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Minister of Word and Sacrament

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April 15, 2009

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## I Come to the Cross

**Dear Readers,**

On Maundy Thursday we gathered at the Lord's Table and ate unleavened bread and drank bitter wine. As worship ended we removed all the adornments from the Sanctuary and departed in silence. Usually when we leave worship we greet each other and catch up on what is happening in our lives. On Holy Thursday we remained in the silence considering the reality that our Lord was betrayed, abused, and condemned.

On Good Friday morning I moved the furniture out of the chancel area of the church. With heavy duty foil and 144 candles Dorothy, Diana, and I then constructed on the open floor a cross. We surrounded that cross with chairs so that when worshipers came that evening we would be sitting in circle around the cross.

At worship on Good Friday, we had no lighting in the room other than those 144 candles and the single candle light of the paschal candle. At the conclusion of the worship service, that paschal light was extinguished, signaling the crucifixion of our Lord.

I hope the picture on this page gives an idea of what it looked like that evening. In all truthfulness, the picture just does not capture the experience. What happened in that room that evening was an authentic experience with the Holy One. I could see it in the eyes of those who were gathered. There we tears for some, but it was more than tears. It was a seeing...a focus...a vision





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perhaps...an experience of the presence of God.

There is that wonderful song with the words I love: *"I come to the cross seeking mercy and grace, I come to the cross where you died in my place. Out of my weakness and into your strength, humbly I come to the cross."* It is that word *"humbly"* that stands out. I don't think it is so much that we are humble, but rather that we are humbled by the presence of Christ. God is the moving one that touches us—yes it is inside of us, but it also is this force/power/source/energy that is beyond us too. God is amazing. Christ is awesome. The Holy Spirit is marvelous.

There is so much that matters in our world. There is so much to be done. Tax papers that have to be filed. Laundry that needs to be folded. Dinner that has to be prepared. Homework that must be accomplished. Grass that needs to be cut. A checkbook that has to be balanced. Friendships that need to be nurtured. ...ah there is so much to be done.

...but... There is a book of Henri Nouwen's on my desk and the title is *"The Only Necessary Thing."* That title reaches out and focuses me...and I hope it will you too... That here and now the only necessary thing is Him. It is all about loving this incredible Jesus who has been Lord from the beginning, who will be Lord at the end, who even now is Lord. He is the only necessary thing...

Blessings,

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