



today I led our college holy week service a week early - its a long story....

I borrowed [jonny baker & grace's theme of brokenness](http://jonnybaker.blogspot.com/2009/03/brokenwhole.html) -
<http://jonnybaker.blogspot.com/2009/03/brokenwhole.html>

Broken Hope - Palm Sunday - Mark 11:1-11

Broken Trust - Garden of Gethsemane - Mark 14:32-42

Broken Loyalty - Peter's Denial - Mark 14:66-72

Broken Community - Last Supper - John 13:1-30

the signature tune was Leonard Cohen's "[Anthem](#)"

There's a crack, a crack in everything

That's how the light gets in

- hence the light table and black cloth with slits in it and the light behind the cross.

We spread the communion liturgy through the whole worship, including the stations.
I'll post in bits over the next couple of days.

Gathering music was "beloved, do not let me be discouraged" from "[Silent City](#)" by Kayhan Kahlor and Brooklyn Rider.

Here are the opening voices, read by 10 people:

I remember being jostled along by a huge crowd, people shouting, going crazy. I couldn't quite see who was making things so wild.

I remember hearing people praising God, singing their hearts out. I was shaking all over, almost feeling whatever it was that stirred them so deeply.

I remember watching him speak, almost idolising him. Such charisma, such a gift. It was as if I was special, just by being close to such greatness, such presence.

I remember so much of what he said... truths that cut to my heart, questions that shook my foundations. I almost thought I needed a new mind to take it all in.

I remember sitting at a meal table... the food and laughter.. the bottle of wine and serious talk of revolution. I felt that we were so close to true solidarity, to real change.

I remember late night supper around the campfire... the flickering light... our flushed faces... the cup passed around... it really tasted like the sweetness of friendships that might last forever.

I remember arguing almost every day... it was such a long road... too long... we started out as best of friends, like brothers. At the end it was as if we'd come close to not talking at all...

I remember waiting... just sitting and waiting... after all, he told us to... but wait for what? And though I didn't know why, I could feel the anguish, the struggle.

I remember promising. I promised so much. I had to. He deserved it from me. From all of us. I can still hear the echoes of my silence when they questioned me.

I remember expecting... expecting him to come back and rescue me. He was that kind of person. But he'd been taken away. And just his absence almost felt like a betrayal.

I remember the whisper of hope

I remember the babbling fear

I remember the tender grace

I remember the kiss of death

I remember the taste of togetherness

I remember the bitter betrayal

I remember the scent of expectation

I remember the stench of denial

I remember the look of love

I remember the hidden guilt

All: I remember

Introduction

In our worship today, we look forward to the events of Holy Week. We re-enact the events from Palm Sunday to the Passion, not as rehearsal but as a re-remembering, a rejoining. We put the story back together, its sights, sounds, tastes, textures so that we might be reconnected as the body of Christ, be revived as disciples who walk the way of Calvary,

and be reoriented as missionaries on the road to the ends of the earth.
We know the events of this story, we've heard them before.
but today,
may we see with clearer vision
may we taste with expectation
may we hear with anticipation
may we touch with hope of transformation

Today as we approach Holy Week
we reflect on the theme of brokenness
imperfect lives, uncertain futures, disruption in our world,
and what it means to trust in a Saviour
who breaks with our expectations
You are invited to visit three stations
to take your time at each
to wait and watch and pray
as the disciples were instructed at Gethsemane
that together we might contemplate the invitation and challenge
of a ruler coming on a donkey,
a final meal with untrusting friends,
a lonely night of unravelled faith
and a shallow denial of ultimate loyalty.

Background music will be playing as you visit the stations.
When the music stops it we will gather back together.
God of grace
be our story-maker, our truth-teller
our way-marker, our liberator.
this day. Amen.

great thanksgiving & station one

here's the next bit on the worship, following previous post.
next came the great prayer of thanksgiving, which we put up front in the service - words by
me, [jonny & dean](http://www.freshworship.org/node/545) (<http://www.freshworship.org/node/545>) and [nathan nettleton](http://www.laughingbird.net/)
(<http://www.laughingbird.net/> - see Maundy Thursday coming).

The Lord be with you
And also with you
Let us lift up our hearts
We lift them to the Lord.
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

God of Creation and Re-Creation
We praise you for your unswerving love for us and our world
In your creative love, you brought the world to birth,
and from the first you loved all who live in it.
For you formed all things with purpose
with the imprint of your creativity
with rhythm of life and harmony
with the hope of eternity within them

You know better than we the fragility of your world
We see its imperfections, you know its deep ruptures
We feel its wounds, you sense its longings
Though human history tells of brokenness
fractured hopes, twisted promises,
betrayed trust, torn relationships -

You have never stopped loving us
and you have never forsaken us
You sent your Son, Jesus, as our Teacher and Lord
and gave all things into his hands.
Laying aside his power,
he gave himself to us in humble service
and taught us to love one another
as he had loved us.

