

Spirit of Grace

ELCA UMC



March 24th, 2024
Palm/Passion Sunday

- Gathering -

- service begins gathered in the Fellowship Room -

Call to Worship

We come to prepare for the holiest of weeks.

**We will journey through praise, with joy on our lips;
we will travel through betrayal and death,
cradling hope deep in our hearts.**

Jesus leads us through this week, and we will follow,
for he is the life we long for,
he is the Word who sustains us.

**We wave palm branches in anticipation;
we lay our love before him, to cushion his walk.**

Setting aside all power, glory, and might, he comes:
modeling humility and obedience for all of us.

Hosanna! Hosanna!

Blessed is the One who brings us the kingdom of God.

Processional Gospel: Mark 11:1-11

The Holy Gospel According to Mark the 11th chapter:

As they approached Jerusalem and came to Bethpage and Bethany at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent off two of the disciples with this instruction: "Go to the village straight ahead of you, and as soon as you enter it you will find tethered there a colt on which no one has ridden. Untie it and bring it back. If anyone says to you, 'Why are you doing that?' say, 'The Rabbi needs it, but will send it back very soon.'"

So they went off, and finding a colt tethered out on the street near a gate, they untied it. Some of the bystanders said to them, "What do you mean by untying that colt?" They answered as Jesus had told them too, and the people let them take it.

They brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks across its back, and he sat on it. Many people spread their cloaks on the road, while others spread leafy branches which they had cut from the fields. And everyone around Jesus, in front or in back of him, cried out,

"Hosanna!

Blessed is the One who comes in the name of our God!

Blessed is the coming reign of our ancestor, David!

Hosanna in the highest!"

Jesus entered Jerusalem and went into the Temple precincts. He inspected everything there, but since it was already late in the afternoon, he went out to Bethany accompanied by the Twelve.

Word of God for the people of God.

Thanks be to God!

Blessing of the Palms

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us pray.

We praise you, O God, for redeeming the world through our Savior Jesus Christ.

Today he entered the holy city in triumph and was proclaimed messiah and king by those who spread garments and branches along his way. Bless these branches and those who carry them. Grant us grace to follow our Lord in the way of the cross, so that, joined to his death and resurrection, we enter into life with you; through the same Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Processional Hymn

All Glory, Laud, and Honor

280 All Glory, Laud, and Honor

Refrain

All glo - ry, laud, and hon - or, to thee, Re-deem-er, King,

Fine

to whom the lips of chil - dren made sweet ho-san-nas ring.

1. Thou art the King of Is - ra - el, thou Da-vid's roy - al Son,
2. The com-pa - ny of an - gels are prais-ing thee on high,
3. The peo-ple of the He - brews with palms be-fore thee went;
4. To thee, be - fore thy pas - sion, they sang their hymns of praise;
5. Thou didst ac - cept their prais - es; ac - cept the prayers we bring,

D.C.

who in the Lord's name com - est, the King and Bless-ed One.
 and we with all cre - a - tion in cho-rus make re - ply.
 our prayer and praise and an - thems be - fore thee we pre - sent.
 to thee, now high ex - alt - ed, our mel-o - dy we raise.
 who in all good de - light - est, thou good and gra-cious King.

WORDS: Theodulph of Orleans, 8-9th cent.; trans. by John Mason Neale, 1851

(Mt. 21:8-9; Mk. 11:8-10; Lk. 19:36-38; Jn. 12:12-13)

MUSIC: Melchior Teschner, 1615; harm. by W. H. Monk, 1861

ST. THEODULPH

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Greeting & Prayer of the Day

Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest!

The grace of our Lord, Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
And also with you.

Let us pray.

God of the foolish cross,
tottering down the streets of Jerusalem on a donkey,
You are not the savior we expect.
Your power doesn't look like the power we want our God to demonstrate.
Your wisdom makes no sense to us.
We are happy to join the crowd, waving branches,
But not so sure we want to follow you
into the temple courts
into the upper room
into the Garden of Gethsemane
to the foot of the cross.
Forgive our false assumptions.
Clarify our clouded vision.
Let us relax into the foolishness of your love, your grace.
Hosanna, hosanna.
Save us, we beseech you!

