

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!*

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

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