

Godspell:

The Good News in the Parables of Jesus

LAKEWOOD UMC LENT 2024



Lakewood United Methodist Church
1922 Topf Road
North Little Rock, AR 72116
www.expandingthelight.com

WEEK OF FEBRUARY 18, 2024

***THE STORY OF THE GREEDY FARMER:
DISCIPLES KNOW WHAT IT MEANS TO
BE TRULY RICH!***



READ LUKE 12:13-21

Pray For Holiness of Heart
Lord, I want to be more holy in my heart.
Lord, I want to be more holy in my heart.
Here is the citadel of all my desiring,
 where my hopes are born
 and all the deep resolutions of my spirit take wings.
In this center, my fears are nourished,
 and all my hates are nurtured.
Here my loves are cherished,
 and all the deep hungers of my spirit are honored
 without quivering and without shock.
In my heart, above all else,
 let love and integrity envelop me
 until my love is perfected and the last vestige
 of my desiring is no longer in conflict with thy Spirit.
Lord, I want to be more holy in my heart. Amen.

-Howard Thurman (United Methodist Hymnal, 401)

PRACTICE: GENEROSITY

List 10 things each day that you are grateful for and give thanks to God.

Give away 10 things this week! Give thanks to God.

WEEK OF FEBRUARY 25

THE STORY OF THE PERSISTENT WIDOW

DISCIPLES PRAY AND NEVER QUIT,
KNOWING THAT GOD IS JUST.



READ LUKE 18:1-8

Read Luke 18:1-8

Pray For Courage to Do Justice

"O Lord, open my eyes that I may see the needs of others
Open my ears that I may hear their cries;
Open my heart so that they need not be without succor;
Let me not be afraid to defend the weak because of the anger of
the strong,
Nor afraid to defend the poor because of the anger of the rich.
Show me where love and hope and faith are needed,
And use me to bring them to those places.
And so open my eyes and my ears
That I may this coming day be able to do some work of peace for
thee."

- Alan Paton, South Africa, UM Hymnal #456

PRACTICE: SPEAKING

Praying the Hours: Pray the prayer listed above three times a day: morning, noon, and evening.

Intercessory Prayer: After reading today's scripture, pray aloud a prayer for others in your life who need prayers today. (Who has asked for prayer recently? What situations in your community need your prayers today? What world issue can you pray for today?)

Memorization: Choose one verse from today's scripture to memorize. Write it out on a card. Place it somewhere you will see it. Often read it aloud. until you can say it by heart, Include it in your prayer time.

Speak up on Justice on Behalf of Another.

WEEK OF MARCH 3

***THE STORY OF THE PHARISEE & THE
TAX COLLECTOR:
DISCIPLES ARE HUMBLE AND
FORGIVING!***



READ LUKE 18:9-14

Pray For the Spark of Love

Almighty and merciful God,
we know that when we offend another, we offend you.
We are aware that we have often allowed the shadow of hate
to cloud our souls, hiding the light from our unseeking eyes.

We have said unpleasant and hurtful things to our brothers and
sisters when they failed to live up to our expectations. Grant that
we might find that spark of love that ever burns within us, the
love that you have shown to us even when we failed you.

Fan the embers of that love until it roars again in flames of love,
peace, and reconciliation. Forgive us our sin and help us to forgive
those who have sinned against us. Lead us into new life through
your Son Jesus Christ, who died for the sins of all. Amen.

-Michael J. O'Donnell, UM Book of Worship

PRACTICE: WRITING

After reading today's passage twice, write about your "takeaways" from the reading.

What part stood out for you, and why?

What part do you feel God is saying to you?

What questions do you have about what you have read in the Bible passage?

After reading the passage, what part has "hit home" for you?

What do you want to talk to God about?

Write a prayer from your heart.

WEEK OF MARCH 10

***THE STORY OF THE SOWER:
DISCIPLES HEAR GOD'S WORD AND
STRIVE TO UNDERSTAND!***



READ MATTHEW 13:1-23

Pray For Illumination

Open wide the window of our spirits, O Lord, and fill us full of light; open wide the door of our hearts, that we may receive and entertain thee with all our powers of adoration and love. Amen.

Read Luke 11:1-11

Pray For Illumination

Open wide the window of our spirits, O Lord, and fill us full of light; open wide the door of our hearts, that we may receive and entertain thee with all our powers of adoration and love. Amen.

PRACTICE: LISTENING

Listen to God through scripture using the practice of Lectio Divina.

Read a short passage of scripture three times. Pause in silence. after reading to listen for how God is speaking to you. Allow your focus to rest on one word or phrase.

Read today's scripture aloud.

Listen to the Bible on audio recording.

For more information on Lectio Divina: <https://www.upperroom.org/resources/lectio-divina-praying-the-scriptures>

WEEK OF MARCH 17

*THE STORY OF THE SHEEP AND THE GOATS:
DISCIPLES SERVE OTHERS!*



READ MATTHEW 25:31-46

Pray: For a New Heart

Thou who art over us,
Thou who art one of us.
Thou who art:

Give me a pure heart, that I may see thee;
A humble heart, that I may hear thee;
A heart of love, that I may serve thee;
A heart of faith, that I may abide lthee. Amen.

