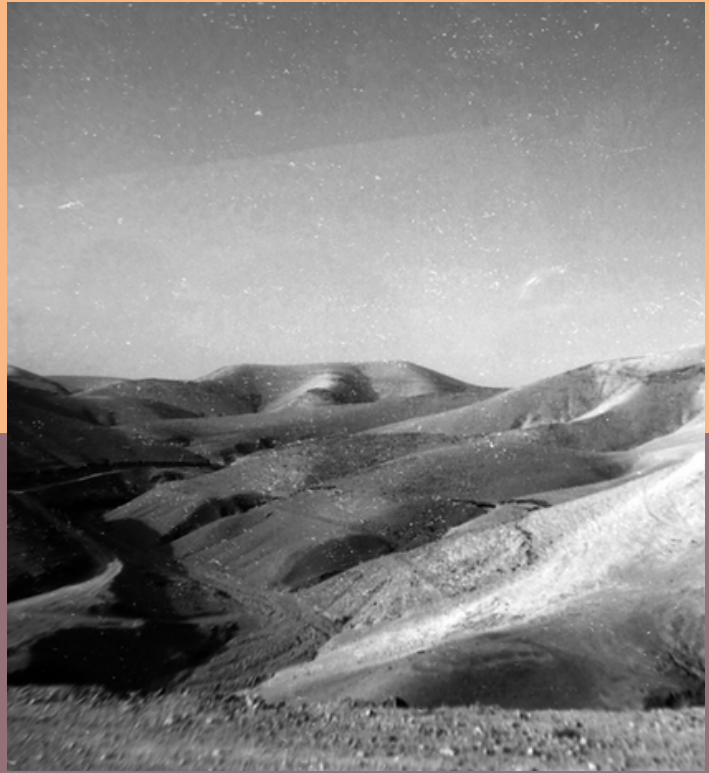


2023 LENTEN DEVOTIONAL  
YEAR A

WEEK FOUR



# 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.



DAY 17  
MAR 13

# Deer by the Water

BY ENA D.



watercolor crayon

[CLICK  
HERE FOR  
SCRIPTURES  
OF THE DAY](#)



play  
music

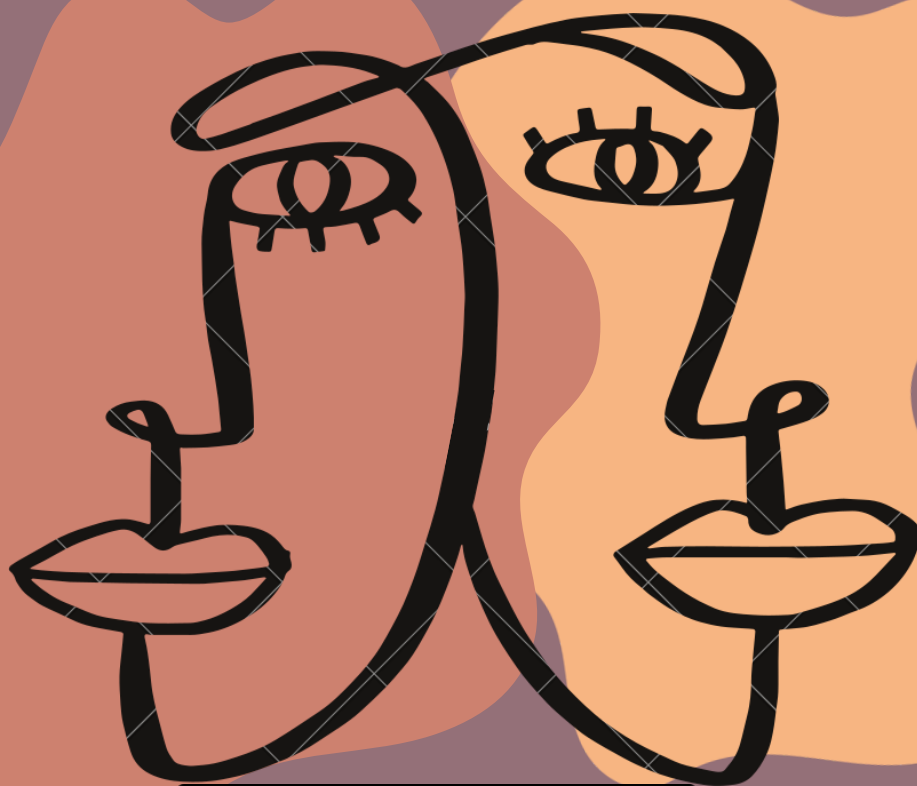


# I AM HIS AND HE IS MINE

BY DREW ABBOTT

DAY 18  
MAR 14

CLICK  
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SCRIPTURES  
OF THE DAY



