

*CHRIST IN THE*

*Psalm*

*the ARTWORK guide*

*2015*



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*Lane Geurkink*

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### About the art:

The main point that I typically gather from the Psalms is the challenge to trust in the character of God amidst confusion and fear. In Psalm 41, David speaks about those dearest to him turning their back on him and enemies threatening him. He asks for the Lord's protection and deliverance from sickness and defeat. Though I can't speak into or understand the depth of David's situation, I am trying to understand the rejection and fear in my own. For me, painting is a medium in which I can express my confusion and hope of reconciliation in ways I can't with words. Creating abstract forms represents beauty amidst chaos and what feels like my constant lack of understanding. But it also represents hope that even though I know I don't know much of anything, I do know that ultimately He is refining us into His image and one day we will be fully restored.

For this piece I focused on creating depth and dimension not only with layers (as I typically do) but also with color value. Stylistically this piece has similar brush strokes, as well as charcoal and ink marks, but it was fun to use moodier and darker colors that were different from my norm.

### About the artist:

Lane Geurkink is a local artist who works primarily in abstract painting and design. Over the years her paintings have been featured and sold in various galleries/shops across the United States.



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### About the art:

I wanted this piece to be vulnerable, as anything less would lack integrity. In recent times I have found myself, like the psalmist, in the juxtaposition of seeking hope amidst feeling utterly hopeless. I have felt desperation for God's nearness (v. 1). I have wavered in belief that he is who he says he is - our only stable ground (v. 9). I have found myself hoping in tragic pieces of scripture like Lamentation, Isaiah and Psalm. I am grateful, because this is the point of the Psalms—to teach us how to pray rightfully in all seasons.

The tears are more prominent than the light, as truly, my tears have often times been my food, both day and night (vs 3). The light (hope) is also secondary to the darkness, a backdrop—barely lighting up my face. My eyes are meant to convey a trust in God's unseen presence and stability. The psalmist faithfully prays, 'Hope in God; for I shall again praise him, my salvation and my God.' (v. 11). I am often less bold and less believing than the psalmist yet I can read his prayer and try again to orient my heart toward the true hope in the presence, stability and provision of God.

I chose to do a portrait because that is my medium of art and for such an honest piece, I felt that straying away from portraiture wasn't right. I was hesitant to do a self-portrait for some time, but I felt that it was practice in positioning my heart vulnerably toward God and his church. I wanted to look haggard, tired, worn down yet with eyes up—because although quick to forget, we have hope even when hopeless.

### About the artist:

Caitlin Ahlenius is a lifestyle branding photographer.



# 43

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the edges enclosing her in the dark space. The pink lilies add some softness to the piece which are meant to symbolize God's light and truth. When our soul is in turmoil and we are too physically and emotionally tired to even open our eyes, God reminds us that He is present and He is listening. He gently places hope in the palm of our hand, waiting for us to grasp hold of it.

I remember reading Psalm 43 in college during one of the darkest and hardest times in my life. I was angry at God, confused, and questioning if He was even real. I remember being surprised to find comfort in relating with the psalmist's pain. I also realized for the first time that it was ok to feel the way I was and to express those feelings honestly to God. He wants us to bring our pain and sorrow to Himself.

Throughout the painting process I thought a lot about that season in my life and the times after when I have felt similar. In a lot of ways I see this painting now as a self portrait. I hope that as you view this piece that it will help provide a space to reflect on some of the more difficult aspects of life, and also be a reminder of God's understanding and presence in the midst of our turmoil and sorrow. Maybe you will even see a little bit of yourself in the painting as well.

## About the artist:

Lindsay Martin works as a graphic designer in the cycling industry. In her spare time she enjoys drawing and painting.

## About the art:

At some level we all, like the psalmist, have experienced spiritual turmoil and sorrow in our lives—when nothing seems to make any sense, and the world feels like it's closing in around us. We are left feeling helpless, worn down, and abandoned. It's during some of the darkest times in life when we remember that God is the only thing we have to hope in. But in the moment even that seems questionable.

