



Presbyterians for Earth Care

2020 Lenten Devotional

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Introduction

God Provides Enough for All

Our family recently moved from the Louisville area to Henryville, Indiana, population 1905 humans, but teeming with wildlife. More tree and shrub species than we can catalog; owls, hawks, turkeys, woodpeckers, coyotes, fox, deer, monarchs, turtles, ladybugs, and the bobcat that appeared on our game cam the first night.

Living in such abundance, I find myself talking to creatures and even to trees, mostly expressing gratitude. I don't expect them to respond, of course. So I am awed when one seems to accept my existence, when a hummingbird flies up to look me in the eye, or a nuthatch continues to feed nearby.

If we think we live in a different world from other creatures, we've been conditioned to do so by centuries of human solipsism, trained to see nature as existing far away, irrelevant. But such distance is an illusion we're waking from now, as we find creation reacting with violent force to our disrespect for its laws and norms.

Human distance from nature is an illusion Scripture's writers do not share. Scripture prompts gratitude for the abundance God offers through creation. Our first lesson in that abundance comes on the Bible's first page: "See, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit; you shall have them for food. And to every beast of the earth, and to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food" (Gen. 1:29-30). In short, there is enough for all. For all people across the world, and for all creatures who inhabit the world with us. Tragically, primarily because we who are rich take more than we need, this abundance is unequally distributed, so that it seems like fearsome scarcity.

Simplicity is key both to Lent and to environmental sustainability. Lenten tradition suggests a fast from some dimension of the overabundance endlessly surrounding the wealthy: from food, or from a destructive habit, recognizing our dependence on God for all we have and are. An ecological fast during Lent might involve dining closer to the ground—eating vegan or meatless, or reducing food waste.



Introduction, cont.

It might involve consumer goods—fasting from online shopping, or reducing single-use plastic. Or fasting from cars or planes, walking or staying put instead. Or from screen time, looking up to observe the vibrant world around us. Or from contributing to injustice, as Isaiah 58 suggests.

Whatever your Lenten practice is this year, the writers of these devotions join you in praying that in 2020 we may become channels of God's peace for the earth and its inhabitants.

Rev. Dr. Patricia K. Tull

Ash Wednesday

Our Chosen Fast

Is not this the fast that I choose:
to loose the bonds of injustice,
to undo the thongs of the yoke,
to let the oppressed go free,
and to break every yoke?
Is it not to share your bread with the hungry,
and bring the homeless poor into your house;
when you see the naked, to cover them,
and not to hide yourself from your own kin?
Then your light shall break forth like the dawn,
and your healing shall spring up quickly;
your vindicator shall go before you,
the glory of the LORD shall be your rear guard.
Then you shall call, and the LORD will answer;
you shall cry for help, and he will say, Here I am.

If you remove the yoke from among you,
the pointing of the finger, the speaking of evil,

if you offer your food to the hungry
and satisfy the needs of the afflicted,
then your light shall rise in the darkness
and your gloom be like the noonday.

The LORD will guide you continually,
and satisfy your needs in parched places,
and make your bones strong;
and you shall be like a watered garden,
like a spring of water,
whose waters never fail.

Isaiah 58:6–11



Ash Wednesday, cont.

Educator and poet Clint Smith began his 2014 TED talk by reminding the audience of the words of Dr. Martin Luther King: “In the end, we will remember not the words of our enemies, but the silence of our friends.”

As a high school teacher, Smith wanted his students to know about the importance of speaking up and the danger of not speaking up. Growing up as a Catholic, he had been taught to fast during Lent from pleasures like sodas, French fries, and French kisses. One year, he decided to give up speaking. But he quickly came to realize that in a larger sense he had given up speaking a long time before, telling people what they wanted to hear instead of what they needed to hear. When a friend was beaten up for being gay, he put his head down and walked on by. Seeing the lock on his locker, he realized the lock he had on his heart and mouth.