When the hour for his departure came,
he was betrayed by a friend
and his body broken on the cross.
With his outpoured blood you marked out
those who will follow where he has gone,
into the promised land of resurrection life

Lord Jesus Christ
You take what is broken
and transform it through your death and love
What once was hurt
what once was friction
what left a mark
no longer stings
because grace makes beauty
out of ugly things
May this worship offer songs of praise
that resonate with your eternal choir of hard knocks
in all times and all places.
Amen

STATION ONE

Palm Sunday - Mark 11:1-11

Table with a laptop with a slideshow (using [Boinx](http://www.boinx.com) PhotoPresenter - <http://www.boinx.com>)
of [images of Obama](http://www.artofobama.com) (<http://www.artofobama.com>), strips of calico, textas, and icon of
Christ and a broken mini-statue of Christ.

*We hope for a leader who will make our world right.
We have had enough of leaders
who promise too much... or too little...
more than a six second sound grab on the 6 o'clock news,
we want to hear
a voice that offers wisdom, not slogans
a vision that offers hope, not handouts
a character embodies integrity, not inconsistency*

a purpose that serves humanity, not hubris

*This humble rider, reminder of Zechariah's vision
is at odds with our experience of leadership, even today
No simple solutions, no spin statements
no branch stacking, no secret donors
No victory procession,
rather, one who comes late to his own requiem.*

*Jesus breaks the hope of those who want easy answers
he denies the dreams of those who build empires
he abandons the vision of those who would force victory*

*Do we hope too much in our leaders
- in who they are, in what they will bring?
Do we expect super-human solutions,
a safe pathway to success?
Do we model ourselves on those
who seem most effective in getting results
and miss a less-travelled way of faithfulness?*

*Reflect on a quality of leadership that you value.
In a word or two, write this quality on a piece of cloth in texta.
Tear the cloth in half.
Reflect on the brokenness that exists
in the leadership of those in whom we hope,
and in our own leadership.*

*Leave one piece of cloth with the icon of Christ.
Offer a silent prayer.*

Say these words aloud in company with those at the table:

***'Hosanna!
Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!
Blessed is the coming kingdom of our ancestor David!
Hosanna in the highest heaven!'***

*Take the other piece of cloth with you as a reminder
that we journey toward wholeness.*

You'll see above how each of the stations contained part of the communion liturgy.

station 2



station 2 in sequence should have been the last supper, and I thought about having a 'broken communion' that would have people coming to the table at different times (ie. as a station) so that our communion would seem fractured, but decided against it.

so station 2 was Broken Trust - Garden of Gethsemane - Mark 14:32-42

the station had some plants (not enough really, as you can see from the photo... but I'm VERY appreciative of Christa who brought a bunch of things - ash, sticks, a burnt log), stunning photos of the victorian bushfires from [mike](#). this station really needed a better visual display for the photos, and was put together rather late in the piece. I can imagine the images on the sides of a long dark, corridor, spotlight...

*We want to be able to trust -
to trust in a God who will deliver us from evil
who will lead us not into temptation
who will make the kingdom come - now
When testing or tragedy are at hand,
we want a God who will hear our prayers
respond with swift power, with flooding grace
who will take the cup of suffering from our hands
When the fire-front comes close
for what do we pray, for what can we hope?
Does Jesus' suffering come by choice or design?
Can he avoid this path and still remain true to God?
What does it mean to trust in a God who will not deliver us?
We rarely choose this hour
sometimes we find ourselves standing in its path*

Reflect on your own dark nights of the soul
Is this where we are to find you, God?
and how will we know you are here?
Take some ash and hold it in your palm.
Reflect on our fragile humanity, our uncertain hope
Take a stick and break it. Leave a piece on the ground.
Reflect on what belief about God you leave behind at times like this.
What part of your trust in God is made clearer in this?
Take a part of the stick with you as you leave.
Before you leave, say the Lord's Prayer, aloud or silently.

I also put out [this poem](#) that Cheryl had blogged (<http://holdthisspace.org.au/and-so-we-must-learn-to-live-again/>), and [mike's stark piece](#) from the front line. (<http://www.redbubble.com/people/rfbfmike/journal/2538671-tomorrow-i-will-know-who-i-am>)
I also printed out a couple of excerpts of Cheryl's blogs about [going up to Kinglake](#). (<http://holdthisspace.org.au/the-flame-trees/>)

There's no doubt that the bushfire event is profound for us as a country. This was the station that people spent the longest at. But I also need to say that I was least comfortable with how I had dealt with the biblical text here. The text is about choosing a certain path, knowing that God may or will not rescue you or set things right, rather than being unknowingly being caught in devastation.