For this painting I thought about how I could best communicate turmoil, abandonment, and hope all in one piece. I am very drawn to street art and graffiti which tend to be a more extreme forms of art. I pulled from that style, using loose and bold brush strokes along with spray paint and a dark, cool color palette to help express the intensity and pain felt in the psalm. The naked woman is meant to convey exhaustion and despair. She is lying on the ground seemingly lifeless, weak, and alone. Her body fills the entire canvas,



# 44

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poster, book, culinary, music and web illustration and my art has appeared in numerous exhibitions across the United States. I am a contributor for the illustration blog Quick Draw Collective. One of my most recent projects was creating album art for Park Church's Psalm 32 CD. Recurring subject matter in my work includes interior space, fish, bears, toy blocks and rocket ships. When not drawing or painting, I enjoy biking and baking artisan bread. Raised in Champaign, Illinois, I currently live in Wheat Ridge, Colorado.

## About the art:

Psalm 44 is a bleak part of scripture which uses a physical setting to express a spiritual state. Shadows, brokenness, scattering, defeat--a place where swords aren't helpful anymore. Studying the passage gave me a mental image of what the passage calls "the place of jackals," and that's what you see here. And to be honest, I really wanted to paint some jackals.

This painting was executed in acrylic paint on a hardboard panel with some collage scattered. Embedding collage into my paintings has become a regular habit for me ever since a two-week studio assistantship I had with a Dallas collage artist over ago. Although I typically begin painting directly in full color, I started this piece with a rough, monochromatic underpainting because I knew the lighting would be crucial to conveying its mood. Once the underpainting and collaged elements were in place, I painted background-to-foreground, building up the image in multiple passes.

## About the artist:

A graduate of the Savannah College of Art and Design (SCAD), I work as a freelance illustrator. My book credits include a wordless picture book, Fish Odyssey, as well as Kenton Visser's Really Terrible Activity Book and Kenton Visser's Really Tiny, Really Terrible Activity Book. My work has included



### About the art:

This piece is based around the strong imagery of Psalm 45. Focusing on the overarching theme of the throne of God, represented in the gold, and how the word is brought into the world through the trinity—from the beginning of the world, until the end. Psalm 45 has so much imagery that I decided to focus on the strong overarching themes throughout.

The challenging part of the piece was also the fun part, I usually don't work with paint on canvas. So it was a fun to branch out and work in a different medium. This was also the challenge in the piece—I don't usually work with such unforgiving materials as paint. Working to overcome the mess and challenge of paint provided a challenge but also enjoyment.

### About the artist:

Travis Ladue is a designer originally from Phoenix, Arizona. He and his wife moved to Denver to help start a small branding studio called Studio Mast.

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### About the art:

My artwork mimics rhythms and patterns found in nature. I aim to create images that are non-representational abstract forms, allowing the viewer to decide what the piece is about for themselves. I love working with texture and the juxtaposition of contrasting ideas because it creates tension. I see both fragility and strength in my work, which in some degrees, is as contrasting as life and death itself. The life and death components of our hearts hold two

truths: growth and decay. The wood I find is rotting, molding, it's weathered and it's been rejected by society. The clay pieces are fresh, new and pure clean developments. They grow without parameters and without plan to become anything except what God intends them to be. The clay and wood also hold similarities. They are both changed by environment and under pressure. They both are seen as beautiful in the eye of the right beholder, and rejected because they are imperfect and broken. We strive and struggle for everything worldly. It's a fundamental component to our every day lives. What if we cease striving and truly know God? The question is almost impossible to fully answer because our busyness, our sin, our pride, and our dull daily routines keep us from finding the peaceful serenity that comes from letting God do what only God can do. He, after all, is the Almighty Refuge, strength and helper.

Psalm 46 shows us God's promise to protect us, even while we choose self-destruction or sin. His faithfulness promises to drive away all fear. As a Christian, we can rely on God's strength and pure goodness. We can trust that the church will not only survive but also thrive and flourish with joy. Battles rage inside us because we are compounded with bondage, sin, pride, shame, and the tiny whisper of the enemy. Yet despite all of that, the Holy Spirit is the means of grace that causes rivers of living water to flow from the hearts of believers. That is our hope and that is our reason to be joyful in a decaying world. Only God can cause growth in this broken world. It's his living water that restores all that is broken and lost. He will make all things new.