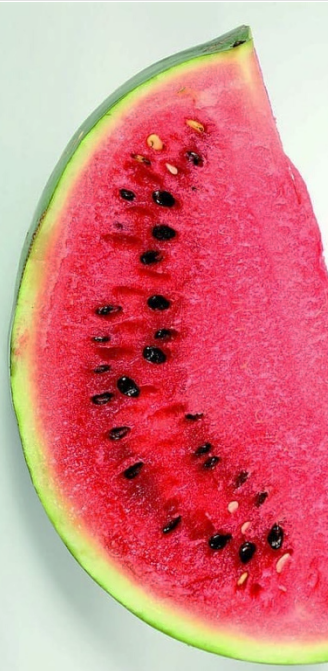
I must confess that I too have kept silent at the cost of others’ needs, dignity, and freedom. But on this Ash Wednesday, Isaiah is challenging us to consider fasting in a new way. Have we fasted from our fear of speaking up against oppression? Have we fasted from our privilege and instead challenged systems of injustice? Or have we diminished our light and hidden it under a bushel? Have we kept God’s desire “to loosen the bonds of injustice, to undo the thongs of the yoke, and to let the oppressed go free?”

Prayer

Dear God, lead us on this Lenten journey. May our chosen fasting, giving, and prayer be the light that break forth like the dawn. May we not fast from speaking up and living out Your bountiful vision for all in Your good creation. Amen.



The Rev. David Shinn was born in Taiwan and immigrated to the US when he was 11. Currently he serves as the Associate Pastor for Congregational Care at Westminster Presbyterian Church in beautiful downtown Minneapolis, MN. He is the proud father of two college age sons, Enoch and Ethan, and husband to Julie. He finds peace and joy in reading, opera, running, and spending time with his family.



First Sunday

Seeing as God Sees

God said, “See, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit; you shall have them for food. And to every beast of the earth, and to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food.” And it was so. God saw everything that God had made, and indeed, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

Genesis 1:29–31

Do you remember spitting watermelon seeds as a kid? Taking a big bite out of a delicious, red juicy watermelon; moving the seeds first to the side and then the front of your mouth; pressing them against the back of your teeth with your tongue while you swallowed the good stuff, and then curling your tongue around the tiny black teardrop and blowing?

I have been asking children whether they know how to spit watermelon seeds—at a recent wedding rehearsal, on the playground after school, in the park near my house. Nothing. My own son remembers eating a watermelon with seeds in it “a couple of years ago.” How about you? When is the last time you spit a watermelon seed?

Today, only 16 percent of watermelons sold in grocery stores have seeds. Many people today don’t even know that watermelons have seeds, let alone how to spit them. Recently developed hybrids do not need seeded melons for pollination. The iconic, black-studded watermelon wedge is disappearing; and with it, creation’s own power to produce new life.

In the beginning “God saw everything that God had made, and it was very good.” The world is good, yes, but “the goodness of the world,” writes Ellen Davis, “is presented not as simple fact, nor even as an authoritative pronouncement, but as a divine perception.” And Genesis invites us to “see like God;” to notice the earth itself possesses a fruitfulness, a sustainable fecundity that perpetuates life. And, by extension, to think about whether and how we dare interrupt that for our own convenience.

First Sunday, cont.

Philosopher Erazim Kohák suggests the root of our ecological crisis is chiefly a failure to perceive what is good. This Lent look attentively. What to do you notice? What goodness will you work to preserve? What goodness will you seek to restore?

Prayer

Creator God, enable us to see the earth as you see it, as good—even where it is fallen—and to imagine what we can do as a part of this good creation to serve and preserve the goodness that you mean the earth to embody.



The Rev. Jeff Geary is the Senior Pastor of the White Plains Presbyterian Church, a progressive multiracial, urban earth-care congregation in the Bronx River Watershed of New York. When he is not working, studying, or parenting he can be found long distance hiking, biking, and rock climbing—anything to be close to creation.



Second Sunday

Creatures of the Same Creator

The Lord is gracious and merciful,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.

The Lord is good to all,
and his compassion is over all that he has made.

All your works shall give thanks to you, O Lord,
and all your faithful shall bless you....

The eyes of all look to you,
and you give them their food in due season.

You open your hand,
satisfying the desire of every living thing.

Psalm 145:8–10, 15–16

As Psalm 145 says, God’s compassion is over all that God has made! “You open your hand, satisfying the desire of every living thing” (v. 16).

We humans tend to think of the world as our oyster. But is that really the intention of our God who creates and cares for the world?

Most of us in the developed world can spend entire weeks not noticing that the planet teems with more sentient, vibrant life than humans. Stepping outside ourselves (literally) reveals a complex world made up of billions of God’s creatures. Squirrels and opossums, dandelions and oysters, clay and sun—all works of the One who is “abounding in steadfast love” (v. 8b).

Our “world is our oyster” mindset may free us to live full lives, at least as defined by human society, but is this mindset satisfying to our God who cares for everyone, biped and bivalve alike?