When asked to reflect upon today's lectionary, I was drawn to the Psalm text, particularly the 5th and 6th verses:

*5 Remember, O Lord,  
your compassion and love,  
for they are from everlasting.*

*6 Remember not the sins of  
my youth and my transgressions;  
remember me according to your  
love and for the sake of your  
goodness, O Lord.*

As I thought about my struggles with God as a young man, I recalled this text set to the beautiful tune Aberystwyth and this setting a friend arranged for me in the mid 1980s. It has meant much to me. I haven't sung this in years, but hope that the intimate, unconditional love expressed here prompts your thoughts and heart as you read today's readings.

## I AM HIS, AND HE IS MINE

POEM BY WADE ROBINSON  
WELSH HYMN TUNE, ABERYSTWYTH, WRITTEN BY JOSEPH PARRY,  
ARRANGED BY BILLY CUTTER  
DREW ABBOTT, TENOR  
SHILOH ROBY, PIANO

LOVED WITH EVERLASTING LOVE  
LED BY GRACE THAT LOVE TO KNOW  
GRACIOUS SPIRIT FROM ABOVE  
THOU HAST TAUGHT ME, IT IS SO.  
O THIS FULL AND PERFECT PEACE,  
O THIS TRANSPORT ALL DIVINE!  
IN A LOVE WHICH CANNOT CEASE  
I AM HIS AND HE IS MINE.

HEAVEN ABOVE IS SOFTER BLUE,  
EARTH AROUND IS SWEETER GREEN!  
SOMETHING LIVES IN EV'RY HUE  
CHRISTLESS EYES HAVE NEVER SEEN.  
BIRDS WITH GLADDER SONGS O'ER FLOW  
FLOW'RS WITH DEEPER BEAUTIES SHINE  
SINCE I KNOW, AS NOW I KNOW  
I AM HIS AND HE IS MINE.

THINGS THAT ONCE WERE WILD ALARMS  
CANNOT NOW DISTURB MY REST.  
CLOSED IN EVERLASTING ARMS,  
PILLOWED ON THE LOVING BREAST,  
O TO LIE FOR EVER HERE  
DOUBT AND CARE AND SELF RESIGN.  
SINCE I KNOW, AS NOW I KNOW,  
I AM HIS AND HE IS MINE.

# THE LAND

BY DAVID MOODY

DAY 19  
MAR 15

CLICK  
HERE FOR  
SCRIPTURES  
OF THE DAY

In a land where mountains stand  
and valleys sit low in the grasslands  
where waterfalls never drip 'cause  
the rivers run quick like a fast wind  
always flowing in this land of milk  
& honey where the hotter it gets  
the colder the water is washing  
over your skin as it keeps on  
running in this land that  
God the Father sculpted  
and gave to man as a gift  
as one grand offering for all  
of His daughters and His sons  
and their kids and their children  
and their offspring to live in this  
land with the charge of teaching  
the next generation of nations  
to keep His commandments  
above all things seeking wisdom  
and discernment remembering  
what the eyes have seen and  
the ears have heard taking care  
to tell the future the story of the  
world and how we got here, lest  
we forget. remember these words  
He said: All the days of your life,  
heed the statutes and ordinances  
that I have given you, observing  
them diligently, and do not add  
or take away anything from what  
I have commanded you for those  
who do what is rightly written in  
stone and teach others to do the  
same will be called great in the  
kingdom of heaven but those who  
don't will be called least so go and  
do what you have heard, what you  
know so that your children and their  
children and their children's children  
might see the goodness that the Lord  
has shown



*You must observe them diligently,  
for this will show your wisdom and  
discernment to the peoples*

