

2023 LENTEN DEVOTIONAL  
YEAR A

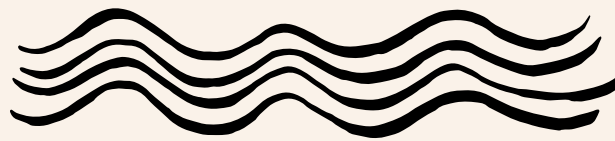
WEEK ONE



# WATER IN THE DESERT



# **water in the desert**



**40 days of creative contributions from the  
Christ Church Cathedral community and beyond**

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# INTRODU CTION

## WHAT IS LENT?

Lent is a holy season of the liturgical year where the body of Christ around the globe intentionally enters into a time of fasting, self-examination, prayer, and works of love. As Christ emerges from the waters of baptism, he is immediately driven out into the wilderness for 40 days to be tested and purified, marking the beginning of his public ministry. And in the Hebrew narratives, the desert is the place where the people of God wander for 40 years after being delivered from slavery in Egypt, waiting for and wandering toward a new life and new land.

The wilderness is treacherous and disorienting. It is a place of liminality and deconstruction - the space in between where we have been and where we are going. All of us have to journey through the unknown at some point, and it's always hard, but it's the only way to get where we're called to go.

## WHAT IS THIS PROJECT?

For each of the 40 days of Lent, our team, in partnership with the Liturgical Arts Collective, asked members of our significantly creative and insightful Cathedral community to read, reflect on, and respond imaginatively to their appointed scriptures for that day from the lectionary, holding in mind a general theme of unexpected sustenance in desolate places, or "water in the desert."

We find in the readings during this six-week season stories of angels tending Christ in the wilderness, quail and manna from heaven, plumes of cloud by day and pillars of fire by night to guide our wandering, water flowing out of rock...

In a chaotic, distracted, and fearful world, noticing beauty is like pure drops of water from heaven to the parched soul. Art and beauty can touch the deepest part of the human heart and aid our collective healing and liberation. The goal for this project was not to create a bunch of "really good art," (although the works are stunning,) but to build something meaningful together through our shared devotion, contemplation of scripture, and responding to the Holy Spirit in our midst through our various mediums. So within a few weeks of being prompted, we strummed, typed, smeared, scribbled, sang, scrapped, recorded, prayed, and listened, and this devotional is the result. We hope this is a gift to you, wherever you might be led, on your Lenten journey.



