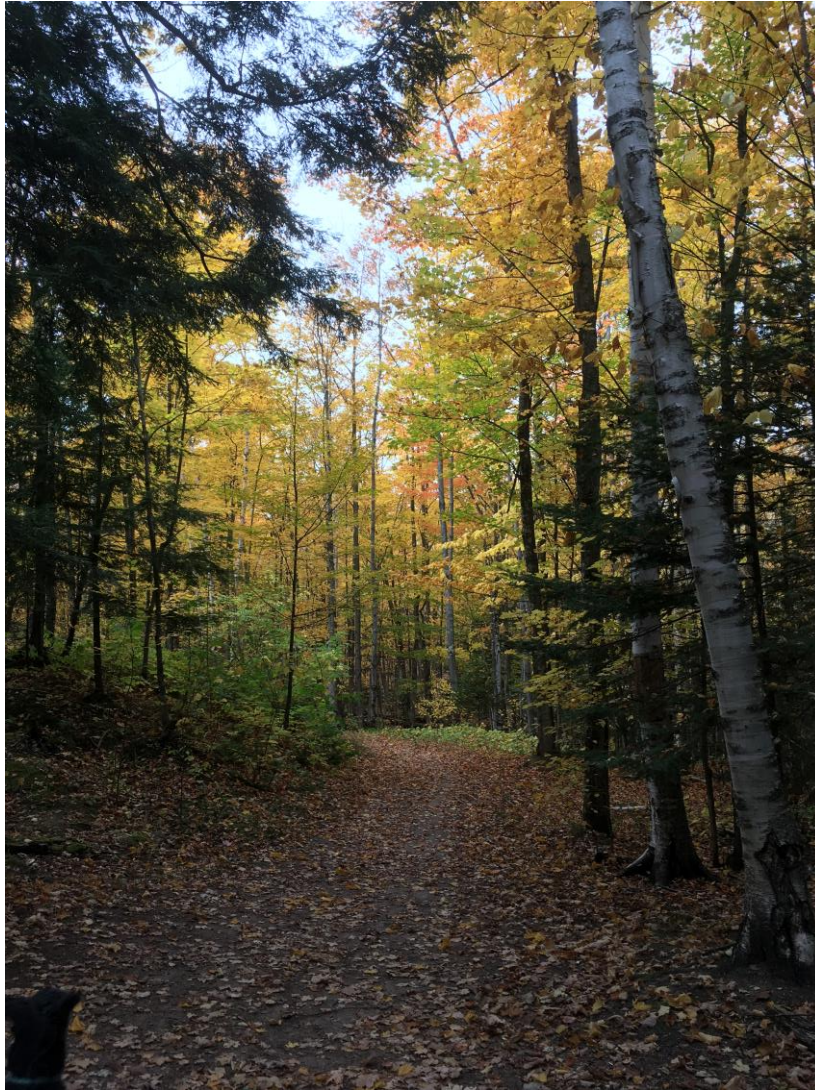


The Wisdom Way of Companionship & Cross



The Path of Jesus of Nazareth and Mary Magdalene

GATHERING

~ IN SILENCE ~

We sit or kneel or stand for a period of grateful silent prayer.

We stand as able.

Presider: Blessed be the Beloved,

Assembly: **Forever and ever. Amen.**

Presider: Beloved God,

we, your very own,

created in your image

and called to become your likeness,

are blinded by our ignorance, fear, anger and greed.

This sinful veil blinds us

to your beauty embodied in neighbor and creation.

We stand before You

with your mercy raining down upon us,

washing over our lives with renewing forgiveness.

Be the grace that strengthens us to serve You in newness of life,

to the glory of your name.

All: **Amen.**

COLLECT

Presider: Let us pray together:

Gracious God,

turn the gaze of our souls to Jesus, the Beloved,

heart of our heart,

whose beauty was broken open upon the cross:

may Christ's arms embrace our broken lives;

may Christ's heart heal our tortured world;

and may the sinful veil of ignorance, fear, anger, and greed

be lifted from our eyes,

so that we might see and fall into the Beloved's boundless mercy. Amen.