DEUTERONOMY 4:6



# LISTEN

BY LOGAN BUCK

DAY 20

MAR 16

CLICK  
HERE FOR  
SCRIPTURES  
OF THE DAY



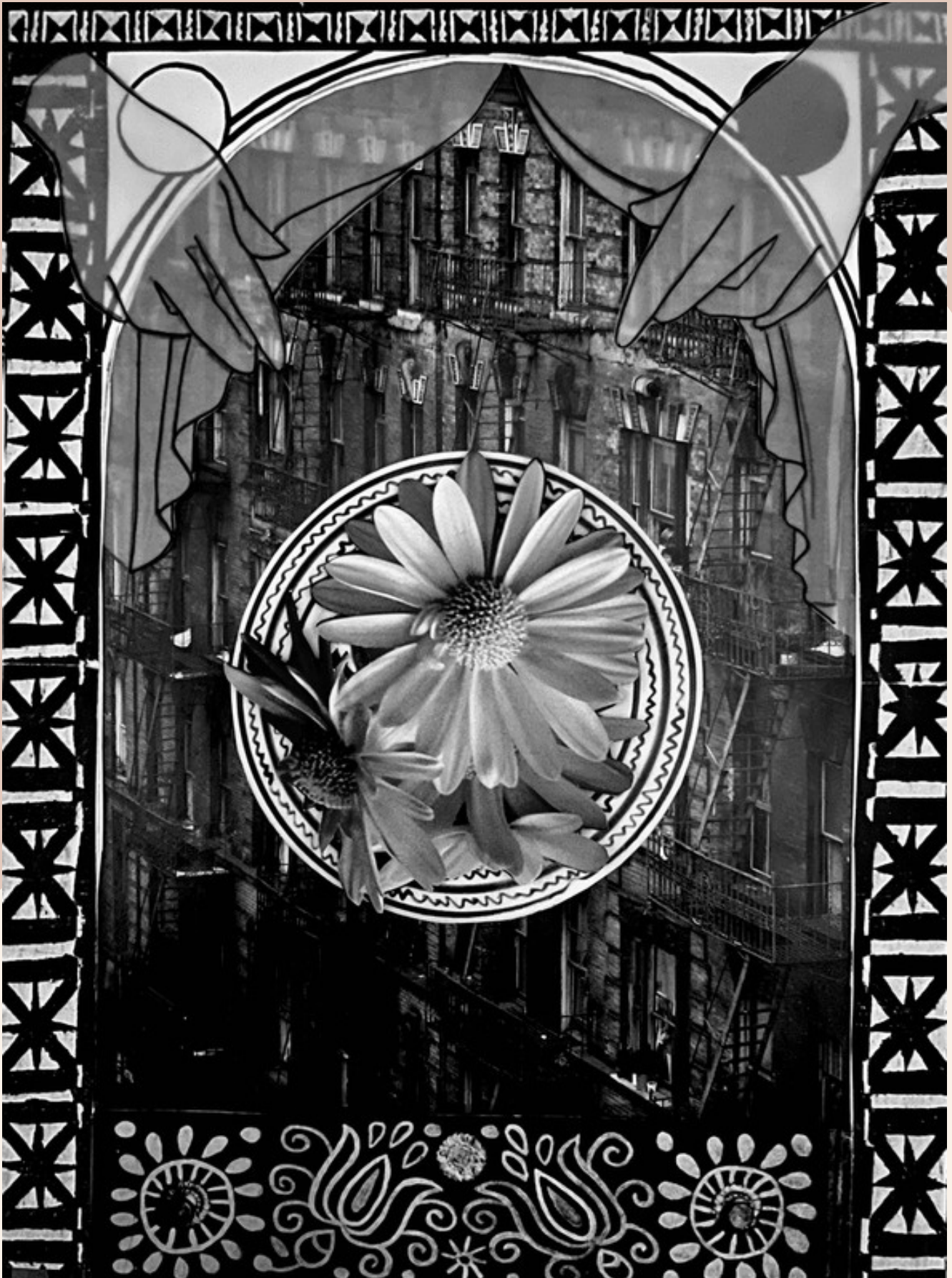
Listen.

There are  
signs of God  
all around us.  
Find a space  
to walk,  
stand, sit or  
lie down and  
Listen.

# *You Are Not Far From the Kingdom of God*

DAY 21  
MAR 17

BY MEGAN SUTTMAN



collage based on Mark 12:28-34

CLICK  
HERE FOR  
SCRIPTURES  
OF THE DAY



# The Prayer of the the Tax Collector

BY BRIANNA KELLY

Sometimes we don't know what to pray or how to pray. Those on the contemplative path know from experience that prayer *is a descent with the mind and into the inner heart*, (St. Theophan the Recluse,) but we still wish there were magic words to invoke God's presence. Other times, we earnestly seek God with our whole wordless being in the tabernacle of our souls and still do not find the presence, consolation, or peace for which we so long.

For many of us in our personal lives, the inclination toward prayer is a mysterious thing, like a wind that blows where it wills; sometimes all we can do is enjoy the breeze when it comes, like a flute or a sail. The goal is always the same; not to become a better version of ourselves, but to *become prayer in the world* by simply being in the intimate, truth-filled presence of God. And yet...