# Lady Sycamore

DAY 1  
FEB 22  
ash wednesday

CLICK  
HERE FOR  
SCRIPTURES  
OF THE DAY

BY BROOKLIN TAYLOR

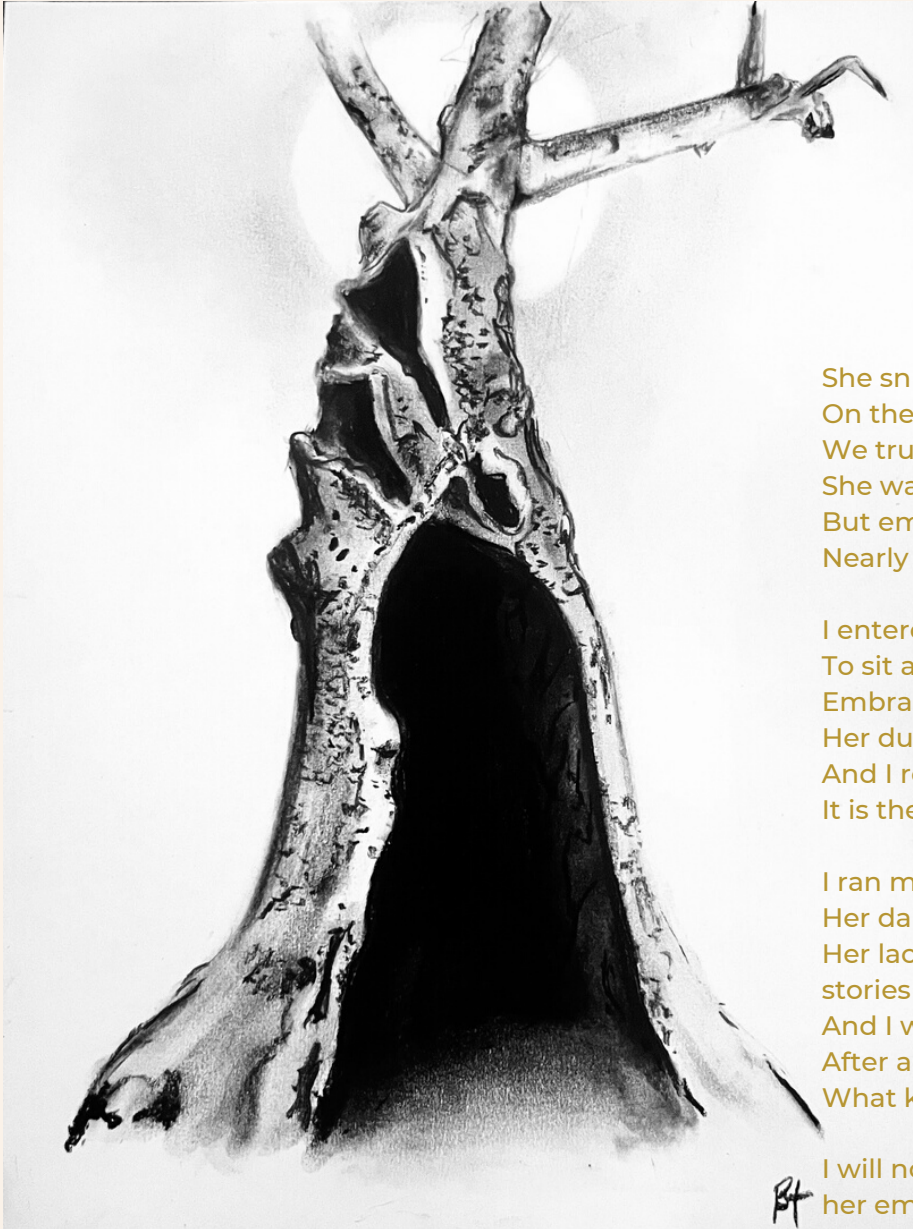


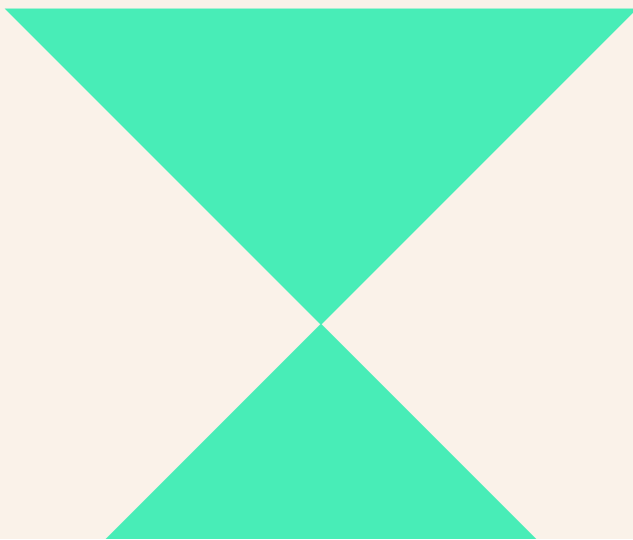
illustration: charcoal, the ashes of willow and vine

She snuck up on me  
On the edge of a creek  
We trudged that winter day.  
She was fierce and powerful  
But empty.  
Nearly completely hollowed out.

I entered in  
To sit at her feet.  
Embraced by the cavern of her wounds.  
Her dust began to cover me  
And I recognized it.  
It is the dust of my bones as well.

I ran my hand gently along her insides  
Her darkness welcomed mine.  
Her lacy, cracked skin whispered to me  
stories of old.  
And I wondered,  
After all this death  
What kept her standing.

I will not romanticize  
her emptiness,  
I will only say  
that somehow  
it sheltered mine



DAY 2  
FEB 23

# MADE ALL OF LIGHT

BY STEPHAN CASURELLA

They are like trees planted by  
streams of water (Psalm 1:3)

Lent can be difficult. It is a necessary taking stock of one's life, choosing between what leads to life and what leads to death, finding oneself through denying oneself, and learning how to become "like trees planted by streams of water" rather than "chaff which the wind blows away." Necessary work, but still difficult.

