

# LENT DEVOTIONAL 2019



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# ABOUT PITTSBURGH THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Rooted in the Reformed tradition, Pittsburgh Theological Seminary is committed to the formation of women and men for theologically reflective ministry and to scholarship in service to the global Church of Jesus Christ.

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**Graduate Certificate in Theological Studies**

**Graduate Certificate in Urban Ministry**

**Spiritual Formation Certificate**

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**Continuing Education**

**Kelso Museum of Near Eastern Archaeology**

**Miller Summer Youth Institute**

**Metro-Urban Institute**

**World Mission Initiative**

**Zeitah Excavations**

## FACULTY

In addition to their on-campus duties, our faculty are experts in their fields and are available to preach and teach. Learn more about their **topics of research and writing** and invite them to present at your congregation or gathering.

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# LENT DEVOTIONAL APRIL 17, 2019

## SCRIPTURE

### JOHN 12:27-36

27 “Now my soul is troubled. And what should I say—‘Father, save me from this hour’? No, it is for this reason that I have come to this hour. 28 Father, glorify your name.” Then a voice came from heaven, “I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again.” 29 The crowd standing there heard it and said that it was thunder. Others said, “An angel has spoken to him.” 30 Jesus answered, “This voice has come for your sake, not for mine. 31 Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be driven out. 32 And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.” 33 He said this to indicate the kind of death he was to die. 34 The crowd answered him, “We have heard from the law that the Messiah remains forever. How can you say that the Son of Man must be lifted up? Who is this Son of Man?” 35 Jesus said to them, “The light is with you for a little longer. Walk while you have the light, so that the darkness may not overtake you. If you walk in the darkness, you do not know where you are going. 36 While you have the light, believe in the light, so that you may become children of light.” After Jesus had said this, he departed and hid from them.

## DEVOTIONAL

**The Rev. Robert V. Ellson, M.Div. / Pastor, The United Methodist Church of Mt. Pleasant, Mt. Pleasant, Pa.**

There is one question that is truly the “bottom-line” question of Easter. It is the question Jesus asked at Bethany when, after proclaiming that He was the resurrection and the life and that those who believed and put their trust in him would have eternal life, he said, “Do you believe this?”

The resurrection is what separates our Lord from the thousands of gurus and prophets who’ve come both before and after him. Easter’s bottom-line question drives responsible hearers either to accept or reject the Christian faith. In an earlier passage (John 11:25-26), the Lord stands at the tomb of his friend Lazarus and makes the astonishing claim, “I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live. And everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die.” Then he looks into their faces and asks the bottom-line question of Easter: “Do you believe this?” It is a question that many of us may not have really stopped to consider. Or perhaps we have actively avoided the question.

“Do you believe this?” Have you transferred your trust from yourself and your own good intentions over to Jesus Christ alone? Has this saving faith, this resurrected life, this “Christ in me” experience made a difference in your life? Jesus said, “I am the resurrection and the life.” When he used that phrase, “I Am,” it captured the attention of those around him. When our Lord made this statement at the tomb of Lazarus, all those around him recognized it as an affirmation of his deity. Do you believe this?

Do you believe that Jesus is Lord, that you will one day die, and that if you put your trust and faith in him alone you will inherit eternal life? That’s it. It’s personal. Do you believe—really believe—that Jesus Christ is the risen Savior? The Lord makes it very plain: Eternal salvation is through faith in him alone and not through human effort or good works, or through any other self-proclaimed prophet or messiah. Nowhere in Scripture does Jesus say, “I am one way, but there will be others.” He says, I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”

When asked the question by Jesus, “Do you believe this?” will you be able to answer as Martha did, “Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who is come into the world”? Will you join her this Easter by saying “Yes, Lord . . . I believe!”?

## PRAYER

Yes Lord, we believe. We believe you are the Son of God, the risen Lord. We believe your hand will touch the dry bones of our faith, your Word will breathe new life where there was death, your Spirit will raise us up from where we lie, your love will bring us home. And we believe that by your cross and by your grace we stand forgiven, free. Yes Lord, we believe.

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