Telling the Story

We sit.

SIRACH 24.1-9, 18-21

Reader: A reading from Sirach

Hear Wisdom sing her own praises; She proudly proclaims her glory among her own people. She speaks out in the assembly of YHWH, in the presence of the God's host: "I am the word come forth from the mouth of YHWH; I enveloped the earth like a mist. I dwelt in the high heavens, my judgment seat a cumulus cloud. Alone I encompassed the vault of the sky; I wandered across the abyss. Over the waves of the sea, over the whole earth, over all the peoples and nations I reigned. I searched for a place to rest among all these places, where I would dwell among all of creation. Then the Creator of all these things chose a place for my dwelling and commanded me, 'Dwell in the land of Jacob; make Israel your inheritance.' Before motion began to be measured, God created me, and my heritage will last forever."

"Come near, all you who yearn to eat heartily of my fruit; you will be reminded that I am sweeter than honey, more precious than the honeycomb. Once you feed on me, you'll yearn for more. Once you hear me out, you are beyond disgrace; once you follow my regimen, you'll fail no more."

Reader: Hear what the Spirit is saying.

Assembly: **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM 29

**Give praise to the Beloved,
O heavenly hosts, sing of Love's glory and strength.**

**Exalt the glory of Love's Name;
Adore the Beloved in holy splendor.**

**The voice of the Beloved is upon the waters;
Love's voice echoes over the oceans and seas.**

**The voice of Love is powerful,
majestic is the voice of Love.**

**The voice of the Beloved breaks the bonds of oppression,
shatters the chains of injustice.**

**Love invites all to the dance of freedom,
to sing the Beloved's song of truth.**

**The voice of Love strikes with fire upon hearts of stone.
The voice of Love uproots the thorns of fear,
Love uproots fear in every open heart.**

**The voice of Love is heard in every storm, and strips the ego bare;
And in their hearts all cry, "Glory!"**

WISDOM OF SOLOMON 10.13-17

Reader: A reading from the Wisdom of Solomon

It was She who refused to abandon one just person who was sold into slavery, preserving him from sin and accompanying him into prison. She did not abandon him in his chains and won for him the authority over a whole nation and command over all his oppressors. She turned the tables on those who had accused him falsely and gave him undying glory. And it was She who delivered a holy people, a blameless stock, from a nation of oppressors; She entered the soul of one of YHWH's faithful, who, with signs and wonders, was able to stand against an imposing ruler. She rewarded the labors of a holy people and guided them on a wondrous quest, becoming their shade by day and their starlight at night.

Reader: Hear what the Spirit is saying.

Assembly: **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM 143

**O Bringer of Joy, awaken my heart;
pour your love and blessings through all my being!**

**Free me from attachments and desire,
that I may become a clear mirror,
reflecting your love to the world.**

**For fear has pursued me,
it has crushed my spirit to the ground;
it has veiled your light so that I dwell in darkness.**

**Therefore, I cry out to You, O Great Awakener;
Help me to rise once again like the phoenix of old!**

**I recall days gone by; I meditate on all that You have done.
I muse on the Covenant of your love.**

**I open my heart to You;
my soul thirsts for You like a parched land.**

**Strength comes with pureness of heart.
Cleanse me anew, O Gentle Healer.**

**This yearning within my soul is naught but the inner birthright
to know and live in You.**

**Let me hear your Voice within the Silence,
for in You I put my trust.**

**Teach me ways of loving service,
that I might co-operate with You, O my Beloved.**

**Help me to face my fears, O Divine Nurturer!
I call on You for Healing!**

**Instruct me in your Divine Precepts,
cultivate my soul!**

**Lead me into deep silence and solitude,
let peace become my mantle.**

**Divine Light shines in those whose lives reflect love.
As the river makes its way to the ocean,
may I surrender to the flow of new life!**

**Then will I trust
that all is working together toward the wholeness of humanity.**

**Then I will help to rebuild
the soul of the world with Love!**

1 CORINTHIANS 1.26-30

Reader: A reading from Paul's letter to the community at Corinth

Consider your own call, brothers and sisters: not many of you were wise by human standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; God chose what is low and despised in the world, things that are not, to reduce to nothing things that are, so that no one might boast in the presence of God. He is the source of your life in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification and redemption.

