

John 12:1-8

Six days before the Passover Jesus came to Bethany, the home of Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead. There they gave a dinner for him. Martha served, and Lazarus was one of those at the table with him. Mary 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. But Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples (the one who was about to betray him), said, "Why was this perfume not sold for three hundred denarii and the money given to the poor?" (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.) Jesus said, "Leave her alone. She bought it so that she might keep it for the day of my burial. You always have the poor with you, but you do not always have me."

Together, let us praise God's greatness
LET THE HUMBLE LISTEN AND REJOICE

²²The glory that you have given me I have given them, so that they may be one, as we are one, ²³I in them and you in me, that they may become completely one...

John 17

¹⁴But thanks be to God, who in Christ always leads us in triumphal procession, and through us spreads in every place the fragrance that comes from knowing him. ¹⁵For we are the aroma of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing; ¹⁶to the one a fragrance from death to death, to the other a fragrance from life to life. Who is sufficient for these things? ¹⁷For we are not peddlers of God's word like so many; but in Christ we speak as persons of sincerity, as persons sent from God and standing in his presence.

2 Corinthians 2

⁹As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love.

John 15

Making the world smell nice is big business.

There is the commercial where the teenage son sprays his room with Febreze, much to his mom's approval. There are many commercials of people smelling the laundry as it comes out of the dryer, taking deep breaths of lovely fragrances. Some of us can remember how good our clothes smelled after mom or grandma hung the laundry outside to dry.

Perfumes are really big business at Christmas time and maybe Valentine's Day too? Do you ever stop to sample the items at the Dillard's or Macy's perfume and cologne counter? I do enjoy walking through those sections of department stores, or into a bath and body works store, or the Yankee Candle store.

When I was a child, for several years my go-to gift for my dad on any gift giving occasion, birthday, Father's Day, Christmas, was Aqua Velva. He'd usually open it right away and slap some on his face, which made me feel good of course.

The question came up in our men's bible group this week in discussing this passage. What does nard smell like? A quick google search indicates that it smells like pine, or lavender.

I believe both options are available at Yankee Candle!

The moment described in our text, when Mary of Bethany, opens up some nard and begins to anoint Jesus' feet, and wipe them with her hair, is a moment from which multiple thematic and fragrant elements can be inhaled. We can certainly imagine ourselves into that scene and savor the actual pine scented or lavender scented air moving back and forth in our noses as we inhale and exhale. And sitting in that room, as we continue to imagine this, we would certainly be aware that rare indeed is the occasion when we would be in a room enjoying such an expensive fragrance..... the text tells us that the bottle cost about the equivalent of a typical year's income.

Years ago, our friend Wing invited me to stop by at a wine tasting and auction on the Plaza. Apparently it was a fairly high powered fundraiser for a cause I cannot recall now. I went in as his guest----no admission fee or ticket. He was already there when I got there and he invited me over to taste a wine he had poured. I first brought the glass to my nose and inhaled. Wow. I had never smelled such gorgeous smells from a wine glass before. It was clear that this was a wine with a price-tag way out of my league. Sure enough it was.

So maybe we can appreciate that the chance to breathe the nard that Mary had opened would have been a once in a lifetime, or at least a very rare opportunity.

But beyond the fragrance itself, the sensory experience of the fragrance, imagine first, how grateful you might be for the fragrance of Mary's generosity-----to have indulged her guests with such an extravagant gift, a truly precious gift. Imagine how wonderful and precious indeed it would have felt in your heart to have been included in a small group of folks considered by Mary to have been her most treasured friends.....Judas notwithstanding. She had probably invited the disciples and so Judas sort of had to be there. And he certainly does not acquit himself well here. In fact, his remarks sort of stink up the place metaphorically speaking.

But here is what I am getting at, the notion that John in this text might be suggesting that there is another, more significant fragrance than just the nard moving through the room there at her house. And Judas stinky attitude can't stop it.

There is a fragrance of generosity, to be sure. The rare fragrance of the nard giving way, then, to the fragrance of feeling so graced to be a guest of Mary.

Then she begins to anoint Jesus' feet and, with tender and devoted intimacy, wipes his feet with her hair. It's not just nard that has been poured out here, but the depths of her heart, the depths of her love, the depths of her adoration, the depths of her devotion. And Jesus, seems to meet her there with affirmation. The fragrance of her love for Jesus and Jesus' love for her becomes unmistakable in that room. The fragrance of the urgent connection of touch becomes unmistakable in that room. It's a gorgeous, sacred moment.

And yet, not too many days will go by, when the risen Jesus will say to another Mary, Mary Magdalene, who is, like Mary of Bethany, eager to touch him, "do not cling to me. I have not yet ascended." There is the suggestion that an even deeper kind of connection, a more sacred connection, more sacred than touch, is soon to come. Then the risen Jesus says to Thomas, while Thomas is touching him, "blessed are those who will not need to see or touch me to experience me, to love me, and to be loved by me."

Closer than Mary of Bethany had ever imagined possible, Christ abides in glory in the depth of OUR being, as a light no darkness can extinguish--his being in communion with our being. It's a beautiful space. In that space Christ breathes the Holy Spirit, and we inhale peace. In Christ's abiding, God also abides, and there is perfect oneness, us in Christ, Christ in God, and us in one another. Unity. Wholeness. Peace. Far more precious and beautiful than nard, Unity, Wholeness, Peace, THIS is the fragrance God is even now, through us, pouring out into the world, moment by moment, as we dwell in Christ's love.