Lent, though, is also a time for learning how to accept God's unconditional love and grace, even as we acknowledge our failings. During this season, I find it helpful to reflect on a poem by Thomas Campion (1567-1620), which beautifully balances awareness of both sin and grace:

*View me, Lord, a work of thine!  
Shall I then lie drowned in night?  
Might thy grace in me but shine,  
I should seem made all of light.*

*Cleanse me, Lord, that I may kneel  
At thine altar pure and bright;  
They that once thy mercies feel,  
Gaze no more on earth's delight.*

*Worldly joys like shadows fade  
When the heavenly light appears;  
But the covenants Thou hast made,  
Endless, know not days nor years.*

*In thy word, Lord, is my trust,  
To thy mercies fast I fly;  
Though I am but clay and dust,  
Yet thy grace can lift me high.*

I am always particularly moved by that image in the first stanza: so filled are we with God's grace that, were the grace visible light, we would seem to be made entirely of light!

Composer Richard Lloyd (1933-2021) has written a beautiful setting of the poem, which you can listen to by clicking [here](#).

I hope it will open your eyes to see the radiant light of God's grace in you as you journey through Lent to the Cross and, ultimately, the Resurrection.

CLICK  
HERE FOR  
SCRIPTURES  
OF THE DAY

# The True Vine

BY CLAIRE ANNE LONG

DAY 3  
FEB 24

CLICK  
HERE FOR  
SCRIPTURES  
OF THE DAY



illustration: acrylic on paper

*“Jesus said, “I am the true vine, and my Father is the vine grower... If you abide in me,...ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples.”*

I love the imagery of Jesus being the vine. As His followers, we are connected to the root and are fed and supported by His love. God is our caretaker who rejoices in fulfilling our purpose and bearing fruit. This can mean many things but I choose to think of this as our call to be our best selves; bringing meaning and productivity to our lives.

We are part of a rhetorical vineyard, producing sustenance that can provide fruit and drink to weary souls. Instead of a flower garden, this analogy utilizes grapevines that have it all - leaves and flowers before the fruit comes. By living as we are called and utilizing our individual talents and gifts towards the greater good, we all can make a difference. Together we can find joy and fulfillment while doing our part to bring that glory back to our Father.



DAY 4  
FEB 25

CLICK  
HERE FOR  
SCRIPTURES  
OF THE DAY

# RISE

BY EMILY SITES KARNS

*Then your light shall rise in the darkness  
and your gloom be like the noonday (Isaiah 58:10)*



animation with oil, lacquer, light

*Rise, you lighted ones,  
put down your weapons,  
for the mouth of the Lord has spoken.*

*For within your shadow shines  
the lumens of three hundred moons.  
Rise you lighted ones,  
for the mouth of the lord has spoken.*

# MEET THE TEAM



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## **BRIANNA KELLY, EDITOR**

**Artistic Director of  
Spirituality and Imagination**

Brianna lives in Cincinnati, OH with her husband, Stephen, and their dog named Slam Dunk. She directs the music of the Noon Service, leads the Liturgical Arts Collective, and is an experimental folk musician, community song leader, and visual artist.



## **MEGAN SUTTMAN, EDITOR**

**Director of Contemplative  
Imagination and Family  
Engagement**

Megan Suttman is a printmaker and collage artist. She creates contemplative prayer programming, directs the Peaceable Kingdom, and leads Terra Divina, a Wild Church affiliated biweekly gathering.



## **BROOKLIN TAYLOR, COLLABORATOR**

**Director of Spirituality and  
Imagination**

Brooklin Taylor has spent the last 3 years as the Canon of Spirituality and Imagination at the Cathedral. Brooklin loves yoga and gardening, walking and sandwiches. She lives in Loveland with her partner and their two babes.

# CONTRIBUTORS



## STEPHAN CASURELLA

**Canon Precentor and  
Director of Music at CCC**

Organist, conductor, and composer Stephan Casurella was born in England, where he began studying piano, organ and music composition at an early age. He conducts the cathedral choirs, composes sacred choral works, and oversees music for the cathedral's rich liturgical life.



## CLAIRE ANNE LONG

**Visual Artist**

Claire Long has always enjoyed art but since her retirement 3 years ago, she is renting an art studio, taking classes and is active in multiple art groups. She paints mostly in acrylic and loves the creative process. Claire and her husband, Matthew have been attending CCC for almost 2 years and live downtown.



## EMILY SITES KARNS

**Visual Artist**

Emily Sites Karns is a creative creature working and expressing through many different mediums including painting, print making, sculpture and tattoo. She shares the joy of creativity while working together with her husband, Isaac, and her two children, Moses and Salem.



# 2023 LENTEN DEVOTIONAL

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