-United Methodist Hymnal #392

PRACTICE: MOVING

Read Luke 12:13-2

Pray with your body. Kneel to pray. Lie on your back to pray and allow yourself to soak in God's love and presence. Receive God's love. No words are needed.

Walking Prayer. After reading the scripture, walk in the park, your neighborhood, or a local labyrinth.

Serve Others.

WEEK OF MARCH 24: PALM SUNDAY

*THE STORY OF THE HUMBLE KING
DISCIPLES PRAISE GOD!*



READ MARK 11:1-11, PSALM 118:1-2, 19-29

Read today

Pray

Praising God of Many Names

O burning Mountain, O chosen Sun

O perfect Moon, O fathomless Well,

O unattainable Height, O Clearness beyond measure,

O Wisdom without end, O Mercy without limit,

O Strength beyond measure, O Crown beyond all majesty;

The humblest thing you created sings your praise. Amen.

–Mechtild of Magdeburg (1207-1282)

PRACTICE: PRAYING WITH NATURE

Find a place outdoors or near a window with a clear view outside. When you have found a space, take some time to appreciate your surroundings.

Read today's scripture.

Let your prayer, spoken or written, include what you've noticed in the scripture, as well as in the nature.

HOLY WEEK OF MARCH 31: MAUNDY THURSDAY

***THE STORY OF THE HOLY MEAL:
DISCIPLES REMEMBER HIM!***



READ: 1 CORINTHIANS 11:23-26 AND JOHN 13:1-17,
31B-35

Read Luke 12:2

Pray

Wesleyan Table Grace
Be present at our table, Lord,
Be here and everywhere adored;
Thy creatures bless and grant that we
May feast in Paradise with Thee. Amen

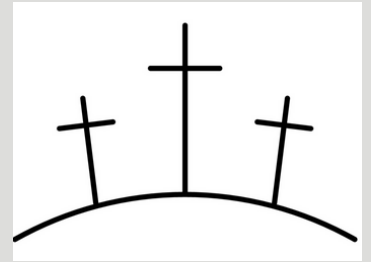
PRACTICE: SILENCE

Before reading this week's scripture, allow yourself a few moments of silence to quiet yourself. Breathe deeply. And ask God for a listening heart as you read. Read the text twice. Then, set a timer - start with 5 minutes to be silent in God's presence. You may want to meditate on the passage or simply enjoy God's presence.

Attend Services at Lakewood United Methodist Church:
Stations of the Cross, Monday - Thursday, 9 am - 4 pm
Thursday Service at 6 pm
Friday Noon Musical Meditations Service at 6 pm

HOLY WEEK OF MARCH 31: GOOD FRIDAY

***THE STORY OF THE WORST DAY:
DISCIPLES TRUST GOD, EVEN ON THE
WORST DAY***



READ: JOHN 18:1-19:42, PSALM 22

Pray

Breath Prayer

Inhale: Jesus, Son of God

Exhale: Have mercy on me, a sinner.

Inhale: Ever-present God

Exhale: May I feel you here.

Inhale: You know me.

Exhale: You love me.

Inhale: You know my neighbors.

Exhale: You love my neighbors.

Inhale: You see me.

Exhale: You see the unseen.

Inhale: Help me to see

Exhale: All your children.

Inhale: God of love

Exhale: May all know your love.

—Prayer by Rachel Gilmore in Where We Meet

PRACTICE: LAMENT

Psalms of lament are an honest expression of distress and a call for help from God. Many psalms of lament follow this pattern: an address to God, a complaint to God, and then a turn to praise of God or recognition of God's presence.

Using Psalm 22 as an example, write your own psalm of lament -- either one that is personal to your life or one that reflects your prayer to God for your community or the world.