A Blessing for Holy Week

Rev. Miranda Bermes-Goller

Prayer of Confession

Six days before the Passover, Jesus came to the home of Lazarus and received hospitality like no one had seen before - generous, loving, whole-hearted, and even a little bit undignified. His disciple Judas could only see the inefficiency of the gift, not the spirit of loving-kindness with which it was offered. We, like Judas, often want to expedite our giving without really engaging with those we are called to serve. Let us consider the depth of our relationships with those we encounter and with the One who calls us to faith, as we confess our sin in silence.

silence for meditation

**We confess, Anointed One, that we excuse ourselves
from reaching out to those who need your care.
We take your words – that there will always be unmet needs –
as a reason not to try to meet the needs we can.
Forgive us and help us to change.
Renew our determination to live
as faithful followers, faithful disciples, faithful Christians.
Help us to work with you for the well-being of your creation,
that the fortunes of all your peoples may be restored. Amen.**

We, too, are a part of the Way-Maker's will for restoration.
We are called, through Christ Jesus, to strive for restoration,
but we are not called to do this work alone.
The One who has made a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert,
will surely equip us for all we are asked to do in Christ's name.
God will empower us to attain all the potential God has placed within us.
Thanks be to God!

Scripture Acclamation

*Words of life, words of hope
give us strength, help us cope.
In this world where e'er we roam,
ancient words will guide us home.*

*Ancient words, ever true
changing me and changing you.
We have come with open hearts.
O let the ancient words impart.*

The Holy Gospel according to Mark the 14th and 15th chapters

Passover and the feast of Unleavened Bread were to be observed in two days' time. The chief priests and religious scholars were looking for some excuse to arrest Jesus and kill him. But they said, "Not during the festival, or the people will riot."

While Jesus was in Bethany reclining at table in the house of Simon, who was afflicted with leprosy, a woman entered carrying an alabaster jar of perfume made from expensive aromatic nard. After breaking the jar, she began to pour the perfume on his head.

Some said to themselves indignantly, "What is the point of this extravagant waste of perfume? It could have been sold for over three hundred silver pieces, and the money given to those in need!" They were infuriated with her.

But Jesus said, "Let her alone. Why do you criticize her? She has done me a kindness. You will always have poor people among you, and you can do them good whenever you want, but you will not always have me. She has done what she could. She has anointed my body and is preparing it for burial. The truth is, wherever the Good News is proclaimed throughout the world, what she has done will be told in her memory."

Then Judas Iscariot, one of the Twelve, went off to the chief priests to hand Jesus over to them. Hearing what he had to say, they were jubilant and promised to give him money. Then Judas started looking for an opportune moment to betray Jesus.

*Stay with me, remain here with me,
Watch and pray, watch and pray
(sung twice)*

On the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, when it was customary to sacrifice the paschal lamb, the disciples said to Jesus, "Where do you want us to prepare the Passover supper for you?"

He directed two of the disciples and said to them, "Go into the city, and you will come upon a man carrying a water jar. Follow him into a house he enters and say to the owner, 'The Teacher asks, "Where is my guestroom? I want to eat the Passover meal there with my disciples.'" Then you will be shown an upstairs room, spacious, furnished, with everything in order. That is the place you are to get ready for us.

Then the disciples went off. When they reached the city, they found it just as Jesus had told them., and they prepared the Passover supper.

—
*Stay with me, remain here with me,
Watch and pray, watch and pray
(sung twice)*
—

As it grew dark, Jesus arrived with the Twelve. They reclined at table, and in the course of the meal Jesus said, “The truth is, one of you is about to betray me – one who is eating with me.”

They were very upset at these words, and one by one they said to him, “Surely it’s not me!”

Jesus replied, “it is one of you Twelve – one who dips into the dish with me. The Chosen One is going the way the scriptures foretell. But woe to the one by whom the Chosen One is betrayed! It were better had that person never been born.”