Reader: Hear what the Spirit is saying.

Assembly: **Thanks be to God.**

THE PASSION: COMPANIONSHIP & CROSS

Reader: The Passion of Jesus and Mary

Gathered with his friends, “the Blessed One said, Peace be with you! Bear my peace within yourselves! Beware that no one lead you astray saying, ‘Look over here!’ Or ‘Look over there!’ For the Child of Humanity is within you! Follow it! Those who seek it will find it.”

~Mary 4.2-7

Jesus also said, “Do not let your hearts be troubled.” Later, he was arrested, tortured and hung on the cross by the Romans. Near the cross of Jesus were standing his mother and his mother's sister, as well as Mary the wife of Clopas and Mary of Magdala.

~John 14.1a, John 19.25-26a

Jesus gave a loud cry and breathed his last . . . And the women looking on from a distance included Mary Magdalene and Mary, the mother of James the younger and of Joses, and Salome . . .

~Mark 15.37,40

Joseph of Arimathea took the body, wrapped it in a clean linen sheet, and laid it in his newly made tomb, which he had cut in the rock; and, before he left, he rolled a great stone against the entrance of the tomb. Mary of Magdala and the other Mary remained behind, sitting in front of the grave.

~Matthew 27.59-64

On the first day of the week, when it was still dark, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary brought spices to anoint Jesus. But the stone was gone and he was not there. An angel of the Lord said, “Do not be afraid. I know you are looking for Jesus. He is not here. He has been raised from death, as he told you. Come and see! Go and tell the others.”

~Matthew 28.1-9; Luke 24.1-3

Jesus himself appeared first to Mary Magdalene, but she did not recognize him.

~Woman, why do you weep?

~Sir, if you have taken him, tell me . . .

~Mary . . .

~Rabboni!

~Mary, do not cling to me . . . Go and tell the others.

Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, I have seen the Lord!

~John 20.14-18

Wherever the good news is proclaimed in the whole world, what she has done will be told in remembrance of her.

~Mark 14.9

Reader: Hear what the Spirit is saying.

Assembly: **Thanks be to God.**

HAVE YOU SEEN WHOM MY SOUL LOVES?

Reader: A cry from the Song of Songs (3.1-4; 8.6-7)

Upon my bed at night

I sought him whom my soul
loves;

I sought him, but found him not;
I called him, but he gave no
answer.

“I will rise now and go about
the city,
in the streets and in the squares;
I will seek him whom my soul
loves.”

I sought him, but found him
not.

The sentinels found me,
as they went about in the city.

“Have you seen him whom my
soul loves?”

Scarcely had I passed them,
when I found him whom my
soul loves.

I held him, and would not let

him go
until I brought him into my
mother's house
and into the chamber of her that
conceived me.

Set me as a seal upon your heart,
as a seal upon your arm;
for love is strong as death,
passion fierce as the grave.
Its flashes are flashes of fire,
a raging flame.
Many waters cannot quench love,
neither can floods drown it.
If one offered for love
all the wealth of his house,
it would be utterly scorned.



MEDITATION – THE WISDOM WAY OF THE CROSS

Presider: Jesus –
open arms,
open table,
God's love embracing all.

Jesus –
love of God,
love of neighbor,
no compromise, no condition,
Rome's cross.

Assembly: **Come. Let us be the body of Christ and follow love's Wisdom way.**

We may come forward in silence and light a candle beside the cross.

Hymn - Nada te turbe



We stand as able.