Let’s consider the oyster world. Although oysters may seem like simple organisms, they are not just sources of pearls and lunch. Oysters are a keystone species, integral to the health of an entire ecosystem. Oysters are champion recyclers, too, each filtering gallons of water every single day. Their shells provide refuge for other creatures. Oysters have oyster feelings. Scientists are discovering that even “simple” organisms demonstrate an awareness of their circumstances. For example, even though they do not have ears, oysters “hear.” Human-generated noise pollution harms their health and the health of their offspring for generations.

Second Sunday, cont.

Our world is as complex and marvelous as is our Creator who delights and provides sustenance and “steadfast love” for all creation. As followers of Jesus Christ, let us embrace one another in celebration of and compassion for all God’s works. Let us endeavor to live in wonder, care, and compassion.

Prayer

Holy One, your world teems with complexity and beauty, and you are “good to all,” human, daisy, and oyster alike. During this season of Lent, we vow to sharpen our focus and soften our hearts so that we can more fully appreciate You as we seek shalom with one another, your beloved creation. Amen.



Carissa Herold has served Presbyterian Women as marketing associate since 2005. Carissa and her husband happily share their home with four dogs and three cats and the occasional “foster dog” from the local humane society. She attends First Presbyterian Church in Jeffersonville, Indiana, and enjoys her ministry of creation– and justice–friendly initiatives of the church’s Green Team.



Christian McIvor serves as the Music & Worship Minister at College Park Baptist Church in Greensboro, NC, where he started the Creation Justice Team. He also serves on the steering committee for the Alliance of Baptists Creation Justice Community. He has actively performed across the Southeast as a trumpet player and singer/songwriter for many years and he enjoys spending time outdoors with his wife, Chrissy, and their daughters, Juliette and River.

Third Sunday

Rooted in the Earth

He also said, “With what can we compare the kingdom of God, or what parable will we use for it? It is like a mustard seed, which, when sown upon the ground, is the smallest of all the seeds on earth; yet when it is sown it grows up and becomes the greatest of all shrubs, and puts forth large branches, so that the birds of the air can make nests in its shade.”

Mark 4:30–32

On a recent trip to central Arizona, my family and I went hiking in the Sonoran Desert. I was awed by the beauty of the desert landscape, which was framed by mountains on all sides and dotted with countless towering saguaro cacti reaching toward the sky. Though the saguaro only grows in the Sonoran Desert, it has become a universal symbol of the American West due to its distinct and majestic appearance.

Saguaro seeds begin quite small, and as they germinate, they put out roots that run deep and wide in order to access water stored underground while also efficiently collecting whatever rainwater might fall. The mature saguaro’s flowers produce nectar and pollen for bees, moths, bats, and birds, and its fruit hydrates and nourishes desert animals of all kinds. The gilded flicker and Gila woodpecker carve out cavities to nest inside these cacti, and when they leave, various other kinds of small birds often move in. Large birds can also be found nesting in the saguaro’s arms and using them as hunting platforms. In the midst of a harsh and unforgiving climate, the saguaro stands tall, rooted in the earth, giving new life and allowing it to flourish.

As we contemplate our own spiritual deserts during this season of Lent, let us remember that we are called to sow sacred seeds which—like the saguaros—root themselves in the earth, carrying the promise of new and abundant life for all of creation.

Prayer

Loving Creator, bless us that we might always remember to dutifully care for the seeds You provide for us to sow. Let us always be aware of Your presence in all of creation and stay rooted in Christ, who calls us to cultivate Your kingdom in bringing about a transformed and renewed creation here on earth.



Fourth Sunday

No Seeds No Trees

“Listen! A sower went out to sow. And as he sowed, some seed fell on the path, and the birds came and ate it up. Other seed fell on rocky ground, where it did not have much soil, and it sprang up quickly, since it had no depth of soil. And when the sun rose, it was scorched; and since it had no root, it withered away. Other seed fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked it, and it yielded no grain. Other seed fell into good soil and brought forth grain, growing up and increasing and yielding thirty and sixty and a hundredfold.”

Mark 4:3–8

No trees no birds
No birds no poop
No poop no seeds
No seeds no trees
No trees no birds

An elderly farmer named Louis Dona Fieffe shared these words of wisdom with my group up in the mountains of southern Haiti three years ago, a gathering with local farmers arranged for us by PCUSA Mission Co-Worker Cindy Corell. His larger message about the need for ongoing reforestation to preserve good soil for farming and how the farmers there have noticed the climatic change on their mountainside from four distinct seasons to two—wet and hot—all came tumbling back as I read this Mark text in the context of Lent and environmental stewardship.

