

Leigh Memorial Westmead Uniting Churches

# Lent 5



Jesus in the home of Martha & Mary

The Fragrance  
of Ethical Generosity

3 April 2022

Leigh Memorial 9.30am

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://uca-nswact.zoom.us/j/5199089657>

Meeting ID: 519 908 9657

Westmead Uniting 9:30am

Zoom: <https://uca-nswact.zoom.us/j/3958336709>

## WELCOME

A warm welcome as we gather together in this space and on zoom.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

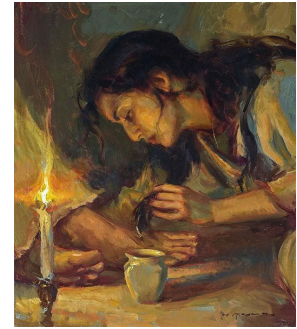
We acknowledge the Burramattagal people of the Darug Nation, the first inhabitants of this place, as the traditional custodians of this land and pay our respects to their ancient culture, their elders past and present and their emerging leaders. We acknowledge the presence of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who now reside within this area. We honour them for their custodianship of the land, on which we gather today.

## OUR LENTEN THEME

*The fragrance of the ethics of generosity*

Today, we enter the story of the homeless and itinerant Jesus being offered hospitality and friendship in the home of Lazarus, Martha and Mary, ... Mary anoints the feet of Jesus with a very expensive ointment, empathically anticipating the violence, suffering and death that awaits him, She offers him her love for his tragic journey.

The Fragrance of generosity, friendship, hospitality, empathy, love and insight fills their home and this place.



## LIGHTING OF THE LENTEN CANDLE

As light is borne  
from a white candle to a violet candle and the flame remains  
the same; so the Spirit of God burns in our lives through the  
good times and the testing times.

*The Lenten Candle is lit*

*We do this in remembrance of Jesus.*

As an extinguished candle waits in the darkness to be rekindled;  
so the spirit of God is forever ready to shine with hope and love.

*the Lenten candle is extinguished*

*As we extinguish this Lenten light, we acknowledge the darkness and pain of injustice in the world And as the Christ candle remains lit, we acknowledge **the promise of the presence of Christ in every wilderness experience.***



## HYMN

*A prophet-woman broke a jar (TiS 696)*

<https://vimeo.com/532062629>

1. A prophet-woman broke a jar by Love's divine appointing.  
With rare perfume she filled the room, presiding and anointing.  
A prophet-woman broke a jar, the sneers of scorn defying.  
With rare perfume she filled the room, preparing Christ for dying.

2. A faithful woman left a tomb by Love's divine commission.  
She saw, she heard, she preached the word, arising from submission.  
A faithful woman left a tomb with resurrection gospel.  
She saw, she heard, she preached the word, apostle to apostles.



3. Though woman-wisdom, woman-truth for centuries were hidden, unsung, unwritten,

and unheard, derided and forbidden, the Spirit's breath, the Spirit's fire, on free and slave, descending, can tumble our diving walls, our shame and sadness mending.

4. The Spirit knows, the Spirit calls, by Love's divine ordaining, the friends we need, to serve and lead, their powers and gifts unchaining. The Spirit knows, the Spirit calls from women, men, and children the friends we need, to serve and lead. Rejoice and make them welcome!

*Brian Arthur Wren*

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### PRAYER (as confession)

O God, with Jesus anointed at Bethany:

I find myself present in this company today. With Martha I desire to serve you;

With Lazarus to sit at table with you; With Mary to kneel at your feet in costly devotion.

Can it be true that with Judas I discover within myself a carping spirit of criticism, sarcasm, and at times cynicism towards others, towards myself?

Arrest any process of deterioration or corruption in my soul, for I realise, O God, that only by your grace can such deliverance be effected.

*Loving, forgiving and transforming God enable us to rely on that grace today. Amen.*

*Adaption: Brother Ramon, When They Crucified My Lord: Through Lenten Sorrow to Easter Joy (Oxford: The Bible Reading Fellowship, 1999), pp 79, 81*

### WORDS OF GRACE

In Jesus Christ, love is the way and the gift.

It is never withdrawn from us, but lies in the heart of God in encouragement & grace.

We are forgiven!

*Thanks be to God. Amen!*

**SCRIPTURE READING** *Jesus Anointed at Bethany* **John 12: 1-8 (NIV)** 12: 1 Six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany, where Lazarus lived, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. 2 Here a dinner was given in Jesus' honour. Martha served, while Lazarus was among those reclining at the table with him. 3 Then Mary took about a pint of pure nard, an expensive perfume; she poured it on Jesus' feet and wiped his feet with her hair. And the house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume.

4 But one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, who was later to betray him, objected, 5 "Why wasn't this perfume sold and the money given to the poor? It was worth a year's wages." 6 He did not say this because he cared about the poor but because he was a thief; as keeper of the money bag, he used to help himself to what was put into it.

7 "Leave her alone," Jesus replied. "It was intended that she should save this perfume for the day of my burial. 8 You will always have the poor among you, but you will not always have me."