SOLEMN COLLECTS

Presider: Dear People of God:
Jesus of Nazareth and Mary Magdalene,
His beloved companion,
embody the Wisdom way of life.
Their selfless companionship
reveals the path of life
to all who would see and receive.
This path is the light of life
in the midst of isolation, suffering, darkness and death.
Born of the one God,
we, too, are companions in Christ.
We, too, are life-givers.
We, too, are heirs of everlasting life.
We pray with gratitude, therefore, for people everywhere.

Presider: Let us pray in thanksgiving for the holy catholic Church of Christ throughout the world;
For its unity in witness and service
For all who minister and the people and creation whom they serve
For all members in this community
For those about to be baptized.
With grateful hearts that God confirms this community in faith, increases it in love, and
preserves it in peace.

~Gong sounds

All: **Beloved God,
your Spirit,
source of life and hope,
weaves us together as one body,
dwelling in You.
Our selves, our souls, our bodies,
are your very Presence.
We offer all to You in thanksgiving.
Be unto us this day the path of life,
so that all that we are
and all that we do,
serves you, our neighbor, and all creation,
through Christ the Life-Giver. Amen.**

Presider: Let us pray in thanksgiving for all nations and peoples of the earth, and for those in authority;
For *N*, the President of the United States
For the Congress and the Supreme Court
For the Members and Representatives of the United Nations
For all who serve the common good.
With grateful hearts that by God's help they can seek justice and truth, and live in peace and concord.

~Gong sounds

***All:* Beloved God,
we offer praise and thanksgiving,
for the flame of your Holy Presence
that ignites hearts to burn for justice and peace;
for the light of your Holy Wisdom
that guides minds in compassionate counsel for the nations of the earth;
may fire of Holy Love so consume the dross of our lives
that nothing remains on earth or in heaven
but the love of Christ,
all in all. Amen.**

Presider: Let us pray in thanksgiving for all who suffer and are afflicted in body or in mind;
For the hungry and the homeless, the destitute and the oppressed
For the sick, the wounded, and the crippled
For those in loneliness, fear, and anguish
For those who are driven by doubt or despair
For the sorrowful and bereaved
For prisoners and captives, and those in mortal danger.
With grateful hearts that God's mercy is comfort and relief, and that knowledge of divine love stirs up in us the will and patience to minister to the needs of our sisters and brothers.

~Gong sounds

***All:* Beloved God,
Source of all Creation,
comfort of all who sorrow,
strength of all who suffer:
May those in misery and need come to you
and find your mercy present within them
in all their afflictions.
Be unto us the constancy that steadies our souls**

**to persevere in service to all in need,
for all indeed are Christ. Amen.**

Presider: Let us pray in thanksgiving for all who search for God;
For all of us distracted by sloth
For all of us consumed by anger
For all of us swollen by pride
For all of us misled by deceit
For all of us obsessed by envy
For all of us driven by greed
For all of us trapped by fear
For all of us deceived by gluttony
For all of us hounded by revenge.
With grateful hearts that God opens all hearts to unfolding truth.

~Gong sounds

All: **Beloved God,
Let us commit ourselves to the Wisdom way.
Let us open our hearts to receive the grace of a holy life.
Let us come to know the fullness and joy of Christ.
In birth we are born in Christ.
In death we die in Christ.
In resurrection we live as Christ.
All is given by You
as a taste of the Beloved Christ.
May we joyously receive. Amen.**

~Gong sounds

Presider: Beloved God,
“Everything looks to You, without thinking.
Shower us with Your Healing Rain!
Help us to overcome, give life to what has withered.
And water the roots of kindness in us.”

All: **Amen.**



Sending Forth

We stand as able.

Presider: Let us pray together.

All: **Beloved God,
here, in this very place,
just as much incarnate as in a human being long ago,
You have become incarnate.
You have given birth to each of us,
woman, man, girl, boy,
as your only begotten child,
and no less.
In Christ,
may we be and live *as* Christ,
life-givers for the world,
praising You with ceaseless thanksgiving. Amen.**

Presider: Our Celebration concludes tomorrow evening with our Celebration of Life Renewed:
The Easter Vigil.
Go in peace to love and serve.

Assembly: **Thanks be to God.**

~Gong sounds

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