

Midweek of Lent 4

March 17, 2021

Overview of service

I'm enjoying that sunshine--I hope you are too! Here is another opportunity to gather via Zoom for our Lent connection. It will be another great time as we hear from Kate Sundstrom, the Executive Director of Philomath Community Services. Our very own Rick Durling will be interviewing her. Once we've heard from Kate, we will then engage in a Marks of Love devotion and share in prayer.

[Interview with Kate Sundstrom](#)

[Devotion](#)

UNDERSTANDING

And they went to a place called Gethsemane. And He said to His disciples, "Sit here while I pray." And He took with Him Peter and James and John, and began to be greatly distressed and troubled. And He said to them, "My soul is very sorrowful, even to death. Remain here and watch." And going a little farther, He fell on the ground and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from Him. And He said, "Abba, Father, all things are possible for You. Remove this cup from Me. Yet not what I will, but what You will." (Mark 14:32-36)

We have a woman in our church who always says she is not afraid to die. If she is telling the truth, she is a rare person. The rest of us admit our fear. Death scares us. We worry that it will hurt. We think of it as an enemy, as the Bible says: "The last enemy to be destroyed is death" (1 Corinthians 15:26).

How it comforts me, then, to see Jesus facing death with the same horror and sadness and distress. Not that I want that for Him! But it makes me feel better about my own weakness. If the Son of God, who gave Himself for me had those feelings, then I don't need to be ashamed myself. I can lean my whole weight of fear upon Him, knowing that He understands-that He will help-that He will strengthen me, no matter what comes. As Isaiah said, He is truly "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief" (Isaiah 53:3b). And He is the One who will ultimately lead us up out of death, back to the land of the living, when He raises us from the dead.

When I fear death, Lord, be close to me and comfort me. Amen.

Reflect & Discuss

- . Do you fear death? Why or why not?
- ' What would you miss the most if the story of Gethsemane was not in the Bible?
- . Are you facing death right now, either yourself or with someone you love? Ask the Lord for strength and help.