Week Six: March 23
Writer: Rev. Melissa Meyers, United alumna, class of 2006

Text: Psalm 31:9–16

9 Be gracious to me, O Lord, for I am in distress; my eye wastes away from grief, my soul and body also.
10 For my life is spent with sorrow, and my years with sighing; my strength fails because of my misery, and my bones waste away.
11 I am the scorn of all my adversaries, a horror to my neighbors, an object of dread to my acquaintances; those who see me in the street flee from me.
12 I have passed out of mind like one who is dead; I have become like a broken vessel.
13 For I hear the whispering of many—terror all around!—as they scheme together against me, as they plot to take my life.
14 But I trust in you, O Lord; I say, ‘You are my God.’
15 My times are in your hand; deliver me from the hand of my enemies and persecutors. Let your face shine upon your servant; save me in your steadfast love.

Reflection:

I’ve found in the church that many would be content to ignore the messy parts of life. It would be much easier to move from the triumphal entry on Palm Sunday to the triumphal resurrection on Easter morning. And yet, in between those two, we have a story rife with pain and heartbreak. It’s a story of dreams ending, of death and despair. To be quite honest, it’s my least favorite part of the Jesus story. Even though it is tempting to sweep through the story with broad strokes, it’s also dangerous to do just that.

When I am in my moments of despair, I turn back through the Psalms. My goodness, those writers know how to write some beautiful laments! I find that through the laments in the Psalms, I am able to find my voice to lift up my angers and heartaches, and yet still cling to the hope that whispers like Psalm 31:14, “But I trust you, O Lord; I say, You are my God.” In the midst of the story that must be told, may we cling to those words of promise that are echoed all throughout this story of Jesus, a story of a God who walks all of the steps of our journey with us.

Personal Prayer:

In you, Father all-mighty, we have our preservation and our bliss.
In you, Christ, we have our restoring and our saving.
You are our mother, brother, and Saviour. In you, our Lord the Holy Spirit, is marvellous and plenteous grace.
You are our clothing; for love you wrap us and embrace us.
You are our maker, our lover, our keeper.
Teach us to believe that by your grace all shall be well, and all shall be well, and all manner of things shall be well. Amen.

— Prayer of Julian of Norwich
Community Prayer Focus:

Lift up laments to God.

Meeting Idea:

Perhaps you have a story of profound disappointment and reminders of hope. Share those with one another. Maybe you don’t consider your story to be profound; share it anyway. There is power in hearing one another’s stories and finding a place to say, “Me too.”