We are deep into the grittiness of Lent by now. We would do well to remember that this parable about sowing God’s word worked in Jesus’ day because good farmers understood issues of conservation (don’t waste seed in places it will not grow) and sustainability (every living thing needs roots in good soil). And the word “scorched” fairly jumps off the page with the global reality of fires burning out of control. Yet there is great good news in this text—the seed that gets the sustenance it needs grows, increases, and yields beyond imagination. This message flows naturally into our Lenten journey: pay attention lest we waste what we’ve been given as blessing; confess when we know we’ve willfully rejected bounty and beauty, or even unknowingly refused to sow life; and recognize that everything and everyone needs nourishment and deep roots to flourish.

Fourth Sunday, cont.

We are walking with Jesus knowing that we might be the ones who deny him, yet we can hope that some of the seed that falls from our hands will fall into rich soil that we have helped nourish, and thus grow.

Prayer

Holy God, help us discern in our thoughts and actions how we might nurture all the soil of this world and then sow your life-giving seed into it so that your vision of a full and abundant life might become a reality for all your people. Amen.



Photo Credit: Louis Dona Fieffe, by Cindy Corell,
Presbyterian Mission Co-Worker in Haiti



The Rev. Dr. Shelley C. Wiley is the Transitional Pastor at First Presbyterian Church, Jackson, Ohio. In her years in pastoral ministry and academia she has traveled to Haiti nearly 40 times, learning much from those who work the land and those who struggle to survive in urban chaos.

Fifth Sunday

Our Earthly Inheritance

“Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.’”

Matthew 25:34–36

This parable begins with the Son of Man seated on the throne, using his authority to separate the people as a shepherd separates his sheep from the goats grazing in the field. The sheep are those that have shown their faithfulness by performing acts of goodwill toward their neighbors. They receive a place of honor and inherit God’s kingdom. But those who have failed to answer the call of the needy and who have not followed in Christ’s footsteps to care for the “least of these” are called goats and do not inherit God’s kingdom.

Since the world’s creation, God in heaven has gifted God’s children an abundant inheritance that provides for all our needs when we lack food, drink, clothing, companionship, care when we are sick, and solace in community during times of imprisonment. Likewise, God provides the earth and all its resources for God’s children to live in its richness. Water and trees are clothed in God’s glory as gifts for humanity and for all creatures on the earth.

But how many of us have come to believe that we are specially entitled? And how many of us, perceiving that we have more than enough resources from which to benefit, pollute our waters and cut down trees, believing that it is our inheritance to squander and do with as we please? Our sense of entitlement has led many down a path of destruction as we misuse God’s Creation.

I long for the day when all of God’s children can partake together in God’s copious and filling bounty. I pray that during this Lenten season we are reminded of God’s abundant gift to us through Creation and that we share that abundance with the entire world, remembering that there is no lack in Christ Jesus and that there is more than enough for all of God’s Creation.



Prayer

Lord God, in all your infinite wisdom, show us your people how to honor your gift of Creation. Let us not be selfish with our gift, rather allow us to share as generously with each other as you have shared with us. Let us remember those in this world who still have not been able to realize God's abundance because we have taken more than what we need. Amen.



Photo Credit: Christ dividing the sheep from the goats.
Mosaic. Sant'Apollinare Nuovo, Ravenna, 6th century, Public Domain



The Rev. Kymberley Clemons-Jones is Pastor of Valley Stream Presbyterian Church in Nassau County, New York. Rev. Clemons-Jones received her MDiv (Union Theological Seminary) and her MEd in Counseling (Hunter College) both in NYC. She is currently pursuing a Doctor of Ministry Degree from Louisville Seminary.

Palm Sunday

Hymning and Breathing

Praise the Lord!
Praise the Lord, O my soul!
I will praise the Lord as long as I live;
I will sing praises to my God all my life long.

Do not put your trust in princes,
in mortals, in whom there is no help.
When their breath departs,
they return to the earth;
on that very day their plans perish.

Happy are those whose help is the God of Jacob,
whose hope is in the Lord their God,
who made heaven and earth,
the sea, and all that is in them;
who keeps faith forever;

who executes justice for the oppressed;
who gives food to the hungry.

The Lord sets the prisoners free;
the Lord opens the eyes of the blind.

The Lord lifts up those who are bowed down;
the Lord loves the righteous.

