

Participants in Video Devotions for March, 2022

Date	Worship Assistant (Psalm)	Reader (OT & NT readings)	Prayer leader
March 6	Kim D	Eric N	Kara R
March 13	Monica P	Katharine B	Tom R
March 20	Kara R	Pam R	Eric N
March 27	Tom R	Jett I	Kim D

Readings and prayers available on the "Sunday Service" page (and archive) of our website. Video clips need to be submitted in advance; contact Pastor Tyler if unclear about parts.

Gloria Dei Lutheran Church is located on original lands of Anishinaabe, Cree, Oji-Cree, Dakota, and Dene peoples, and on the homeland of the Métis Nation. We respect the Treaties that were made on these territories, we acknowledge the harms and mistakes of the past, and we dedicate ourselves to move forward in partnership with Indigenous communities in a spirit of reconciliation and collaboration.

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The Gloria Daily

March, 2022 www.GloriaDeiWinnipeg.org Vol 3. No. 3

*Now is the time of grace, now is the day of salvation.
Turn now, and seek God's face, now behold God's invitation*
ACS #918

The Lenten invitation is to the disciplines of fasting, alms-giving, and prayer. Maybe (in looking at the hymnist's words) that's also part of God's invitation – but maybe that's something to think about... what is God's invitation, and how might we perceive God's face?

As we hear the Transfiguration story on the Sunday before Lent begins, we also hear something about God's face and God's invitation. The divine voice in the cloud identifies Jesus as the Chosen One, and that the disciples are to listen to him.

I wonder if, when we are invited to seek God's face and listen to God's Chosen, if there is a message about truth, there. That we are being called to orient ourselves towards a word of grace that is easily overshadowed by fear, or confusing messages.

The weeks of Lent are connected to the days Jesus spent in the wilderness, living simply. Can we do things to 'simplify' in an effort to hear God in new ways? We have these days and weeks of preparation, leading to the holiest week of our church-year, and biggest festival.

We won't be singing 'Alleluia,' but we are invited to return to God in this season. Perhaps that is the grace we need: letting go of the distractions and fears, and point ourselves towards the peace and compassion of God who loves us. And, as we practice over these forty days, maybe we can emerge in new ways as bearers of God's peace and compassion in the world.

-Pastor Tyler

Wednesdays – 9:30am Virtual Coffee Hour
Sundays – 9:30am Bible Study,
10am time of prayer

we hold in prayer

-those who are ill

-those who have experienced loss

-those celebrating birthdays, and other good news

To join in these social times, follow the link provided in the e-news.

On the first Sunday of the month, our prayer time includes online Eucharist – have some bread and juice ready!



SERVICES CONTINUE ONLINE

We continue with weekly worship *online* for the coming while.

We continue to discern risk of virus transmission, and desire in our community to gather in-person. Mid-week Lenten services will be online with the congregation of St Stephen St Bede – as has become our habit, you can find links in our e-news!

We are working at a livestream set-up in our sanctuary, so part of our eventual return to in-person worship can include a means of reaching beyond our church walls *while* we gather in our building.

Find us on YouTube!

Links for online worship can also be found on our website under "Sunday Service."



www.GloriaDeiWinnipeg.org



Rev. Dr. Anna Madsen reflects on Ukraine, and us in North America

Prayers are arising for peace in Ukraine.

www.omgcenter.com

This is good.

We -should- pray for peace.

But I'm not convinced that we should pray because we think it will change God's mind, or Putin's.

Both are already fixed, albeit in diametrically opposed ways.

God covets the well-being of all people and works through us to create it.

Putin covets more power and works through violence to create it.

Increasing the number or the earnestness of prayers will not alter God's intentions, already demonstrably and inherently bent toward peace, nor will they alter a dictator's intentions already demonstrably and inherently bent toward war.

There is no divinely necessary quorum of prayers nor tallied critical mass of sincere pray-ers essential for God to decide to act, to respond to suffering, to engage as God has already promised to do and already gone about doing.

Jesus is risen, actually, so we have a revelation in hand that God's agenda is decidedly about life and not death.

So why pray?

-We pray to show the people of Ukraine that they are neither alone nor are they forgotten: they are lifted up in our collective words of concern, outrage, and hope, and, we hope, they are thereby lifted up.

-We pray to strengthen the bonds of people around the world, reminding each other that we are all siblings, all connected, all children of God, all worthy of shalom.

-We pray to orient ourselves toward the God of peace, and away from gods of authoritarianism, of quietude, and of safe privilege.

-We pray to find courage to act in ways that our prayer-time has given us ears to hear is God's will.

-And we pray to center ourselves, finding moments both individual and collective, in which we can acknowledge:

+that we are afraid;

+that we can trust we need not be;

+that the God to whom we are praying does indeed hear our prayers;

+that this God does what God would and is doing anyway;

~be present where there is death;

~promise—not least of all through us via our prayers and the fruits they bring about—to bring peace.

