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| drawing | **Salem Lutheran Church**  **401 S. Lake St. Lake Mills IA 50450**  **Welcome to the House of the Lord**  **WEEK FIVE: LOVE**  **April 6, 2022 – 7:00pm** |

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TURNING TOWARD GOD’S ABUNDANCE: a lenten service of word and prayer

*Lent is a season of repentance, turning to God and asking for God’s goodness to wipe away our sins and show us how to live anew. Lent also turns us toward Easter and the abundant life God will offer through the Three Days. This Lenten midweek service turns us toward God’s abundance by focusing on five divine attributes drawn from the gospel texts for Lent (year C): faithfulness, mercy, compassion, forgiveness, and love. Each service is designed for sustained reflection on the gospel in the context of contemplative prayer, readings, silence, and song.*

MARY ANOINTS JESUS

**Greeting**

The love of God poured into our hearts, the saving grace of Jesus Christ,

and the abundant life of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**And also with you.**

**Opening Prayer**

O God, rich in mercy, full of kindness, out of your great love, you raise us up from sin and death and make us alive together with Christ. Write your word upon our hearts and restore in us the image of your love that, by your Spirit, our way of life may become the way of Christ, through whom we pray.

**Amen.**

**Silence**

***The beginning and end of our time of silence will be marked by the chiming of a prayer bowl***

**Opening Song *Where Charity and Love Prevail* ELW #359**

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**Reading: *“The Last Touch”*** DeLana R.A. Dameron

There is a dead mother  
and a living daughter and the ritual  
of washing hair. I was too young to think  
anything heroic about her heavy head  
in your hands before the funeral.  
What an intimate farewell: you  
waiting at the house of a friend,  
the funeral home – agreeing to your request –  
delivers great-grandma Georgia  
so that yours could be the last touch.  
How you moved your fingernails  
between her wet follicles, shielded  
her eyes, careful not to splash  
shampoo because you remember  
being chided about the burn. You denied  
the embalmer’s offer to dress her;  
denied her their orange lipstick, but  
gave her the best dress and a heel –  
having been a while since she could walk  
after diabetes snatched half a leg.  
This intimate farewell: you rubbing  
her down in baby oil, whispering  
Mama, singing her those thousand hymns  
every ready in your mouth.

*© 2009 How God Ends Us, DéLana R.A. Dameron*

**Silence**

***The beginning and end of our time of silence will be marked by the chiming of a prayer bowl***

**Sung response *Come, My Way, My Truth, My Life*** ELW #816

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**Gospel: John 12:1-8  *Mary Anoints Jesus***

1Six days before the Passover Jesus came to Bethany, the home of Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead. 2There they gave a dinner for him. Martha served, and Lazarus was one of those at the table with him. 3Mary took a pound of costly perfume made of pure nard, anointed Jesus' feet, and wiped them with her hair. The house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume. 4But Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples (the one who was about to betray him), said, 5Why was this perfume not sold for three hundred denarii and the money given to the poor? 6(He said this not because he cared about the poor, but because he was a thief; he kept the common purse and used to steal what was put into it.) 7Jesus said, "Leave her alone. She bought it so that she might keep it for the day of my burial. 8You always have the poor with you, but you do not always have me."

**Time of prayer and reflection:**

*The leader invites the community into prayer.*

In Christ Jesus we meet the God who knows our weakness and bears the wounds of the world. Therefore, let us be bold as we pray, trusting that God draws near to those in any kind of need.

*You may wish to close your eyes and ask God to guide your sight and reflection. You are invited to light additional candles as you meditate and pray for guidance, for those who have gathered, for others who are unable to be with us, for healing, inspiration, for the needs of the community,* our *nation, the world.*

**Time of conversation:** *This gospel story from John takes place in the week before Jesus death on the cross. In the midst of so much violence death and plotting to kill both Lazarus and Jesus there are acts of hospitality and love. How is one moved to acts of love in the midst of so much hatred? How is one moved to acts of hatred in the midst of so much love? Where to you see and experience God’s abundance in a world so conflicted? How can one rise up to acts of love in these troubled times?*

**Prayer with anointing:**

*The anointer may mark the palms of each participant with a cross and repeat these or similar word.*

**As Mary anointed Jesus out of obedience of her love, may God’s abundant love cover and protect you.**

*The person may respond* **Amen.**

**Concluding prayer:**

God of all compassion, gather our prayers in your mercy and grant to us what you know we need, that we may walk in the life and the peace of your Spirit, through Jesus Christ, our hope and our salvation.

**Amen.**

**Lord’s prayer**

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever.**

**Amen.**

**Concluding song *Restore in Us, O God* ELW #328**

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**Blessing**

Christ Jesus dwell in our hearts through faith,

as we are being rooted and grounded in love,

strengthened by the Spirit,

and filled with all the fullness of God.

**Amen.**

*A greeting of peace may be shared by all.*

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