### RESPONSE

*O God our nurturer, may your word live in us.*

*And colour our living. Amen!*

### REFLECTION

**HYMN**      *Feed us now, Bread of life* (TiS, 538)

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=58U\\_jEkuyTY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=58U_jEkuyTY)

1.      Feed us now, Bread of life, in this holy meal; let us know your love anew: we hunger for you. Feed us now, Bread of life, come and live within; let your peace be ours today, Lord Jesus, we pray.

2.      Piece of bread, glass of wine: Lord, this food is good; love and mercy come to us — your promise we trust.  
Piece of bread, glass of wine; who can understand how his mercy works in these? Yet, Lord, we believe.

3.      God is here, O so near, nearer than our thoughts. Stay with us where'er we go; Lord, help us to grow.  
God is here, O so near, in this heaven's meal.  
May we always feed on you — on the bread that is true

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**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**OFFERING**

We offer our gifts this day with gratitude.

Through them, may hope come to those who know despair, may love come to those who feel alone, may healing come to those who endure pain.

May these gifts be a sign of our commitment to serve you in the world.

*Amen.*

**PRAYERS FOR THE WORLD**

God of justice, hear our yearning for peace wherever conflict rages; for truth wherever deception is the norm; for freedom wherever oppression reigns.

*We ask for justice.*

God of imagination, hear our passion for new visions where habits are ingrained and inflexible; for inspiration where thinking is tedious and stale; for ingenuity where challenges seem insurmountable.

*We ask for imagination.*

God of healing, hear our prayers for all those who suffer, for all those in sickness, or all those who grieve.

*We ask for healing.*

God of generosity, we reflect on our lives, remembering every gift of beauty and mercy you have offered to us.

*We offer our gratitude to you.*

God of grace, receive all the prayers we offer this day.

*Amen.*

*(Seasons of the Spirit)*

## COMMUNION

### INVITATION TO THE TABLE

Host of life, You invite us to this table to share the fragrance of generosity, *the gift of your life given for us, the gifts of bread and cup.*

At this table we give thanks for justice, love, peace and freedom. *At this table we give thanks for friends and strangers.*

At this table all are welcome!

### THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

May the God of generosity and all things new be with you!

*And also with you!*

Let us open our hearts to the One who restores us to new life! *May our hearts be emptied of fear And filled with grace and love.*

Beloved of God, let us give thanks to the One who draws near to the world.

For the person we name Jesus and his message of peace, justice and inclusiveness that is the realm of God.

For the renewing strength and freedom of the Spirit always present on the breath of life.

*We give thanks for the love, peace and justice, for prosperity, strength and freedom, and for God in the midst of life.*

Holy God of wonder, feed us with the bread of life, so we might share food with those who know true hunger; as your justice shines in the shadows of our hearts, *may we light the way for the lost and despised;* as you reshape our brokenness into wholeness, *may we bind up the wounds of our world.*

### THE INSTITUTION

On the night he was betrayed, Jesus took bread, gave thanks, broke it and said: "This is my body, which is for you.

Do this to remember me" In the same way, after supper, Jesus took the cup and again giving thanks, said: "This cup is the sign of my new covenant with you.

Do this as often as you drink it to remember me."

### THE INVOCATION

Be present risen Jesus Christ, by your Holy Spirit, as you were with your disciples and make yourself known to us in the breaking of the bread, for you live and reign with the Creator and the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever. *Amen.*

### THE BREAKING OF BREAD

The bread we break is a sharing in the body of Christ.

The cup we take is a sharing in the life-blood of Christ.

The gifts of God for the people of God.

## THE DISTRIBUTION OF BREAD AND WINE

The body of Christ given for us. The life-blood of Christ poured out for us.

## FINAL PRAYER

And now, God sends us out into our communities, *not to cling to a faded past, but to discover all things new God is doing.*

And now, Jesus calls us to notice those around us, *to receive and share generous hope, to find each other in community to welcome each other as family.*

And now, the Spirit anoints us with grace, *to make a way through the injustices around us so we might walk with our sisters and brothers into the kingdom springing forth in all of life. Amen!*

## HYMN

*Sent forth by God's blessing*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-Q9HOEDvBwI>

Sent forth by God's blessing, Our true faith confessing, The people of God from His dwelling take leave. The Supper is ended.

O now be extended the fruits of this service in all who believe. The seed of His teaching, Receptive souls reaching, Shall blossom in action for God and for all. His grace did invite us, His love shall unite us To work for God's kingdom and answer His call.

With praise and thanksgiving To God ever-living, The tasks of our ev'ryday life we will face. Our faith ever sharing, In love ever caring, Embracing His children of each tribe and race. With Your feast You feed us, With Your light now lead us; Unite us as one in this life that we share. Then may all the living With praise and thanksgiving Give honor to Christ and His name that we bear.

*Omer Westendorf*

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## BLESSING

Let us leave this sacred place, to travel towards the road where the Christ will soon pass on the way of the Cross.

May we go in gratitude for the faithfulness of God.

May we go with hands that reach out to anoint the Christ.

And may the Holy Spirit guard and guide us into deeper life.

*Amen!*