

# Gifts of the Dark Wood

Sunday, March 12



Our journey through the Dark Wood invites us to the gift of emptiness. Many of us sometime feel empty inside and we fear that there is nothing there of worth. But what if we let go of our obsession with worthiness and released into the idea that if we want to be filled -- to find God -- getting empty is the best way. God will find us! In our journey toward the Cross, we know even Jesus felt empty despair ... and it was at this moment that God's possibility of life beyond that pain was revealed.

**This week we focus on “The Gift of Emptiness”**

## **Prayer**

Trusted Love, enter our lives  
and open us to the gifts residing deep within the Holy Darkness of our lives.

Help us to empty ourselves  
with every breath.

Make room in us  
so that you might take up residence  
in the very marrow of our bones.  
In your many names, we pray. Amen.

## Scripture Readings

From noon until three in the afternoon the whole earth was dark. At three, Jesus cried out with a loud shout, “Eloi, eloi, lama sabachthani,” which means, “My God, my God, why have you left me?”

*Mark 15: 22-38 (CEB)*

“Whoever tries to preserve their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life will preserve it.”

*Luke 17:33 CEB*

## Contemporary Reading

“Like a wild animal, soul is tough, resilient, resourceful, savvy, and self-sufficient: it knows how to survive in hard places. I learned about these qualities during my bouts with depression. In that deadly darkness, the faculties I had always depended on collapsed. My intellect was useless; my emotions were dead; my will was impotent; my ego was shattered. But from time to time, deep in the thickets of my inner wilderness, I could sense the presence of something that knew how to stay alive even when the rest of me wanted to die. That something was my tough and tenacious soul.” ~ Parker Palmer (57)

## Reflection

This week, we focus on how the things that fill us -- like ego, fear of being unloved, worry of not measuring up, need to be emptied so that we might live. You are invited to write something on a piece of paper that you need to let go of, that needs to die in order that you can live more fully. Then when you are ready, crumple that paper up and throw it away as a symbolic release of letting it go.

Check with Pastor Martha or add the benediction ...