joy of your people, those made holy by you; and the glory of a King, so great that even the gates of his city cannot hold back their praise! isaiah 42:1-9 psalm 36:5-11 hebrews 9:11-15 john 12:1-11

If the future is to remain open and free, we need people who can tolerate the unknown, who will not need the support of completely worked-out systems or traditional blueprints from the past. [Margaret Mead]

> monday of holy week [march 25th]

isaiah 49:1-7 psalm 71:1-14 1 corinthians 1:18-31 john 12:20-36

Life is not a problem to be solved, but a mystery to be lived. [Thomas Merton]

tuesday of holy week [march 26th] isaiah 50:4-9a psalm 70 hebrews 12:1-3 john 13:21-32

Love has a way of making places sacred and moments meaningful. [Janet Hobson]

> wednesday of holy week [march 27th]

exodus 12:1-14 psalm 116:1-4, 12-19 1 corinthians 11:23-26 john 13:1-17, 31b-35

Est autem fides credere quod nondum vides; cuius fidei merces est videre quod credis.

[Faith is to believe what you do not see; the reward of this faith is to see what you believe.] [St. Augustine]

holy thursday [march 28th] GOOD FRIDAY

we will be offering time to reflect, pray and take communion with leaders, pastors and elders.

the doors will be open at 6pm.

service moving from light to dark will begin at 7pm.

isaiah 52:13-53:12 psalm 22 hebrews 10:16-25 john 18:1-19:42

> GOOD FRIDAY [march 29th]

pray

Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord! O Lord, hear my voice! Let your ears be attentive to the voice of my pleas for mercy!

If you, O Lord, should mark in iniquities, O Lord, who could stand? But with you there is forgiveness, that you may be feared.

I wait for the Lord, my soul waits, and in his word I hope; my soul waits for the Lord more than watchmen for the morning, more than watchmen for the morning.

Hope in the Lord! For with the Lord there is steadfast love, and with him is plentiful redemption. And he will redeem us from all our iniquities. old testament readings & psalms exodus 14:10-31, 15:20-21

choose two of the following: genesis 1:1-2, 4a psalm 136:1-9, 23-26 psalm 33 genesis 7:1-5, 11-18; 8:6-18; 9:8-13 psalm 46 genesis 22:1-18 psalm 16 exodus 15:1b-13, 17-18 isaiah 55:1-11 isaiah 12:2-6 ezekiel 36:24-28 psalm 42, 43 ezekiel 37:1-14 psalm 143

> holy saturday [march 30th]

new testament reading & psalm romans 6:3-11 psalm 114

gospel reading mark 16:1-8

"God will not have his work made manifest by cowards." [Ralph Waldo Emerson]

> holy saturday [march 30th]

EASTER

we will be gathering at 10:00 am to celebrate the resurrection of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

acts 10:34-43 psalm 118:1-2, 14-24 1 corinthians 15:1-11 john 20:1-18 or mark 16:1-8

> EASTER [sunday, march 31st]

pray

Let us give thanks to the Lord, for he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever! Let the redeemed of the Lord say so, whom he has redeemed from trouble and gathered in from the lands, from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south.

Some wandered in desert wastes, finding no way to a city to dwell in; hungry and thirsty, their soul fainted within them. then they cried to the Lord in their trouble, and he delivered them from their distress. He led them by a straight way till they had reached a city to dwell in. Let them thank the Lord for his steadfast love, for his wonderful works to the children of men! For he satisfies the longing soul, and the hungry soul he fills with good things. pray

Our Father, who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, On earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, And forgive us our trespasses, As we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, But deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen. unless otherwise noted, scripture passages taken from *The Holy Bible*, english standard version and prayers were taken from *Reflections and Prayers*, an online devotional produced by college church, wheaton, illinois, 2008.

other sources used:

ash wednesday: The Book of Common Prayer, Oxford, 1990.

Breuggemann, Walter, Awed to Heaven, Rooted in Earth, Augsburg Fortress, 2003, p. 89.