During the meal, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them saying, “Take this and eat. This is my body.” He likewise took a cup, gave thanks and passed it to them, and they all drank from it. Jesus said to them, “This is my blood, the blood of the Covenant, which will be poured out on behalf of many. The truth is, I will never again drink of the fruit of the vine until the day I drink it anew in the kingdom of God.”

After singing songs of praise, they walked out to the Mount of Olives.

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*Stay with me, remain here with me,
Watch and pray, watch and pray
(sung twice)*
—

As they were walking Jesus said to them, “You will all fall away, for scripture says, ‘I will strike the shepherd and the sheep will be scattered.’ But after I have been raised, I will go to Galilee ahead of you.”

Peter said to Jesus, “Even though everyone may fall away, I will not.”

Jesus said to him, “The truth is, this very night before the cock crows twice, you will deny me three times.”

But Peter said vehemently, “Even if I have to die with you, I will not disown you!” All the other disciples said the same thing.

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*Stay with me, remain here with me,
Watch and pray, watch and pray
(sung twice)*
—

Then they came to a place named Gethsemane. Jesus said to them, “Sit down here while I pray.” Jesus took along with him Peter, James, and John. Then he began to be very distressed and troubled, and said to them, “My heart is filled with sorrow to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch.”

Jesus went a little further off and fell to the ground, praying that if it were possible this hour might pass him by. He said, “Abba, you have the power to do all things. Take this cup away from me. But let it be not my will, but your will.”

When Jesus returned he found them asleep. He said to Peter, “Asleep, Simon? Could you not stay awake for even an hour? Be on guard and pray that you not be put to the test. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.”

Going back again, Jesus began to pray in the same words. Upon returning Jesus found them asleep once again. They could not keep their eyes open, nor did they know what to say to him.

He returned a third time and said, “Still sleeping? Still taking your rest? It will have to do. The hour is upon us – the Chosen One is being handed into the clutches of evildoers. Get up, let’s go. Look! Here comes my betrayer.”

While Jesus was still speaking, Judas, one of the Twelve, came up accompanied by a crowd carrying swords and clubs; they had been sent by the chief priests, the religious scholars, and the elders. The betrayer had arranged this signal for them. “Whoever I embrace is the one; arrest him and take him away under guard.” Judas went directly to Jesus, embraced him and said, “Rabbi!” At this, they laid hands on Jesus and arrested him.

One of the bystanders drew a sword and struck the high priest’s attendant, cutting off an ear. Jesus then said, “Why have you come to arrest me with swords and clubs, as though I were a robber? I was within your reach daily, teaching in the Temple precincts, yet you never arrested me. But let the scriptures be fulfilled.”

With that, all the disciples deserted Jesus and fled. Following Jesus was a youth wearing nothing but a linen cloth, whom they also tried to arrest but who fled naked, leaving the cloth behind.

—
*Stay with me, remain here with me,
Watch and pray, watch and pray
(sung twice)*
—

Then they led Jesus off to the high priest, and all the chief priests, elders, and religious scholars gathered together. Peter followed at a distance right into the high priest's courtyard, where he found a seat with the Temple guard and began to warm himself at the fire.

The chief priests with the whole Sanhedrin were busy soliciting testimony against Jesus that might lead to his death, but they could not find any. Many gave false testimony against Jesus, but their stories did not agree. Some, for instance, on taking the stand, testified falsely by saying, "We heard him declare, 'I will destroy this Temple made by human hands, and in three days I will build another made without hands!'" But even in this, their testimony did not agree.

The high priest stood up before the court and began to interrogate Jesus: "Have you no answer to what these people are testifying against you?" But Jesus remained silent and made no reply. Once again the high priest interrogated him: "Are you the Messiah, the Only Begotten of the Blessed One?"

Jesus replied, "I am! And you will see the Chosen One seated at the right hand of the Power and coming with the clouds of heaven."