### About the artist:

I create because if I didn't, I would go insane. I feel alive when I'm at work in the studio. I work primarily with clay because the process is so multifaceted. It's a relationship of give and take. It's tactile, labor intensive, time sensitive, raw, organic, involved and at the end of the day, you have created something from a block of earth that has potential to take the viewer to new realm of visual enjoyment. I graduated from Metropolitan State University with a BFA degree in Art Education and Ceramics. I have been teaching high school art and graphic design for five years.

# 47

Poem by *Asa Crow*

Calligraphy by *Bethany Siekmeier*



Pavilioned in splendor  
is the LORD God, enthroned  
With terrible excellency  
as fluid as stone

The shields are all His  
So we fear Him alone  
Blast trumpets and worship!  
To make His praise known

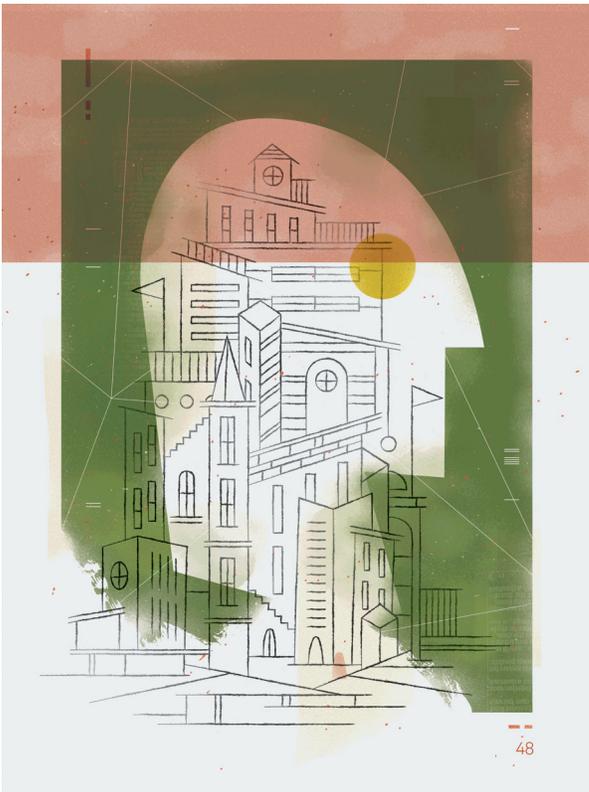
He gives us a heritage,  
a hope, and a crown  
May His name be exalted  
As we announce His renown

What awe-full great majesty  
that subdues our will  
to blessing so abounding  
earth's princes stand still

Our God has ascended:  
The man on the tree  
The ark to the city  
Our salvation decreed

His radiance is blinding  
A glory none can explain  
He's LORD of the godless  
O'r the earth does He reign

With a voice of joy, shout!  
To your triumphant King  
Make noise and applaud!  
A sweet psalm to Him Sing



### About the art:

I struggle with the personality of God. If He is angry, kind, all of the above or when He is any of them. I want to fit God in a box I understand, and yet am thankful that I can't. This piece represents that mystery of who God fully is with the security of knowing regardless of who He is, he is present. The propaganda style of the head seemingly watching over the city represents that while I can't understand God, I have peace knowing He is always present and the city He is building is a fortress.

### About the artist:

Scott Hill is a graphic designer and co-owner of Studio Mast. He is originally from Oklahoma but has now settled in Denver with his wife, 2 dogs, and baby-girl-to-be.

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### About the art:

For this piece I wanted to create a tension between two things. The Psalmist speaks of many dueling concepts. Wisdom and Foolishness. Rich and Poor. Life and Death. These things have stark contrast when you speak directly about them, but in life the line can seem a bit more hazy. Here the woman amidst the haze represents both wisdom and wealth, a reminder that sometimes the two stand side by side.

I've always been interested in using photography not merely to capture a preexisting scene, but to capture a scene I've first created. I used plastic sheeting draped over stands to create a box for EB to stand in. I wanted to experiment with different amounts of layers as well as shooting directly through the plastic. I think the biggest challenge was picking one specific theme to portray out of the Psalm. There were far too many ideas that had to be left behind in order create the piece I envisioned.