The prayer of the tax collector in this Gospel narrative from Luke 18 is essentially the foundation of what is known as the Jesus Prayer in the Eastern Christian tradition; "*Lord, Jesus Christ, have mercy on me, a sinner.*" Perhaps as widely known as the Lord's Prayer or the Hail Mary, this ancient phrase popularized by the Desert Mothers and Fathers in the 4th century is considered by many to be a "perfect" prayer essential to our spiritual maturity; it declares our faith while humbling us by requesting mercy for our sinfulness. It is both worship and an ascetic discipline to help focus the mind.

According to tradition, repeating this prayer dozens or hundreds of times throughout the day with a sincere and contrite heart has a profound impact on the soul. In a 1998 study by George Stavros, P.h. D, it was found that practicing this prayer for 10 minutes a day for 30 days led to decreased levels of anxiety, depression, interpersonal sensitivity, and hostility, with an increased perception of "nearness to God."

If the goal of prayer is to become prayer in the world, not judgment, we can see where the Pharisee in the Gospel story lost his way to the blindness of spiritual pride. Like many of us on the circuitous and spiraling path toward holiness and wholeness, without a sincere and contrite heart, we are susceptible to the same blindness, self-consciousness, and performative empty ritual. Yet there is as much mercy for the Pharisee as the Tax Collector, if only the hardened heart could be softened to see the invitation to participate in God's restorative grace instead of reinforcing one's own "earned" righteousness...

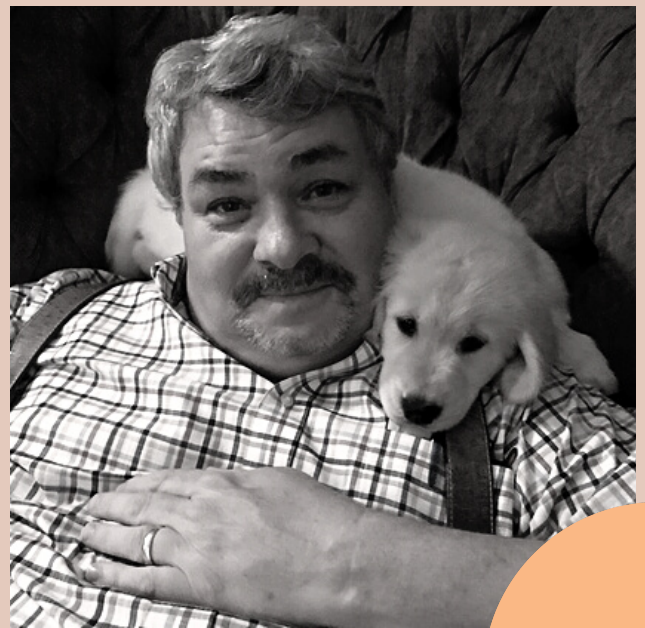
This Lent, let us fast from the need to be seen by others as profound, clever, good, pious, and articulate. Each Sunday as we sing the words Kyrie Eleison, Christe Eleison (*Lord have mercy, Christ have mercy,*) may we be reminded of the power and beauty of simple and sincere prayer, so that we may love with pure hearts.

# CONTRIB UTORS



## ENA D.

Ena is 7. She likes drawing, painting, working with beeswax, and needle felting. She has a cat named bug and three bunnies named Furry, Fluffy, and Feta. One day, she wants to have a farm with one more cat and a dog.



## DREW ABBOTT

Vocal Music



## DAVID MOODY

Poet, Multidisciplinary Artist

David is a multidisciplinary artist from Cincinnati, OH who enjoys writing, painting, and listening to music in his free time.

instagram:

@moody\_\_designs, @moody\_\_writes



## LOGAN BUCK

### Contemplative Craftsman

Logan is a Cincy native who lives with his wife, Katie and cat, Freckles in Clifton. He is a handyman by trade and loves to spend his evenings cooking—especially for friends! Logan grew up an exhausted evangelical and has been enjoying exploring the contemplative world since he started attending CCC a year ago.



## MEGAN SUTTMAN

### Visual Artist

Megan Suttman is a printmaker and collage artist living in Cincinnati, OH. As the Director of Contemplative Imagination and Family Engagement at Christ Church Cathedral, she creates contemplative prayer programming, directs The Peaceable Kingdom, and leads Terra Divina, a Wild Church affiliated biweekly gathering.

## BRIANNA KELLY

### Musician, Multimedia Artist

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.





# 2023 LENTEN DEVOTIONAL

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