At that, the high priest tore his robes and said, "What further need do we have of witnesses? You have heard the blasphemy. What is your verdict?" They all said Jesus was guilty and condemned him to death.

Some of them began to spit on Jesus. They blindfolded and hit him, saying "Prophecy!" The guards beat him too.

While Peter was down in the courtyard, one of the attendants of the high priest came alone. When she noticed Peter seated near the fire, she looked more closely at him and said, "You too were with Jesus of Nazareth." Peter said, "I don't know what you're talking about! What do you mean?" Then Peter went out into the gateways. At that moment a rooster crowed.

The woman, keeping an eye on him, started to tell the bystanders, "He's one of them." Once again, Peter denied it. A little later the bystanders said to him once more, "You are certainly one of them! You're a Galilean, aren't you?" Peter began to curse and swear, "I don't even know who you're talking about!" The cock crowed a second time. And Peter

recalled the prediction Jesus had made: “Before the cock crows twice, you will deny me three times.” He rushed away, weeping.

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*Stay with me, remain here with me,
Watch and pray, watch and pray
(sung twice)*

—

As soon as it was daybreak the chief priests, the elders and religious scholars and the whole Sanhedrin reached a decision. They bound Jesus and led him away, and handed him over to Pilate, who interrogated him. “Are you the King of the Jews?” he asked.

Jesus responded, “You are the one who is saying it.”

The chief priests then brought many accusations against him. Pilate interrogated Jesus again: “Surely you have some answer? See how many accusations they are leveling against you!” But to Pilate’s astonishment, Jesus made no further response.

Now whenever there was a festival, Pilate would release for them one prisoner – anyone they asked for. There was a prisoner named Barabbas who was jailed along with the rioters who had committed murder in the uprising. When the crowd came to ask that Pilate honor the custom, Pilate rejoined, “Do you want me to release for you the King of the Jews?” Pilate was aware, of course, that it was out of jealousy that the chief priests had handed Jesus over. But the chief priests incited the crowd to have him release Barabbas instead. Pilate again asked them, “What am I to do with the one you call the King of the Jews?”

The people shouted back, “Crucify him!”

“Why?” Pilate asked. “What crime has he committed?”

But they shouted all the louder, “Crucify him!”

So Pilate, wishing to satisfy the crowd, released Barabbas to them, and, after having Jesus scourged, handed him over to be crucified.

—

*Stay with me, remain here with me,
Watch and pray, watch and pray
(sung twice)*

—

Then soldiers led Jesus away into the hall known as the Praetorium; then they assembled the whole battalion. They dressed Jesus in royal purple, then wove a crown of thorns and put it on him. They began to salute him: "All hail! King of the Jews!" They kept striking Jesus on the head with a reed, spitting at him and kneeling in front of him pretending to pay homage. When they had finished mocking him, they stripped him of the purple and dressed him in his own clothes. Then they led him out to be crucified.

—

*Stay with me, remain here with me,
Watch and pray, watch and pray
(sung twice)*

—

Isaiah 50:4-9a

Exalted YHWH has given me
a skilled and well-trained tongue,
so that I can sustain the weary
with a timely word.
God awakens me morning after morning –
wakens my ear, to listen like a student.
Exalted YHWH has opened my ears
and I have obeyed, I did not turn away.
I offered my back to those beating me,
offered my cheeks to those who would humiliate me.
I did not hide my face from insults
or spitting.
Because Exalted YHWH helps me,
insults cannot wound me,
for I have set my face like flint,
because I know I will not be put to shame.
My vindicator
is at my side.
Who would dare accuse me?
Let us confront each other!
Who are my adversaries?
Let them accuse me!
It is Exalted YHWH who helps me.
Who will judge me guilty?

—

*Stay with me, remain here with me,
Watch and pray, watch and pray
(sung twice)*

—
A passerby named Simeon of Cyrene, the father of Alexander and Rufus, was coming in from the fields. The soldiers pressed him into service to carry Jesus' cross. Then they brought Jesus to the site of Golgotha – which means “Skull Place.”

