LENTEN EARLY MORNING PRAYER MARCH 10, 2026

6:30 – 6:40am: Praise Song

-During this time, we will learn a new praise song that invites us to open our hearts before God

Reckless Love - Cory Asbury
https://youtu.be/Sc6SSHuZvQE
Songwriters: Caleb Culver / Cory Hunter Asbury / Randy Matthew Jackson
Reckless Love lyrics © Bethel Music Publishing, Watershed Worship Publishing, Cory Asbury Publishing

Before I spoke a word, You were singing over me
You have been so, so good to me
Before I took a breath, You breathed Your life in me
You have been so, so kind to me

Oh, the overwhelming, never-ending,
Reckless love of God
Oh, it chases me down, fights 'til I'm found,
Leaves the 99
And I couldn't earn it
I don't deserve it, still You give yourself away
Oh, the overwhelming, never-ending,
Reckless love of God

When I was Your foe, still Your love fought for me
You have been so, so good to me
When I felt no worth, You paid it all for me
You have been so, so kind to me

Oh, the overwhelming, never-ending,
Reckless love of God
Oh, it chases me down, fights 'til I'm found,
Leaves the 99
And I couldn't earn it
I don't deserve it, still You give yourself away
Oh, the overwhelming, never-ending,
Reckless love of God

There's no shadow You won't light up
Mountain You won't climb up
Coming after me

There's no wall You won't kick down
Lie You won't tear down
Coming after me

There's no shadow You won't light up
Mountain You won't climb up
Coming after me

There's no wall You won't kick down
Lie You won't tear down
Coming after me

There's no shadow You won't light up
Mountain You won't climb up
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6:40 – 6:50am: Scripture Reading & Devotional

Today's reading comes from John 12:1-8.

This scene is a scene dear to my heart. I remember hearing a sermon on this back when I was in high school. Here, Mary is a young woman declaring with this one act that forever and always her true love is Jesus. This is

Mary who simply wept in front of Jesus when her brother Lazarus had died. Now Mary has poured out her emotions once more, this time in the form of a most precious gift as a memorial to Jesus.
This practice of anointing guests with oil was a sign of hospitality. Think of the heat of the Middle East. Oils were given to guests so that they could be refreshed, kind of like how they give bowls of hot water and a towel at super fancy restaurants. But the pound of pure nard is an expensive perfume, not a normal oil for guests. It's extremely fragrant and, as Judas viciously points out, worth 300 denarii. A denarius was a day's worth of wages for a laborer. So 300 denarii means 300 days' worth of wages, or nearly a year's salary. Can you imagine, a year's salary worth of perfume, poured out for her Savior?
When I was younger, I was taught that the perfume was a young woman's prize. It would be given to her to be saved for use on her wedding day. On her wedding day, she would prepare herself and make herself beautiful, not forgetting to smell fragrant as well. She would pour this expensive oil on herself so that she could be her best for her husband. If this is true, then what Mary has done is given her prize to Jesus. An act of devotion to Jesus, and only Jesus.
In contrast, Judas condemns Mary for her actions. The author of John deliberately shares the fact that Judas would be betray Jesus, and is already stealing from Him. All the while, Judas is pretending to care for the poor. So, Jesus defends Mary. Jesus receives Mary's beautiful act, calling it an anointing for His burial, which is another indication to His disciples that He will soon die for them. Jesus accepts Mary's devotion and assigns it as something that no one else will be able to do. Mary is anointing Jesus, as one would have in ancient times to prepare a king's burial. A king's body is anointed with expensive perfume before being seal in his tomb.
And the oil Mary used, spikenard, is an expensive oil because it was imported. Some archeologists claim that it was an oil that could also be found in King Tut's tomb! It can be said that only Mary got to anoint Jesus for his burial, a burial that did not happen. For her devotion, Mary is given a special honor.
Mary understood – she **saw** Jesus, the one who had come to save them. He was precious enough to her that she was willing to spend a fortune on anointing him, to welcome him into her home, to devote her life to him, to honor even if he is headed toward death. So, in a shameful (or perhaps shameless) state of undress and mourning, Mary comes to anoint Jesus body for burial.
Jesus saw how Mary knew, how Mary understood. And Jesus stood up for her on her behalf.
Do we understand, truly, deeply, fully, who Jesus is? Who is Jesus to us? And what did he do for us?
Is he simply a good moral teacher? Simply the person whose name we use to brand ourselves as "good folk"?
Or do we see him as our Redeemer, the lover of our soul?
Do we see Jesus for who he truly is, just like Mary did? And how do our actions demonstrate our devotion?

6:50 – 7:10am: Prayer

First, pray for peace all over the world. Where ever there is conflict, of lives lost in bloodshed, of war, of violence, there let us pray for God's justice and mercy. For Almighty God is the God of life, so may his peace be swift in coming.

Secondly, pray for God's church all around the world. For unity. For making Christ the center of our lives. For laying down our own pride and arrogance to take up the humble heart of love of Jesus Christ.

Thirdly, pray for our church and all the names on our prayer list. All those in need of healing, of comfort. Let us reach out to those who need someone to be with them.

Lastly, pray for more and more love for Jesus. For deeper desire for Jesus; and deeper understanding of who Jesus really is. May we seek out and pursue all the ways we can show our devotion for our Jesus.

7:10 – to whenever: Personal prayer time

-During this time, there will be gentle instrumental music that will play in the background and all are invited to stay as long as they wish in prayerful posture, lifting up everything into God's hands.