



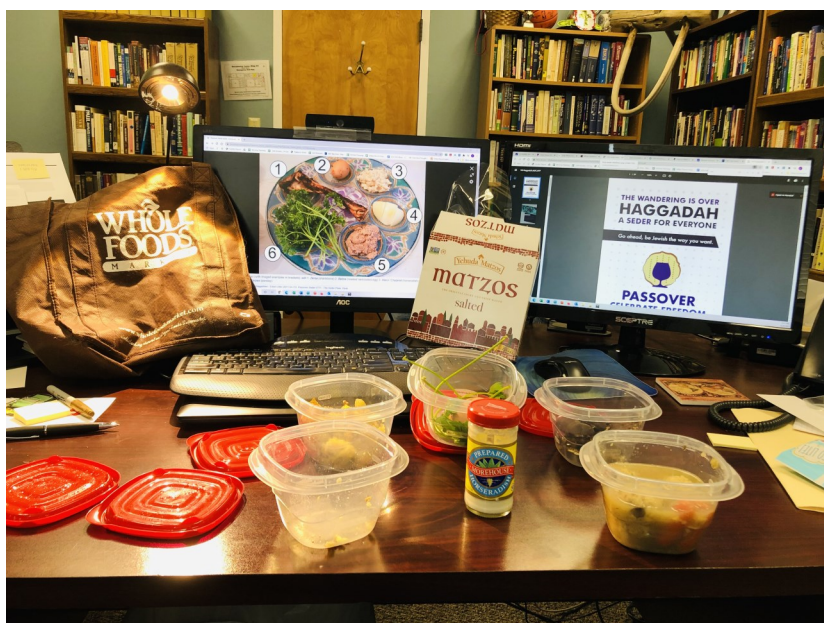
**BETWEEN 6:00 AM—9:00 AM: A DESKTOP SEDER, THANKS TO LISA.**

I entered the Zoom room last Sunday night and heard a chorus of “Chag Sameachs!” from the other guests. This is the Hebrew greeting that urges the recipient to have a happy Passover holiday. Thus began my own cheerful seder dinner with Lisa, her husband Rick, their daughter Sarah, and a number of their close friends.

A little background. I met Lisa in a Hebrew class four years ago at Congregation Beth David in Saratoga and we became fast friends. She invited me to a seder at her home (my first one) three years ago and now Becky and I are invited every year. Lisa was a lively guest at our Alpha course. The best picture I could find of her is below. She’s sitting next to Alex Auer.

Sadly, the seder was on Zoom because of Covid. This posed a problem because I didn’t have the many elements and knew that I’d have a hard time collecting them myself. Lisa anticipated my need and said, “Don’t worry. I’ve got you covered.” So, on Sunday afternoon after Church on the Grass, Lisa dropped by the church with a Whole Foods bag. Inside I found everything I needed for the meal, carefully separated into small plastic containers.

The Passover meal is divided into 14 specific steps. (“Seder” means “order” in Hebrew. In fact, “Seder Yom” means “agenda” or “to do list” in modern Hebrew.) We slowly relived the story of the Israelites’ liberation from bondage in Egypt. It’s very moving. Lisa led our group as we read from the “Haggadah,” the Seder text with the narrative and blessings.



Notice the small glass container of horseradish at the bottom of the picture above. My Haggadah read: “On all other nights we eat all kinds of vegetables. Tonight we eat bitter herbs.” (See Ex. 12:8.) Along with the shank bone, representing the Passover lamb, and the matzah, Jews eat bitter herbs to provide a visceral reminder of the painfully brutal and dehumanizing experience of slavery.

This week we Christians celebrate our deliverance from the Egypt of Sin and Death through the life, death, resurrection and ascension of our Passover Lamb, the Lord Jesus. Let’s praise God for our suffering and triumphant Emancipator.

Jews end the Seder by singing songs that praise God. Often these are from the Psalms. To celebrate our spiritual freedom, let’s sing. You might try “Jesus, My Redeemer,” by Chris Tomlin which you can find



online. We’ll also put the lyrics for “When I Survey the Wondrous Cross” on the next page.

## Lyrics for “When I Survey the Wondrous Cross” by Isaac Watts.

### Verse 1

When I survey the wondrous cross  
On which the Prince of glory died  
My richest gain I count but loss  
And pour contempt on all my pride

### Verse 2

See from His head His hands His feet  
Sorrow and love flow mingled down  
Did e'er such love and sorrow meet  
Or thorns compose so rich a crown

### Verse 3

Were the whole realm of nature mine  
That were an offering far too small  
Love so amazing so divine  
Demands my soul my life my all



**BETWEEN 9:00 AM—12:00 PM: OILED FOR KINGSHIP THROUGH CRUSHING.**



On Wednesday of Holy Week, Matthew reports that an anonymous woman witnessed to others about the excruciating path Jesus would take at the end of the week. She did so wordlessly, and with costly and symbolic actions. Her mute but crystal clear testimony stands in contrast to many other false and erratic witnesses. For example, religious leaders sought slanderous testimony about Jesus (Matt. 26:59-60). Bumbling Peter asserted a vision for Jesus that sidestepped suffering (Matt. 16:22). All the disciples fled when the heat increased (Matt. 26:56). But this woman evoked the truth about Jesus’

path and identified herself with him in a way that the world will never forget. Let’s read the story.