...THE HOUSE WAS FILLED

NORTH OAK CHRISTIAN CHURCH-DISCIPLINES OF CHRIST

April 7, 2019 FIFTH SUNDAY IN LENT

In Jesus' Name, Greetings!

Music for Gathering

O Christ, give us the gift of looking towards you at every moment
SO OFTEN WE FORGET THAT YOU LIVE WITHIN US, THAT YOU ARE PRAYING WITHIN US
To seek you is to discover that you are already loving us and we did not know it
HAPPY ARE THOSE WHO SURRENDER THEMSELVES TO YOU

Lighting of the Candles

“Divine love attracts all to itself.” Thomas Keating

16 Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing

Sharing Christ's Peace

259 Spirit of the Living God 2X

The Morning Prayer and Musical Response

Silence

“Words are all we have and words won't do” Alan Jones

Children's Circle

All children thru 5th grade are welcome to come forward. A small outreach offering will be collected for our money jar. Following this time of sharing and prayer, children may attend their very own “Worship and Wonder” time together in our classroom annex. Child care is offered for infants and toddlers but they are also welcome in the sanctuary.

Prayer for Illumination

Light from light, creation from chaos, life from death, all your gifts, all your love, all your power
ALL FROM YOUR WORD, FRESH FROM YOUR WORD, SAVING GOD. AMEN.

THE GOSPEL JOHN 12: 1-8

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost

As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end, amen amen.

The Meditation “In a Beautiful Space” Rev. Rob Carr

Glorious is the life of the soul when illumined by the Spirit.

All goodness comes from Divine Love, the Source of all life.

From the chalice of our hearts we offer praise.

Fill us, Gracious One, with Your Wisdom.

Guide our hearts into the path of peace. Amen.

Silent and spoken personal prayers of thanksgiving confession, intercession

Vocal Solo Suzie Sutton

The Offering

Praise God from Whom all blessings flow, Praise God all creatures here below

Praise God above ye heavenly host, Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost

CELEBRATION OF HOLY COMMUNION

We are Disciples of Christ, a movement for wholeness in a fragmented world.
As part of the one body of Christ, we welcome all to the Lord's Table as God has welcomed us.

349 My Jesus I Love Thee

Teach us your ways Lord

**THAT WE MAY BE OPEN TO THE SAME SPIRIT
WHO MOVED OVER THE FACE OF THE WATERS**

Who moves over the chaos of these times
**SWEEPING US UP INTO WORSHIP, SHAPING OUR LIVES
INTO AN IRREPRESSIBLE YES TO YOU**

Filled to the brim with wonder, gratitude and obedience
LIBERATING OUR WEARY MINDS WITH FRESH DREAMS

Welcome to the Table
The Words of Institution

The Communion Prayer
The 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 sins as we forgive those who sin 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, amen.

Following the Lord's Prayer, please come forward by rows to receive the loaf and the cup.

The cup is non-alcoholic by choice of the congregation

Gluten free crackers are available on the table for those who prefer this option

Children also celebrate communion weekly as part of "Worship and Wonder"

560 Leaning on the Everlasting Arms vss 1 and 3

We are marked as Christ's own, held in God's constant love
LIVE YOUR YEARNING IN US O GOD, FOR LOVE IS STRONG AS DEATH. AMEN

TO OUR GUESTS-----WELCOME!

**SHAPED BY GOD'S WORD AND GRACED AT CHRIST'S TABLE
WE WALK HUMBLY, LOVE DEEPLY, LIVE SIMPLY, AND SERVE JOYFULLY**

We are delighted to include you today. Your presence and participation is a gift to us all. We hope you experience among us the warm spirit of our family of faith and the gracious touch of Christ upon your life. Refreshments and welcoming conversation are available after worship in the Community Room just down the hall. More information about NOCC and the Disciples of Christ is available via

Facebook and these websites

www.nocckc.org www.kcdisciples.org www.disciples.org

OUR LIFE TOGETHER

THIS WEEK

TODAY 5PM SERVICE OF PRAYER FOR HEALING AND WHOLENESS

Monday 6PM Troop 900
Tuesday 945AM Men's Bible Group
Tuesday 1230PM Women's Bible Group
Tuesday 6PM Pack 900
Wednesday 1PM Vital Conversations at Antioch Library
Wednesday 6PM SOUP SUPPER
Wednesday 7PM Music Ministry
Thursday 6PM NOCC Board
Saturday 6PM Recording Session in Sanctuary
NEXT SUNDAY--HOSANNA!!

UPCOMING

REZOUND BELL CHOIR IN CONCERT NEXT SUNDAY 3PM

Blessing of the Animals Follows Worship April 28

YOU, ME AND THE ENNEAGRAM MAY 11, 16, 23

JULY 22-23 DISCIPLES GENERAL ASSEMBLY IN DES MOINES

CHERITH BROOK NEWS

A workday has been announced for SATURDAY APRIL 13 9AM to NOON. All manner of tasks will be planned for willing workers, followed by lunch. RSVP by April 11 to 816.241.8047 or email cherithbrookkcmo@gmail.com

YOGA BENEFIT FOR CHERITH BROOK APRIL 12 630-730PM "Get Down Dog" is open to all who want to bring a yoga mat to Power Life at 1480 Grand. This is a free will donation event with all funds going to Cherith Brook. This event is sponsored by GIVE SEVEN DAYS.

We are seeking an NOCC person to serve as a liaison between the church and our Scout Troop and Pack. This person would offer occasional presence at their meetings and extend NOCC hospitality to our Scout friends to assure a healthy working relationship. Contact Rob or Elzene if interested.