

# Lenten Worship through the Senses: Week 2, Scent

St. Andrew Lutheran Church

Wednesday, March 19, 2025

PRELUDE

O *Living Breath of God*, arr. Mark Sedio  
Susan Werner Reiser, piano

*The assembly stands.*

GATHERING LITANY

For these forty days, we journey with Jesus down the Lenten path. As we gather, we seek to experience the ways Christ's embodied life demonstrates God's love for us.

**We come with hearts open to learn.**

We will listen to stories of Jesus' life and of God's people, because they teach us how God calls us to live in the world.

**We come to learn from the stories of God's ancient people, Christ's life, and the church.**

We will engage through our senses with the power and mystery of the world God made, because this exploration calls us into wonder.

**We come to learn through the gifts of our senses.**

We will light candles to remind each other of the fullness of Christ's presence with us in our worship and in our world.

**We come to learn how to better see and reflect the light of Christ.**

We will pray as Jesus taught us and send each other back into daily life with a deeper connection to the life and love of Jesus.

**We come to learn how to live more fully in the embodied image of God.**

## OPENING PRAYER

God incarnate,  
you have given us a sense of smell to breathe in awareness of the world around us and to connect with our own memories. Open our minds and our hearts to receive the gifts you have for us, and teach us to share these gifts with the world. Amen.

## GATHERING HYMN

O Living Breath of God  
see insert

*The assembly is seated.*

## READING

John 12:1-8

As we listen to the story of a gift of love and preparation, notice the description of how the scent of the perfume fills the room. Consider how this sensory description underlays and amplifies the heavy emotions at play in this scene.

A reading from John.

<sup>1</sup>Six days before the Passover Jesus came to Bethany, the home of Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead. <sup>2</sup>There they gave a dinner for him. Martha served, and Lazarus was one of those reclining with him. <sup>3</sup>Mary took a pound of costly perfume made of pure nard, anointed Jesus's feet, and wiped them with her hair. The house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume. <sup>4</sup>But Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples (the one who was about to betray him), said, <sup>5</sup>"Why was this perfume not sold for three hundred denarii and the money given to the poor?" <sup>6</sup>(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.) <sup>7</sup>Jesus said, "Leave her alone. She

bought it so that she might keep it for the day of my burial. <sup>8</sup>You always have the poor with you, but you do not always have me.”

Word of God, word of life.

**Thanks be to God.**

## MEDITATION STATIONS

*Verbal introduction of the stations concludes with the following dialogue:*

God gave us a sense of smell to perceive the world around us.

**Our senses are open for the lessons God provides.**

*The assembly stands.*

## THANKSGIVING FOR THE EMBODIED GOD

God has created and blessed us. In Jesus, God has joined us in the experience of embodied life as an expression of God's own love and joy. Through exploration of our own physical senses we are invited to know God in new ways.

**In thanksgiving for the gift of incarnation, we light our candles.**

*Pause for the sharing of the light.*

Through the beauty of the candle's light,  
**we see the brightness of God's love shining in every darkness.**

Through the warmth of the candle's heat,  
**we feel the strength of God's love burning through all obstacles.**

In the scent of the candle's wax,  
**we remember the promise that our prayers rise up as incense to God.**

In the flavor of the candle's smoke on our breath,  
**we taste the persistence of God's love,  
surviving the flames and taking new form.**

In the sound of the candle's flame crackling,  
**we hear the dance of God's love, which we are invited to join.**

May the light, warmth, scent, flavor, and sound of our candles lead us deeper  
into the love of God today and always.

**Amen.**

#### LORD'S PRAYER

**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your  
will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread.  
Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from  
the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power,  
and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.**

*Candles may be extinguished.*

#### SENDING HYMN

Now Rest beneath Night's Shadow  
see insert

#### BLESSING & DISMISSAL

May the Creator God, who made you whole, bless you in body and in spirit  
now and forever.

**Amen.**

Go in peace, open to the presence of Christ all around you.

**Thanks be to God.**

#### POSTLUDE

*Now Rest beneath Night's Shadow*, arr. Kurt Oliver  
Susan Werner Reiser, piano

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