

thresh·old /'THreSH,(h)ōld/

a point of entry or beginning.

the magnitude or intensity that must be exceeded for a certain reaction, phenomenon, result, or condition to occur or be manifested.

✠ **FPC BELLINGHAM** January 8, 2023

Welcome to Vespers.

Please make yourself at home.

This service is designed to be very casual. Feel free to move about the building, giving yourself and others space.

Poem

Finisterre
//David Whyte

The road in the end taking the path the sun had taken,
into the western sea, and the moon rising behind you
as you stood where ground turned to ocean: no way
to your future now but the way your shadow could take,
walking before you across water, going where shadows go,
no way to make sense of a world that wouldn't let you pass
except to call an end to the way you had come,
to take out each frayed letter you had brought
and light their illumined corners; and to read
them as they drifted on the western light;
to empty your bags; to sort this and to leave that;
to promise what you needed to promise all along,
and to abandon the shoes that had brought you here
right at the water's edge, not because you had given up
but because now, you would find a different way to tread,
and because, through it all, part of you would still walk on,
no matter how, over the waves.

Song

The Lord Our God is Good
//Paul Zach

**The Lord our God is good
The Lord our God is good
Full of kindness and compassion
Merciful and just
The Lord our God is good**

Who else knows our deepest pain
Bears it as His own
Find us in our naked shame
Clothes and brings us home?

Who takes His inheritance
And gives it all away
Welcomes guests to feast with Him
Who never can repay?

Reflect +
Respond
Song

Candles of remembrance
and intention

Mercy and Grace
//Sandra Cracken

**Teach us to number our days
That we may apply our hearts to Your ways
O! Teach us to number our days
With wisdom and grace, wisdom and grace.
Wisdom and grace, wisdom and grace**

You've been our home and our dwelling
Our place in all generations.
Before the earth or the mountains were formed,
Lord, You were God.

Now the span of our lives,
It is made of sorrow and labor
As the days pass away like the grass
How soon we are gone.

Let the work of our hands bring you praise,
Set Your favor upon us.
O establish the work of our hands,
May Your kingdom come!

Litany

Litany for the Journey
//Fran Pratt

Holy Spirit, Lover of our souls:
You have set us in this world
Each with intention, destiny, and purpose,
And given us opportunities to know you
To connect with you,
And to become our best selves.

You have given us freedom of choice on this journey.
In love you have allowed us to choose
Whether we will listen and pay attention to you;
Whether we will love you.

We choose you, our Friend and Redeemer.
Make our lives a testament to your love.
We don't want to settle for surface level
Or for a spirituality that never changes us.

Help us to be patient with the process of growth,
To even enjoy it;
To be present with the journey of life, spirit, soul
To dig deep and uncover whatever is hidden
And bring it to light (Matthew 10:26).
To encounter our inner darkness without fear
To look for beauty, and do its work;
We set our intentions toward life and light.

We know that we are our best selves
When we are most aware of your grace towards us.
Walk with us on this journey of life
Now and forever.

Amen

Song

Way Maker
//Osinachi Kalu Okoro Egbu

You are here moving in our midst
I worship You I worship You
You are here working in this place
I worship You I worship You

(You are) **Way Maker Miracle Worker Promise Keeper**
Light in the darkness my God that is who You are

You are here touching ev'ry heart
I worship You I worship You
You are here healing ev'ry heart
I worship You I worship You

You are here turning lives around
I worship You I worship You
You are here mending ev'ry heart
I worship You yeah I worship You Lord

Scripture

Matthew 9:9-16
The Calling of Matthew

Song

New Wine
//Brooke Ligertwood

In the crushing in the pressing
You are making new wine
In the soil I now surrender
You are breaking new ground
(You are breaking new ground)

**So I yield to You and to Your careful hand
When I trust You I don't need to understand**

**(So) Make me Your vessel
Make me an offering
Make me whatever You want me to be
(God) I came here with nothing
But all You have given me
Jesus bring new wine out of me**

*'Cause where there is new wine
There is new power
There is new freedom
And the kingdom is here
I lay down my old flames
To carry Your new fire today*

Story

A Threshold's Edge
//Kerrie Bauer

a Psalm

Psalm 121

Song

Psalm 24:7-10
//Eshinee Veith

Let us worship God for he made us
Let us worship God for he made us

Who is the King of Glory? The Lord of might and power.
Who is the King of Glory? The Lord, strong in battle.

Who is the King of Glory? The Lord of hosts, he is the king.
Of glory; The Lord of hosts, he is the King.

Gates, raise up your heads; stand up, eternal doors.
Let the king of glory enter.

Poem

Leaving the Liminal
//John Freal

Although we learn to run
from brokenness – our own and that
of others – we are made to notice it.
Slowly we learn to open our hearts
in hospitality and our world to justice.
We can remain for a time on a threshold.
Help us see the shalom and the suffering,
the outcasts and the strangers,
and the revelations that they bring.

Help us see the blessings of the liminal
so we will find the courage to cross.
When we cross a border,
a road, a threshold, or a room,
what was outside can come alive
among us and within us.
Crossing spaces makes them different
and can turn borders to welcome mats.

Love not our own connects us,
opens us to the borders that we did not set,
the bridges we did not make, and the doors
we neither opened nor closed.
Love learns and grows, makes space and heals,
even breaks rules, opening our eyes and hearts.
Help us bring courage to times of transition.

The priest and the Levite did not cross.
Seeking God in the temple or on the mountain
seemed to make a difference to them.
Though in our own practiced deafness
we should not condemn them,
perhaps even extend our sympathies.
Crossing is not so much a virtue
as a calling we can hope to hear.

The oil and wine from the Samaritan
for the wounded traveler did not shatter further
and found the particular suffering
and knew the cost of hospitality.
That life, all life, is a gift given in love.
The journey is not only the one
going down from Jerusalem to Jericho
on our own business, but the orthogonal
one across the road where we make a space
to receive a gift and hear a calling.

Song

Graves Into Gardens

//B. Lake, C. Brown, S. Furtick, T. Hammer

I searched the world but it couldn't fill me
Man's empty praise and treasures that fade
Are never enough
Then You came along and put me back together
And every desire is now satisfied here in Your love

Oh there's nothing better than You
There's nothing better than You
Lord there's nothing
Nothing is better than You

I'm not afraid to show You my weakness
My failures and flaws
Lord You've seen them all
And You still call me friend
'Cause the God of the mountain
Is the God of the valley
There's not a place
Your mercy and grace won't find me again

You turn mourning to dancing
You give beauty for ashes
You turn shame into glory
You're the only one who can

You turn graves into gardens
You turn bones into armies
You turn seas into highways
You're the only one who can

Benediction

*Please take as long as you want in the sanctuary,
and when you do leave, do so quietly.
Thank you for being here!*

*If you would like to participate in a
future vespers service, please contact:*

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