

**Life on the Edge of Faith**  
*Soup and Sandwich Lenten Series*

Wednesday evenings, beginning with food at 6:00 p.m.  
Worship and discussion following

Five characters bear witness to the world-changing event which forces them right to the “edge of faith” Each perspective comes from someone present at our Lord’s Passion. Through the confusion of these characters we may find a voice for the confusion that we all experience from time to time.

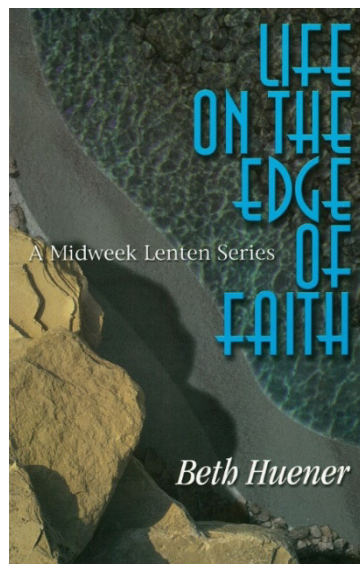
**March. 4 – Sleeping Disciple**

**March 11 –High Priest**

**March 18 – Maid**

**March 25 – Soldier**

**April 1 – City Dweller**



**Life on The Edge of Faith**  
*Ash Wednesday Worship Service*

**Opening Litany – Joel 2:12-14**

<sup>12</sup>Yet even now, says the Lord,  
**return to me with all your heart,**  
with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning;  
<sup>13</sup>**rend your hearts and not your clothing.**

Return to the Lord, your God,  
**for he is gracious and merciful,**  
slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love,  
**and relents from punishing.**

<sup>14</sup>Who knows whether he will not turn and relent,  
**and leave a blessing behind him,**  
a grain offering and a drink offering  
**for the Lord, your God?**

**Imposition of Ashes**

**Psalm 51:1-18, Stanza 1**

Have mercy on me, O God, according to your unfailing love;  
**According to your great compassion blot out my transgressions.**

Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin.

**For I know my transgressions, and my sin is always before me.**

Against you, you only, have I sinned

**And done what is evil in your sight,**

So that you are proved right when you speak

**And justified when you judge.**

Surely I was sinful at birth,

**Sinful from the time my mother conceived me.**

**Confession of Sins**

Gracious and life-giving God, we stand before you knowing that without your authority in our lives, an authority which comes to us as gently as the sun shine and as suddenly and as powerfully as an earth quake and yet comes to us at every moment, lacking that present and omnipotent

maintenance, we cease to exist. While this is so, still you stand before us with your hands outstretched, offering us your forgiveness.

**Though we are unworthy, Lord, forgive us.**

*Right Side: When we fail to bring your love into consideration or when we slip into apathy or despair about the world,*

*Left side: When we fail to take strength and courage from the example of your Son,*

**Though we are unworthy, Lord, forgive us.**

*Right Side: When, by our inaction, we allow justice, greed, selfishness, and even cruelty to go unchecked,*

*Left Side: When by our inaction, we allow your truth to go unspoken and undefended, ignored and mocked,*

**Though we are unworthy, Lord, forgive us.**

*Right Side: When with our apathy and despair, we fall into dangerous, abusive, and destructive habits,*

*Left Side: Or allow our hopelessness to turn into cynicism or into the deadly desire for power, wealth, or other forms of earthly corruptible security,*

**Though we are unworthy, Lord, forgive us.**

*Right Side: When in our weakness and fear, we allow ourselves to be dragged down into a place, in which we see no way to live which does not involve sinful behavior,*

*Left Side: And perhaps find our strength and our courage in sin instead of your goodness,*

**Though we are unworthy, Lord, forgive us.**

*Right Side: When we find profane power and treacherous security in acts of injustice, greed, selfishness, and cruelty,*

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

#### **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 trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass 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 and ever. Amen.**

#### **Prayer After Communion**

We give you thanks, Lord that you have welcomed us, unworthy as we are, into your presence. Fill us with a gratitude born of the knowledge of your Son's sacrifice and send us forth to embrace the freedom and joy this sacrifice brings. **Amen.**

#### **Blessing and Dismissal**

Now is the acceptable time. Now is the day of salvation. Holy God, † bless you, unbind you, and send you in love and in peace. **Amen.**

Go in peace. Share the good news.