The Lord watches over the strangers;
he upholds the orphan and the widow,
but the way of the wicked he brings to ruin.

The Lord will reign forever,
your God, O Zion, for all generations.
Praise the Lord!

Psalm 146

Robert Alter often catches me up short in his translations of the Hebrew. He renders the second verse of Psalm 146 as: “Let me praise the LORD while I live, *let me hymn to my God while I breathe.*”

I think of this line when I am out at the Farminary, Princeton Seminary’s 21-acre farm. While there I contemplate the land and all the living creatures (human and non-human) that call it home, as well as all the plants that grow (or sometimes fail to grow) there.

In the midst of contemplation and work and sweat and joy and sometimes grief (for the farm also entails predation, loss, death), I find myself “hymning to my God while I breathe”—“hymn” as a verb, something done while breathing which, like breathing, can become an almost unconscious part of what it means to be alive. Hymning to God as a basic brain stem function: in the midst of beauty, work, sorrow, and joy, hymning is as life-giving as breathing.

Yet the wicked are always with us, as the psalmist knows too well. “The way of the wicked God contorts.” Some readers are squeamish over the psalmists’ prayers about the wicked. I am not. I pray that God makes good on this promise—not to destroy the wicked but to “contort” their plans and actions so they do not unleash their harm on the world. And that would have to include my own part in wickedness.

Palm Sunday, cont.

Palm Sunday, when Jesus was about to face down the way of the wicked, reminds us of both our own complicity and our hosannas. As I breathe, I hymn all this, and it is enough.

Prayer

God of life, help us to hymn to you as we breathe. Contort the way of the wicked, so that all may flourish and thrive in the exquisitely beautiful world you have made.

Photo Credit: Courtesy of Princeton Seminary



Dr. Jacqueline Lapsley is Dean and Vice President of Academic Affairs and Professor of Old Testament at Princeton Theological Seminary. She has written or co-edited several books, including *Whispering the Word: Hearing Women's Stories in the Old Testament*. An ordained Presbyterian elder married to an Episcopal priest, "empty-nesting" for the first time, she is trying to make hymning to God as easy as breathing.

Maundy Thursday

Heartbreak

The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a sharing in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a sharing in the body of Christ? Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread.

1 Corinthians 10:16–17

My father, a chemist for NASA in the 1960s and '70s, used to study the first satellite photos of the earth. I remember the day he brought home some images and pointed out early signs of ozone depletion over the poles. His voice was grave as he warned of the need to care for the fragile planet on which we live. I share his sadness today as I look at NASA's famous "earth rise" photo that now hangs on my own wall. The visible half circle of our home planet, so blue with life, floats in black space above the moon. It hovers there like the Body of Christ that I raise each Sunday in doxology over the rim of the chalice at the end of the Eucharistic prayer.

In the well-known window of the Dominus Flevit ("The Lord Wept") Church on the Mount of Olives, we see that same raised bread and chalice framing the city of Jerusalem below. This church commemorates the moment in Luke's Gospel when Jesus wept over the strife and lack of understanding that would lead to its destruction. Looking down on the city that would crucify him, Jesus longed to gather its people together as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings. Like my father's sorrow for the damaged earth, Jesus' love for Jerusalem was filled with heartbreak.

To share in Christ's Body and Blood is to frame one another and all creation in the heartbreak of this love: love that pours itself out for all life, love that opens us to transformation, love that makes us one. On this day in which we remember Christ's commandment to love, may our hearts break wide open—not to bleed with sadness, but to pour out life-giving care for our fragile planet and all its inhabitants.

Prayer

Loving God, you long to restore us to unity with one another and with creation. You long to heal us and make us whole. Break our hearts open, that we may live into the blessing of the Cross and the hope of resurrection. Amen.

The Rev. Anne F. Downs Richter is a priest at St. Andrew's Episcopal Church in Louisville, Kentucky, where she works in the area of youth, child, and family formation. She is also working on her STM degree in church history at the School of Theology of The University of the South.



Good Friday

In the Cross's Shadow

He said to them, "When you pray, say: Father, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come. Give us each day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins, for we ourselves forgive everyone indebted to us. And do not bring us to the time of trial."

Luke 11:2-4

Good Friday is the darkest day of the liturgical year. We commemorate the crucifixion of our Lord Jesus and remember God's love, grace, and mercy.

Showing the greatest compassion, God through Jesus dwelled among us and taught us to love radically, to act mercifully, and to live righteously. Jesus's teachings brought people closer to God, reconciled communities, demonstrated our shared humanity, and reminded us of our mutual need to belong, to be nourished, and to be well.