I'm so appreciative of the material from friends, and had been wanting to offer as space to reflect on the bushfires in chapel. I guess I'm wrestling with the absent issues from a text that speaks of refusing to back down in the face of evil, of choosing a path that may lead to death for the sake of ultimate good, compassion and peace.

stations 3 and 4

station 3 - Broken Loyalty - Mark 14:66-72

i got this idea from the "alternativeemerging" egroup.
the station had black plastic folded over with tiles inside it. there was a picture of a rooster and I had my little [orbit speaker](#) with ipod shuffle attached. the ipod had one track on it - a 40 second loop with a rooster crowing once in the middle of it.

*It is not hard to disclaim the ones
who let us down
who promised much
and failed to deliver
To their faces we agree
to others we complain,
critique, compromise
hypothesise, demoralise*

*In fact its easy
to convince ourselves
that we were right to begin with
that things aren't that simple
that we could have done it better*

more gain for less pain

*Jesus betrays our trust
by not endorsing our hopes
not paving our future path*

*Not only does Jesus break our hope
in who we thought he was -
he expects our fractured faith
our misguided belief, our limited trust*

God lives on broken promises

*How do we justify ourselves
for breaking trust with God?*

*Reflect on your own allegiance with Christ
your alliances with people on God's behalf*

*What is broken?
What needs breaking?*

*Take the hammer
and hit the black plastic
Pray aloud or silently*

*Child of God
you take away the sin of the world
have mercy on us*

*Child of God
you take away the sin of the world
have mercy on us*

*Child of God
you take away the sin of the world
grant us your peace*

*Lift the plastic
and take a piece of broken tile with you*

station 4 - Broken Community - John 13:1-30

(words from seasons of the spirit, jonny baker, me and iona)

*Jesus sat with all sorts,
the many different colours of humanity,
but mainly those excluded, and broke bread.
So along with everyone the world has turned its back on,
along with everyone hungry for justice and truth,
along with everyone abused as stranger and foreigner,
along with everyone who does not fit "normal",*

*along with everyone who questions, doubts and even denies,
along with every prejudice that has ever been flung,
along with everyone made poor by otherss riches,
you, you and I, are welcome at this table*

*I invite you to place your torn cloths and broken sticks on the table
I invite you to place the smashed tiles on the white box at the centre of the table
Let us bring our own brokenness and that of our world
to the table where Christ makes all things new.*

(people brought their broken stuff and placed it on the light table, which I then turned on. the idea was that the light would shine through the cracks in the tiles, but too few people had actually smashed the tiles, and most of them brought very tiny pieces. still, it looked nice - see previous photo. we stood around the table for communion).

*This is the table of Christ
Today it is literally made of our brokenness
a sign that Christ welcomes us all as we are
There is no need to pretend and no need to hide
Let us be open to receive what God would give us today*

Reading: John 13:1-30 - 5 readers

*On the night in which Jesus gave himself up to death
With friends who mistrusted,
betrayed and denied him,
he took bread and broke it,
he broke it and gave thanks
he offered them divided bread
saying, here is my wounded body
its yours, remember me*

*He lifted up the cup of wine
again giving thanks
wine freely poured,
a cup freely offered to his friends
friends who mistrusted,
betrayed and denied him,
saying, drink up
this is a promise in my blood
its yours, remember me*

*God who makes, mends and moves on,
send your Spirit so that
we, though wounded,
may know we are the body of Christ
that we, though emptied,
may know that Christ's life pulses in us
we, though humbled,
may trust that you raise us up with you
May Christ's wounds give us life
for your sake and the sake of the world*

Christ has died

Christ is risen

Christ will come again

[Prayer](http://www.freshworship.org/node/546) - <http://www.freshworship.org/node/546>

Dismissal

Go in peace, as the body of Christ

wounded and whole

broken and blessed

forgiven and free

given in love and service to the world.

In the name of Christ. Amen.

I then played Leonard Cohen's "Anthem". I thought people would get up and leave but they just sat and listened to it.

"Anthem"

by Leonard Cohen

The birds they sang

at the break of day

Start again

I heard them say

Don't dwell on what

has passed away

or what is yet to be.

Ah the wars they will

be fought again

The holy dove

She will be caught again

bought and sold

and bought again

the dove is never free.

Ring the bells that still can ring

Forget your perfect offering

There is a crack in everything

That's how the light gets in.

We asked for signs

the signs were sent:

the birth betrayed

the marriage spent

Yeah the widowhood

of every government --

signs for all to see.

I can't run no more

with that lawless crowd

while the killers in high places

say their prayers out loud.

But they've summoned, they've summoned up

a thundercloud

and they're going to hear from me.

Ring the bells that still can ring ...

You can add up the parts
but you won't have the sum
You can strike up the march,
there is no drum
Every heart, every heart
to love will come
but like a refugee.
Ring the bells that still can ring
Forget your perfect offering
There is a crack, a crack in everything
That's how the light gets in.
Ring the bells that still can ring
Forget your perfect offering
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