**Thanks be to God.**

*Left Side: And allow others to pay the cost for that power and security,*

**Though we are unworthy, Lord, forgive us.**

*Right Side: When we neglect the truth that your Son died to show us, and when, with our fearful doubt and our lack of support, we abuse those who try to spread that truth with words and actions,*

*Left Side: When we show the world how little your love really means to us,*

**Though we are unworthy, Lord, forgive us.**

We lay our lives, unworthy of even a glance from you, at your feet and beg you for mercy, not because of anything we have done or can hope to do, but because of your Son's sacrifice that paid our debt.

**Humbly, we give you thanks. Amen.**

#### **Psalm 51, Stanza 2**

Surely you desire truth in the inner parts;

**You teach me wisdom in the inmost place.**

Cleanse me with hyssop, and I will be clean;

**Wash me, and I will be whiter than snow.**

Let me hear joy and gladness;

**Let the bones you have crushed rejoice.**

Hide your face from my sins

**And blot out all my iniquity.**

Create in me a pure heart, O God,

**And renew a steadfast spirit within me.**

Do not cast me from your presence

**Or take your Holy Spirit from me.**

Restore to me the joy of your salvation

**And grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me.**

#### **Gospel Lesson – Luke 18:9-14**

<sup>9</sup>[Jesus] also told this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous and regarded others

with contempt: <sup>10</sup>Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. <sup>11</sup>The Pharisee, standing by himself, was praying thus, 'God, I thank you that I am not like other people: thieves, rogues, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. <sup>12</sup>I fast twice a week; I give a tenth of all my income.' <sup>13</sup>But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even look up to heaven, but was beating his breast and saying, 'God, be merciful to me, a sinner!' <sup>14</sup>I tell you, this man went down to his home justified rather than the other; for all who exalt themselves will be humbled, but all who humble themselves will be exalted."

**Sermon Hymn**      *"Existing on the Edge of Faith"*

**Existing on the edge of faith,  
Christ's promised peace alone we seek  
Grant us the strength to look at you,  
We fear our lives are frail and weak.**

**Your gift of faith fills us with hope  
That life can be forever bright  
But faced with this world's hungry lies,  
We feel our hearts lose your love's light.**

**Teach us the humble road to walk.  
Open our hearts to your embrace  
Then we can show the world your love,  
With acts of mercy, joy, and grace.**

**Sermon**

**Prayers of The People**

Dear Lord, grant to all who come before you this night, the peace of your presence. We do not pray this so that you will do it, for you are ever present. We pray that all who invoke your presence will feel its warmth in spite of the coldness of the world, will see it shining through even the brightest, fleeting glitter of our misdirected hopes, and will hear it

above the traffic of our desires which continually roars in our ears. Our heads deeply bowed,

**We pray to you, O Lord.**

Draw us more deeply, Lord, into the faith that can be ours through your Holy Spirit. Remind us that sins which keep us from embracing that faith have been rendered harmless by the crucifixion and resurrection of your Son. Surround our lives with your loving presence, Holy God, Three in One, so that neither fear nor loneliness can invade our lives and lead us from you. Our heads deeply bowed,

**We pray to you, O Lord.**

During these next six weeks, Lord, help us to repent of our distance from you, distances which we have allowed, not only because of fear or loneliness, but because of selfishness and laziness as well. Teach us to feel the dread of that distance so that we feel the joy of your nearness. Our heads deeply bowed,

**We pray to you, O Lord.**

We thank you, Lord, because you have promised that you will be with your creation this night, that you will comfort the fearful, strengthen the weak, be present to the lonely, and encourage the faithful. Help us to work to be your hands and feet in and among your people. Our heads deeply bowed,

**We pray to you, O Lord.**

Standing on the edge of faith, we beg you to hold us up, dear Lord, with your gift of peace and hear our prayers.

**Amen.**

**Words of Institution**

In the night in which he was betrayed our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.