By our inactions to help those who are hungry, homeless, sick, and marginalized, we seem to forget Jesus's lessons and examples. Fearing scarcity, we clench our fists to hold fast to what we have, while simultaneously closing ourselves from God's abundance and our responsibility to provide for others. In the shadow of the cross we recognize that we turn away from God every time we turn away from one another.

However, God never turns away from us. Even Jesus's last breath carried words of pardon. Forgiven, we are able to forgive. Unburdened by sin, we experience God's grace. Welcomed into God's kingdom, we enjoy life's abundance.

At the cross, we see that God loves us and has not forsaken us. We remember that the darkness will not last; it is only a precursor to seeing the light of the risen Lord.

God enables us to walk in that light and in the ways of Christ. We remember to love God is to love one another. As we receive freely, we are open to give generously. God's gifts are not just for our sake, but for the sake of all creation. And God always provides more than enough.

Good Friday, cont.

Prayer

Merciful God, in the shadow of the cross, you provide us with the gift of salvation. In your forgiveness, we learn to forgive. Unburdened by sin, we receive your light. Guide us so that we may love radically and reflect brilliantly even in darkness.



Photo Credit: Dominus flevit by Berthold Werner



The Rev. Bridgett A. Green teaches New Testament at Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary. While completing her Ph.D. studies, she also enjoys serving on The Presbyterian Outlook Foundation Board and on the board of directors of Montreat Conference Center.

Easter Sunday

God Provides a Feast for All

On this mountain the Lord of hosts will make for all peoples
a feast of rich food, a feast of well-aged wines,
of rich food filled with marrow, of well-aged wines strained clear.
And he will destroy on this mountain
the shroud that is cast over all peoples,
the sheet that is spread over all nations;
he will swallow up death forever.
Then the Lord God will wipe away the tears from all faces,
and the disgrace of his people he will take away from all the earth,
for the Lord has spoken.
It will be said on that day,
Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, so that he might save us.
This is the Lord for whom we have waited;
let us be glad and rejoice in his salvation.

Isaiah 25:6–9

One of my favorite restaurants also has a great name—Feast. The word rings with celebration and conjures images of abundance and welcome. It’s an Easter word, you might say.

Easter celebrations often involve feasting. In addition to gathering with faith communities to shout “Hallelujah!” many of us gather today around a table with family and friends. We will feast, and I will probably eat too many chocolate eggs. After the fasting and contemplation of Lent, enjoying God’s bounty becomes particularly delightful.

Isaiah 25 imagines a feast of rich food and well-aged wines—God’s abundance from the productive, good earth. It is a spread for all peoples, nations who have waited earnestly for God’s arrival and salvation. It’s not a private party for a select few.

And the really amazing aspect of this divine banquet? God is the *host* and *chef* of the meal. As the host, God draws up the invitation list so that all are invited. God prepares the feast’s atmosphere by wiping away all tears of sorrow and loss. This party is not a time for disgrace but joy. God selects the perfect location for this feast—God’s mountain where heaven and earth meet. God sets the delicious menu full of food and drink. The food will be decadent, the wine supple. What a celebration!

On this Easter day of joy, how might we find a place at God’s great table to feast together in praise of God’s salvation?

Easter Sunday, cont.

Prayer

Hallelujah! Christ is Risen!

You have swallowed up death and prepared for us a feast. May we rejoice in your salvation, for you are our God. We have waited for you to save us. Hallelujah! Amen.



Photo Credit: Fresco of a banquet, 4th century; public domain



Dr. Tyler Mayfield teaches Old Testament at Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary and is the author of the forthcoming book *Unto Us a Child Is Born: Isaiah, Advent, and Our Jewish Neighbors*.

Credits

Cover

The watercolor sketch on the cover is for a 24' by 12' silk banner sculpture that Lorraine Rich created for the Scott Mission Chapel in Toronto, Canada. Go to her website, Bezalel.ca, to see the seven completed banners and have a look at her other silks, textiles, and prints. PEC is extremely grateful to Lorraine for giving us permission to use her exquisite artwork.

Layout

Thanks again to Sarah Pragg for making the Lenten Devotional a work of art in itself. This is the second year Sarah has donated her time to do the layout design.

Coordinator

Patricia Tull was at the heart of this work. She decided on a theme, selected the scriptures, and recruited and followed up with the authors. Many thanks to her for doing such a magnificent job in a very timely manner.