**Matt. 26:6** *Now when Jesus was at Bethany in the house of Simon the leper,*

**Matt. 26:7** *a woman came up to him with an alabaster flask of very expensive ointment, and she poured it on his head as he reclined at table.*

**Matt. 26:8** *And when the disciples saw it, they were indignant, saying, “Why this waste?”*

**Matt. 26:9** *For this could have been sold for a large sum and given to the poor.”*

**Matt. 26:10** *But Jesus, aware of this, said to them, “Why do you trouble the woman? For she has done a beautiful thing to me.*

**Matt. 26:11** *For you always have the poor with you, but you will not always have me.*

**Matt. 26:12** *In pouring this ointment on my body, she has done it to prepare me for burial.*

**Matt. 26:13** *Truly, I say to you, wherever this gospel is proclaimed in the whole world, what she has done will also be told in memory of her.”*

Consider the reaction of the disciples (“*This is dumb, a needless expenditure, a squandering of resources*”). But Jesus defends and affirms her. This woman’s extravagance is pointing out the incalculable value of Jesus’ death for his people. In these special circumstances, the needs of the poor became secondary, which has shocked some readers. I don’t know what to do with this exactly, but let’s make sure nothing in our schedules eclipses our consideration



**BETWEEN 12:00 PM—3:00 PM: EASTER PLANNING AND PRAYER FOR THE SPIRITUALLY PARALYZED**

My Dear Fellow “Joel Moment-eers,”

I just want to encourage us to invite someone to Easter. Our theme relates to burdens, as you can see from the graphic.

I think about the men who carried their paralyzed friend to Jesus and lowered him through the roof. You know the story. Maybe we can carry our lost friends and relatives into Jesus’ presence over the next three hours.

Pray especially for kids. It’s a family service and I’m going to try to focus my sermon on young ears and hearts. Please ask God to give me that ability to be simple and clear.

Your brother in Christ,

Darren

**Luke 5:18** *And behold, some men were bringing on a bed a man who was paralyzed, and they were seeking to bring him in and lay him before Jesus,*

**Luke 5:19** *but finding no way to bring him in, because of the crowd, they went up on the roof and let him down with his bed through the tiles into the midst before Jesus.*

**Luke 5:20** *And when he saw their faith, he said, “Man, your sins are forgiven you.”*



Write the names below of those whom you want Jesus to touch this Easter.

**BETWEEN 3:00 PM—4:00 PM: Join the AFTERNOON Joel Moment Prayer Gathering. Go to Zoom.com and enter Meeting ID and Password.**



**BETWEEN 5:00 PM—7:00 PM: “I...CRY...TO YOU, ‘VIOLENCE!’ AND YOU WILL NOT SAVE?” (HAB. 1:2).**

It’s hard to take in the acts of cruelty and callousness going on all around us. Elderly Asian people have been knocked to the ground and both injured and killed. Police officers have been shot responding to calls. Fourteen believers in Indonesia were decimated last Sunday by a suicide bomber. Habakkuk looked at the “*destruction...violence...strife...and contention*” in his own day and then raised his hands and face. Let’s do that now. Seek his voice. Seek his wisdom. Seek his perspective.

**BETWEEN 7:00 PM—8:00 PM: Join the EVENING Joel Moment Prayer Gathering. Go to Zoom.com and enter Meeting ID and Password.**



## 3:00 PM and 7:00 PM Prayer Gatherings

**LESLIE GATES** *[This faithful woman will share about her early life, how salvation came her way, and how God has led her to help others taste the grace of God. Here she is serving up in the tech booth. She also serves a deacon.]*

**Psa. 116:12** *What shall I render to the LORD for all his benefits to me?*

**Psa. 116:13** *I will lift up the cup of salvation and call on the name of the LORD,*



**GROUP PRAYER PROMPT #1 (6 min.):** The passage that Leslie Gates picked for us is Psalm 116:12-13. You can read it above. Name his benefits to you, as they come to mind. Take a few minutes to express thanks for his provisions in various decades of your life. You might say, “Thank you for \_\_\_\_\_ in the \_\_\_\_\_ decade of my life,” and so on.

**GROUP PRAYER PROMPT #2 (6 min.):** Covid caused some people to lose their sense of smell. It seems like lost people today can’t smell Christians even though most Christians smell very sweet with the aroma of Christ. Pray that lost people will detect the aroma of Christ in the believers around them and ask: “Hey, why are you different?”

**GROUP PRAYER PROMPT #3 (6 min.):** We’re all born spiritually paralyzed and can’t find Jesus on our own. Carry people to Jesus now in your Zoom group, and ask the Lord to bring them spiritual life through belief in all that he accomplished.

**GROUP PRAYER PROMPT #4 (6 min.):** You have personal, family and work concerns. We know each other pretty well after a year of meeting together. Pray about your personal needs. Pray for each other based on what

**BETWEEN 8:00 PM—10:00 PM:** Rest yourself.