~guide our feet into that way of peace.

So pray for Ukraine, of course.

Then engage.

Here are some ways to do just that.

Ways to help: https://www.globalcitizen.org/en/content/ways-to-help-ukraine-conflict/?fbclid=IwAR1BIEmuSKZ7Y4UnALd3IAKM4Hm6wsr-dCwcAYlwLU3Hwi-I9YC_x_k6DOA

Why Ukraine is happening now: <https://www.economist.com/ukraine-crisis>

What is happening in Ukraine now: <https://kyivindependent.com>

Why nationalism and authoritarianism is on the rise:

[https://fsi.stanford.edu/news/understanding-global-rise-authoritarianism?](https://fsi.stanford.edu/news/understanding-global-rise-authoritarianism?fbclid=IwAR31xwsV6h2DboWANoaYzGpxjdlSwBr_GDqe0Uf-xF_F5_FbwdBUxiwauCQ)

[fbclid=IwAR31xwsV6h2DboWANoaYzGpxjdlSwBr_GDqe0Uf-xF_F5_FbwdBUxiwauCQ](https://fsi.stanford.edu/news/understanding-global-rise-authoritarianism?fbclid=IwAR31xwsV6h2DboWANoaYzGpxjdlSwBr_GDqe0Uf-xF_F5_FbwdBUxiwauCQ)

From the **Winnipeg Free Press**

“Hope is Not a Plan” by Tom Broadbeck – published February 17, 2022
Until now, the province has relied on public-health measures such as mandatory mask use, capacity limits, business closures and restrictions on household visits to control the spread. Vaccines have reduced government’s reliance on those interventions, but they were still used during the most recent wave of the pandemic.

Now, after 22 months of on-again, off-again restrictions, the province is phasing them out completely by March 15. Unlike during previous waves, the option of reinstating them (not if, but when, cases and hospitalizations flare up again) appears to be off the table, at least for the foreseeable future. [...]

Even as restrictions wind down over the next few weeks, hospitals — including intensive-care units — continue to operate well above pre-pandemic capacity.

The question now is: what happens when cases rise again and there is renewed pressure on hospitals? If public-health restrictions are no longer an option, what mechanisms will the province use to protect hospital capacity? [...]

Roussin said restrictions will be replaced with "recommendations" beginning next month. Individuals will have to learn to protect themselves from the virus, like they do with other respiratory diseases, such as influenza, he said.

There’s nothing wrong with that approach per se, except it doesn’t address what happens when cases explode and hospitals are under siege again. What is the plan to prepare for that?

Personal responsibility and individual protection plans are great. But they don’t address the macro threat of another devastating fifth, sixth or seventh wave. [...]

The hope is that a combination of higher vaccine uptake (which appears to have stalled), improved treatment options and voluntary adherence to recommendations, such as continued mask use, will be enough to ward off catastrophe. Maybe it will. But hope isn’t a plan.

If public-health measures are no longer a political option, what are we replacing them with? Do we simply accept higher mortality rates and destabilized hospitals as part of the new normal?

Repeating the platitude that we have to "learn to live with COVID" and that "it’s time to get our lives back" doesn’t solve the longer-term problem if there are no contingency plans to respond to a worse-case scenario. SARS-CoV-2 can’t be willed away. Without a plan, we are doomed to repeat the mistakes of the past.

Lent: Journey Towards Liberation

Lent invites us to interrogate our practices because individualistic Christianity cannot create an imagination that leads to a practice of solidarity. How can we live justly if our colonized spiritual practices shape us to center ourselves? Justice starts with shifting concern from ourselves to others.

Lent invites us on a journey towards our collective liberation.
It is a season that celebrates the life, death and resurrection of our liberator who came to offer us salvation:

Embodied in healing
Embodied in deliverance
Embodied in liberation

We enter this journey with our whole selves not to practice a faith of intellect, but one of embodiment. We enter the forty day journey understanding that it is one of solidarity and mutuality. We start by considering the words of Jesus after he came from his forty days in the wilderness to offer his inaugural speech. We are inheritors of both that promise and purpose.

Lent invites solidarity with one another. When many of us think of Lent we think of individual fasting (aka. give up chocolate) or corporate fasting (aka. Daniel Fast). Fasting is a powerful discipline that allows us to practice solidarity with those on the margins and enter into one another’s suffering. Who cares if we gave up coffee if it did not help us to become a more compassionate witness of the suffering and power of Christ? What does God say to us about worship and fasting that does not produce mercy and justice?

Lent reminds us that we are finite and the renewal of all things does not depend solely on OUR ability. The observance of Ash Wednesday reminds us that we are ashes to ashes, dust to dust.

We are amazing creative creatures, but we are not creator.
We are culture shapers, but not culture saviors.
We are engaged participants, but not infinitely wise.
We have limits.

(<https://chasingjustice.com/lent-journey-towards-liberation/>)