They tried to give him wine drugged with myrrh, but he would not take it. Then they nailed him to the cross and divided up his garments by rolling dice for them to see what each should take. It was about nine in the morning when they crucified him.

The inscription listing the charge read, “The King of the Jews.” With Jesus they crucified two robbers, one at his right and one at his left.”

People going by insulted Jesus, shaking their heads and saying, “So you were going to destroy the Temple and rebuild it in three days! Save yourself now by coming down from that cross!” The chief priests and the religious scholars also joined in and jeered, “He saved others, but he can't save himself! Let 'the Messiah, the King of Israel' come down from that cross right now so that we can see it and believe in him.!” Those who had been crucified with him hurled the same insult.

When noon came, darkness fell on the whole countryside and lasted until about three in the afternoon. At three, Jesus cried out in a loud voice, “*Eloi, eloi, lama sabachthani?*” which means, “My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?” A few of the bystanders who heard it remarked, “Listen! He is calling on Elijah!” Someone ran and soaked a sponge in sour wine and stuck it on a reed to try and make Jesus drink, saying, “Let's see if Elijah comes to take him down.”

—
*Stay with me, remain here with me,
Watch and pray, watch and pray
(sung twice)*
—

Psalm 31: 9-16

Be a comfort to me, Beloved, for I am in distress;
my eyes are dim from weeping,
my soul is deep with grief.
For my life is worn away with sorrow,
and my years with sighing;
My body has weakened and my bones waste away with misery.

**All my fears rise up to mock me,
my neighbors turn away,**

**My friends dread to see me
and flee from my sickness of soul.**
My mind, too, has left me like one who is dead;
I have become like a broken vessel.
Yes, I hear the voices around me whispering my plight –
fears rise up on every side!
Isolation, rejection, fear surround me
and conspire to overwhelm me.

**Still, I trust in You, O Beloved,
I repeat, “You are my Life.”
My life is in your hands;
deliver me from the fears which separate me!
Let your face shine on me;
hold me in your steadfast love!**

—
*Stay with me, remain here with me,
Watch and pray, watch and pray
(sung twice)*
—

Then Jesus uttered a loud cry and breathed his last. At that moment the curtain in the sanctuary was torn in two from top to bottom. The centurion who stood guard over Jesus, seeing how he died, declared, “Clearly, this was God’s Own!”

—
*Stay with me, remain here with me,
Watch and pray, watch and pray
(sung twice)*
—

There were also some women present looking on from a distance. Among them were Mary of Magdala; Mary, the mother of James the younger and Joses; and Salome. These women had followed Jesus when he was in Galilee and attended to his needs. There were also many others who had come up with him to Jerusalem.

As it grew dark – it was Preparation Day, that is, the eve of the Sabbath – a distinguished member of the Sanhedrin, Joseph from Arimathea, arrived. He was waiting for the reign of God, and he gathered up courage and sought an audience with Pilate, and asked for the body of Jesus.

Pilate was surprised that Jesus should have died so soon. He summoned the centurion and inquired whether Jesus was already dead. Upon learning that this was so, Pilate released the body to Joseph.

Then, having brought a linen shroud, Joseph took the body of Jesus down, wrapped him in the linen, and laid him in a tomb which had been cut out of rock. Finally, he rolled a large stone across the entrance of the tomb. Meanwhile, Mary of Magdala and Mary, the mother of Jesus, were looking on and observed where Jesus had been laid.

