

Willow Springs Worship March 14, 2021 LENT #5

FOCUS - Like a seed that falls deep into the dark, rich earth, we are called to deep growth, releasing our attachments that prevent us from bearing and offering fruit.

Thematic Slide Show

Welcome

Call to Worship

One: The days are coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with Israel.
I will be their God, and they will be my people.

Many: God, teach us wisdom in our secret hearts.

Put a new and right spirit within us.

Restore to us the joy of salvation, and sustain in us a willing spirit.

One: We trust you, God, to forgive our iniquities and remember our sin no more.

Many: There is a time for everything, and sometimes, the hour is upon us.

One: Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears,
knowing that those who love their life will lose it.

**Many: "The hour has come. Unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies,
it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit."**

All: We call out to you, as you call us to deeper growth.

Song

Prayer of Confession and Assurance

Many: Deep calls to deep.

We call to you from the depths of our hearts.

One: We confess our resistance to being planted
into your aching earth,
into the way of your covenant.

We confess our need for you to plant within us
the joy of your salvation,
a willing spirit.

(Silence. Or name the forces that keep us from deep growth.)

Deep calls to deep.

You call to us from the depth of your love.

Many: Calling us to deep growth.

We come to you, God.

Song

Children's time

Scripture: Jeremiah 31:23-34, John 12:20-33

Sermon: Many Kernels, Covenant Kernels

Song

Sharing/Pastoral prayer

Offering our lives/song

Announcements

AntiRacism Discussion – Following worship.

April 1 – Maundy Thursday worship service, 7:00 pm via zoom.

April 4 – Easter Worship, 10:00 am

SENDING BLESSING

Only when a seed “lets go” does new life arise from it. And here is the secret planted deep within the earth—this change happens not once for us but many times over. Go into this week aware of the times of letting go that have allowed for new life to come. Go, aware of the deep growth stirring within you. Amen.

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Jeremiah 31:23-34

²³ This is what the Lord Almighty, the God of Israel, says: “When I bring them back from captivity,^[a] the people in the land of Judah and in its towns will once again use these words: ‘The Lord bless you, you prosperous city, you sacred mountain.’ ²⁴ People will live together in Judah and all its towns—farmers and those who move about with their flocks. ²⁵ I will refresh the weary and satisfy the faint.”

²⁶ At this I awoke and looked around. My sleep had been pleasant to me.

²⁷ “The days are coming,” declares the Lord, “when I will plant the kingdoms of Israel and Judah with the offspring of people and of animals. ²⁸ Just as I watched over them to uproot and tear down, and to overthrow, destroy and bring disaster, so I will watch over them to build and to plant,” declares the Lord. ²⁹ “In those days people will no longer say,

‘The parents have eaten sour grapes,
and the children’s teeth are set on edge.’

³⁰ Instead, everyone will die for their own sin; whoever eats sour grapes—their own teeth will be set on edge.

³¹ “The days are coming,” declares the Lord,
“when I will make a new covenant

with the people of Israel
and with the people of Judah.

³² It will not be like the covenant
I made with their ancestors
when I took them by the hand
to lead them out of Egypt,
because they broke my covenant,
though I was a husband to^[a] them,^[a]”
declares the Lord.

³³ “This is the covenant I will make with the people of Israel
after that time,” declares the Lord.

“I will put my law in their minds
and write it on their hearts.

I will be their God,
and they will be my people.

³⁴ No longer will they teach their neighbor,
or say to one another, ‘Know the Lord,’

because they will all know me,
from the least of them to the greatest,"
declares the Lord.
"For I will forgive their wickedness
and will remember their sins no more."

John 12:20-33

Jesus Predicts His Death

²⁰ Now there were some Greeks among those who went up to worship at the festival. ²¹ They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, with a request. "Sir," they said, "we would like to see Jesus." ²² Philip went to tell Andrew; Andrew and Philip in turn told Jesus.

²³ Jesus replied, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. ²⁴ Very truly I tell you, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds. ²⁵ Anyone who loves their life will lose it, while anyone who hates their life in this world will keep it for eternal life. ²⁶ Whoever serves me must follow me; and where I am, my servant also will be. My Father will honor the one who serves me.

²⁷ "Now my soul is troubled, and what shall I say? 'Father, save me from this hour'? No, it was for this very reason I came to this hour. ²⁸ Father, glorify your name!"

Then a voice came from heaven, "I have glorified it, and will glorify it again." ²⁹ The crowd that was there and heard it said it had thundered; others said an angel had spoken to him.

³⁰ Jesus said, "This voice was for your benefit, not mine. ³¹ Now is the time for judgment on this world; now the prince of this world will be driven out. ³² And I, when I am lifted up^u from the earth, will draw all people to myself." ³³ He said this to show the kind of death he was going to die.

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GOING DEEPER 2021

As you continue through Lenten worship this year, consider what other practices might help you go deeper with God and with one another.

Consider ways of "going deeper."

Into Our Stories: Either throughout the week, share prayer requests with one other person and to pray for each other.

Into Scripture: Encourage at-home engagement with the Scripture texts throughout the week, such as reading, practicing *lectio divina* or guided meditations, writing/creating artistic responses, and sharing those creations on Sundays.

Into Silence: As we dwell on what we find to be most essential, deep at our core, bravely embrace silence in life, not filling every transition, not narrating every moment.

Into the Past: When this season of Lent comes around, pay attention to the anniversaries that your congregation is remembering, and consider how they need to be tended. How is your worship different this year from last year at this time? What events of 2020 are you remembering? What losses is your community grieving? What new discoveries fill you with gratitude? What has God revealed in these times? Make space to reflect on these things.

Into Voices Together: Page through the new hymnal reading the text of songs that catch for eye, sing familiar songs and hum the tunes to new ones. Use a bookmark to keep track of how far you have explored.