EASTER WEEK

***THE GOOD NEWS FOR ALL!
DISCIPLES GO AND TELL THE STORY:
"HE IS RISEN!"***

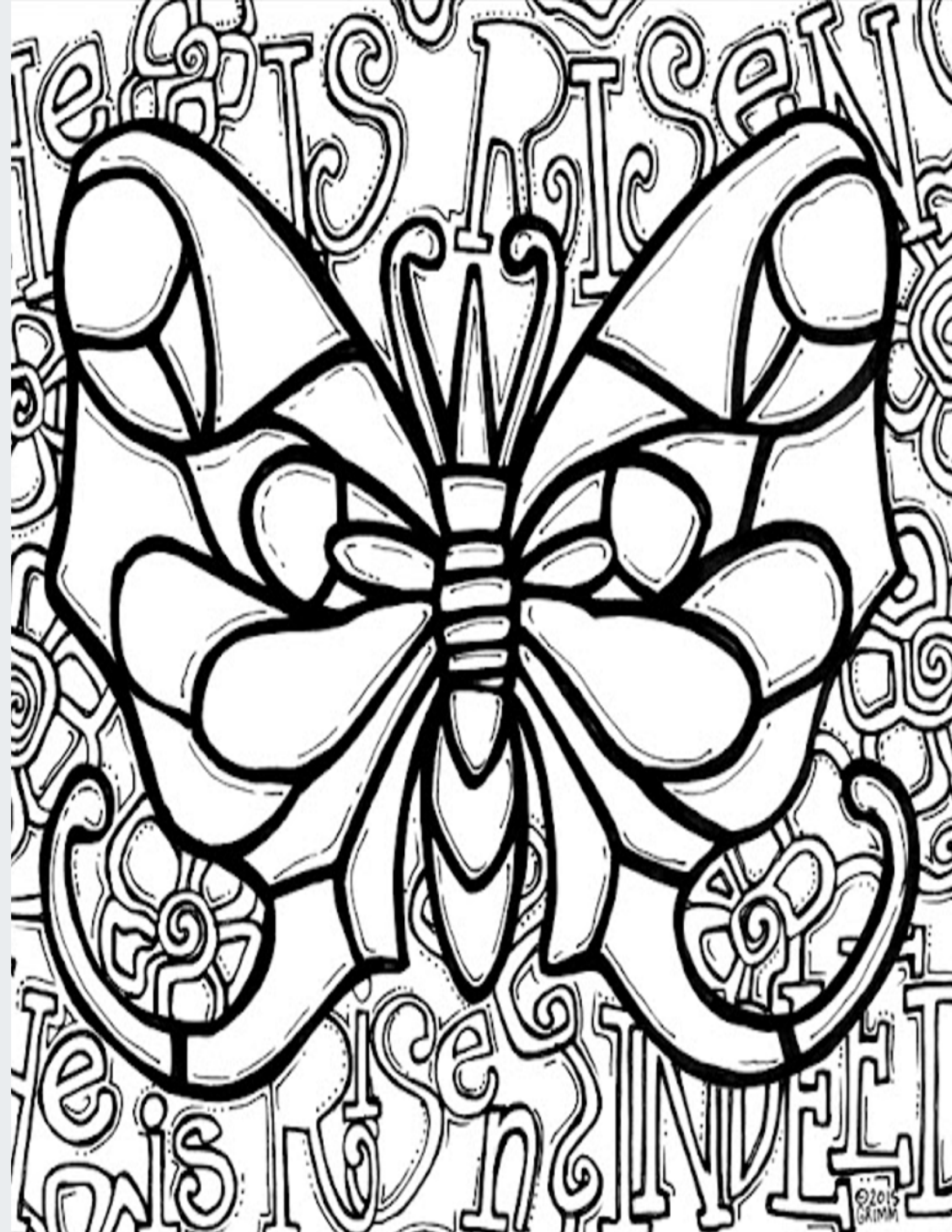


READ: JOHN 20:1-18

Prayer 2012
Pray
When everything was dark
and it seemed that the sun would never shine again,
your love broke through.
Your love was too strong,
too wide,
too deep
for death to hold.
The sparks cast by your love
danced and spread
and burst forth
with resurrection light.
Gracious God,
We praise you for the light of new life
made possible through Jesus.
We praise you for the light of new life
that shone on the first witnesses of resurrection.
We praise you for the light of new life
that continues to shine in our hearts today.
We pray that the Easter light of life, hope and joy,
will live in us each day;
and that we will be bearers of that light
into the lives of others. Amen

PRACTICE: ART

Doodle Prayers
Doodle Prayers: After reading the passage, write out a verse that speaks to you. Highlight or circle the word or words that stand out to you. Do the words suggest any visual images for you? If so, draw those near the verse. If not, just use colors to doodle designs around the word. Write questions to God you may have about the verse. (See *Praying in Color: Drawing A New Path to God* by Sybil Macbeth.) After reading this Easter scripture, play some worshipful or quiet music for your prayer time. Check out Taize music! Color the picture on the next page as you meditate on the Good News.





JOIN US FOR LENT AND EASTER EVENTS

Sunday worship during Lent 9:00 am, 11:00 am – online and in-person

Egg-stravaganza for the kids, March 24, 3:30 pm

Stations of the Cross with interactive prayer stations: drop-in during Holy Week, Monday-Friday, 9:00 am - 4:00 pm in the Sanctuary

Maundy Thursday, March 28, at 6:00 pm

Good Friday service, March 29, at 6:00 pm

Easter Sunday, March 31

Sunrise Service at 7 a.m. at the Lakewood POA Pavilion

9 a.m. in the Sanctuary and Wesley Hall

11 a.m. in the Sanctuary

UNLESS OTHERWISE CITED, THE SOURCE FOR THIS DEVOTIONAL IS THE COMMON ENGLISH BIBLE FOR DAILY PRAYER, 2013.

WE ARE A COMMUNITY OF FAITH, EMPOWERED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT TO EXPAND THE LIGHT OF CHRIST IN THE WORLD. WE ARE GROWING TOGETHER AS WE SEEK GOD'S GRACE, SERVE OTHERS, AND SHARE THE LOVING MESSAGE OF JESUS WITH THE WORLD.