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*Stay with me, remain here with me,
Watch and pray, watch and pray
(sung twice)*

—

Affirmation of Faith – The Nicene Creed

Please stand as you are able as we confess our faith in God together using the words of our common creed:

**We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father.
Through him all things were made.**

**For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven:
by the power of the Holy Spirit
he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary,
and was made man.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
He suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven**

**and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory
to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit,
the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son.
With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.
He has spoken through the Prophets.**

**We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

Offering

*At this time, if you are willing and able, please consider giving to
Spirit of Grace Church to support our ongoing ministry.
Checks can be mailed to 1140 Tucker Road, Hood River OR, 97031.
Online Donations can be made through the link below:
[Spirit of Grace Church](#)*

Prayer of Thanksgiving

God of good gifts,
receive these and all our offerings
as we present them in faithful service
for the sake of your gospel.
Prepare our hearts to receive you
as you pour out your very presence
through Christ Jesus, the wellspring of eternal life.
Amen

Joys & Concerns

*If you have any joys, concerns, or prayer requests to share, please type them into the
comment section of the livestream so that we may lift them up together as a community.*

Prayers of the People

Trusting in God's promise to reconcile all things, let us pray for the church, the well-being of creation, and a world in need.

A brief silence.

(sung by all)

***Lord, listen to your children praying,
Lord, send your Spirit in this place;
Lord, listen to your children praying,
send us love, send us power, send us grace.***

Blessed One, today the church sings glad hosannas as we enter Holy Week. Prepare us to bear witness to Christ's suffering and death endured for our sake. Gather your people around the cross and comfort us with resurrection hope.

Merciful God,

Receive our prayer.

Renew your good creation and protect the balance of life on earth. Encourage the work of foresters, scientists, arborists, gardeners, and river keepers. We pray for the health of pollinating insects, songbirds, and native plants.

Merciful God,

Receive our prayer.

Establish peace and justice among the nation. Bring comfort and safety to the people of Palestine and all who are impacted by the acts of genocide happening in the Holy Land. Hold to account any with authority to judge others. Grant that courts, legislatures, and local governments will serve with integrity and compassion.

Merciful God,

Receive our prayer.

Bring hope to any who feel forsaken or forgotten. Make a way for refugees and asylum seekers. Reunite families enduring separation. We pray for any who are incarcerated, institutionalized, or in foster care, that they may know your love.

Merciful God,

Receive our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

(sung by all)
Lord, listen to your children praying,
Lord, send your Spirit in this place;
Lord, listen to your children praying,
send us love, send us power, send us grace.

Gathered into One by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us, using the language you are most familiar with - the language of your heart.

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those
who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours,
now and forever. Amen.**

Sending Song:

Lord of the Dance
UMH 261 – verses 1-4

Benediction & Dismissal

And now, my friends, go forth
To a week where transformation
Will meet you and guide you.
Do not hide when they recognize you,
Do not doubt when you see Christ,
Do not deny when you are confronted.
Do not stop until you are at the cross
And there you will see the light
And the burdens of your heart will roll away.

Until then God be with you!
Amen.

Go in peace. The Spirit of God is alive in you!
Thanks be to God.

Our service continues on Maundy Thursday at 5pm.



1140 Tucker Rd. Hood River, OR 97031
541-386-3993
www.hoodriverchurch.org

Church Office Hours
Closed on Fridays
Pastor Miranda Bermes-Goller
M-Th 9-1, or by appointment
spiritofgracepastor@gmail.com
Linda Boris, Pastoral Assistant
Tuesday 10-1

Attributions

Call to Worship – Written by Thom Shuman and posted on his Lectionary Liturgies blog. Re-posted on the re:Worship blog at <https://re-worship.blogspot.com/2012/02/contemporary-call-to-worship-palm.html>.

Blessing of the Palms, Prayers of the People, Offertory Prayer - copyright augsburg fortress, 2023

Prayer of the Day: Written by Joanna Harader on her Spacious Faith blog, <http://spaciousfaith.com/>.
Re-posted on the re:Worship blog at
<https://re-worship.blogspot.com/2013/02/prayer-god-of-foolish-cross.html>.

Prayer of Confession: Posted on the United Church of Christ's Worship Ways Archive, <http://www.ucc.org/>.
Re-posted on the re:Worship blog at
<https://re-worship.blogspot.com/2013/02/prayer-of-confession-anointing-of-jesus.html>.

Benediction: Written by B. Kevin Smalls, The Africana Worship Book, Year B (Nashville: Discipleship Resources, 2007), 215.