### About the artist:

My wife EB and I have been married for three years and own a business together. We are both photographers and graphic designers working together for individuals and small companies. We love making beautiful things with our hands and technology alike.



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### About the art:

My mind and heart have always struggled with beholding the fullness of God—specifically when considering His wrath (distinctly prevalent in Psalm 50). My understanding of God is often limited to what is comfortable to comprehend—love, mercy, grace—conveniently leaving out His wrath and judgment. However, in reality, all of these characteristics form the fullness of God to serve His holy purpose. They are not independent of one another, but they exist in relationship together simultaneously.

The piece is wine on wood. Warmth envelops my mind when I consider both His wrath and His mercy. Our God intimately knows the experience of pain because of the cross. I've chosen to express the complexities of His character that ultimately point to the cross with the use of these two materials.

### About the artist:

I am a Texas native, now based out of the lovely Denver, CO. My husband Jonathan and I own our own businesses and have the privilege of working alongside our good friend, Rachel Nichols.



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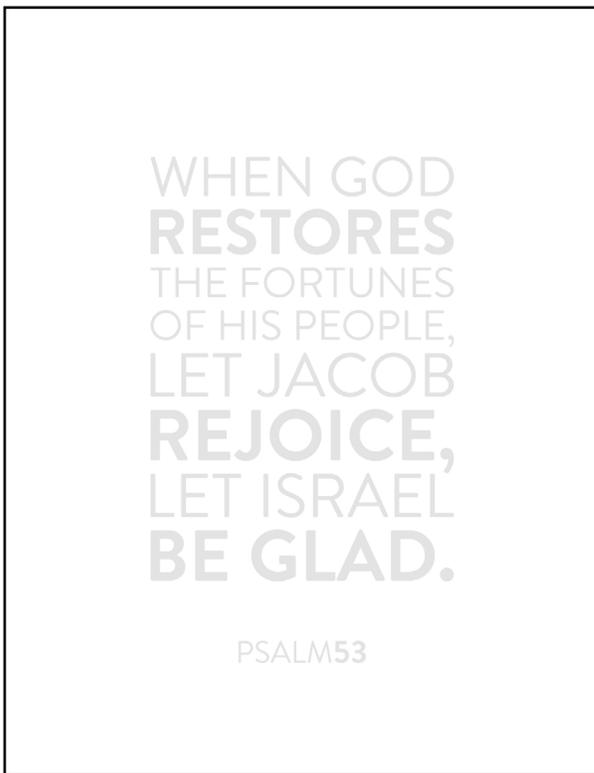
### About the art:

The earliest stages of my paintings sometimes resemble a child's first attempt at finger painting. For years, afraid of the messiness, I couldn't move through this stage for fear of failure. Anxiety would wreck havoc on my emotions making me feel inadequate, and incapable of making something beautiful out of what appeared disastrous.

Meditating on Psalm 51, I was reminded how God often uses painting to reassure me of His beautiful Truth—He came to fix my mess, I cannot save myself. It is only in His strength and our weakness He leads us through the darkness of our own hearts. When I let go of my control and wholly surrender to His severe mercy, I can move through anxiety with no fear of failure. All He asks of me is a willing spirit to hold a paintbrush in my hand, as He delivers something beautiful out of the trepidation before me. This particular composition boldly depicts the reality of how our Creator wields powerful forces to “wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin.” Surely our God creates in us a pure heart, and renews a steadfast spirit within us, even when all we can see are our transgressions.

### About the artist:

Jennie is originally from Austin, Texas. She started her own business, Jennie Lou Art a little over a year ago and now works as a full-time artist in Denver. She specializes in live wedding/event painting, and personalized commission pieces. Currently, she has a studio in the RiNo Arts District at Wazee Union.



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### About the art:

While working through Psalm 53, I felt challenged in so many ways because I really wanted to do something different than I had done before...but the more that I spent time thinking about what to do, the more I realized that my gifts lie within type and color. I wanted to create a piece that spoke for itself and was simple, but had symbolism represented in the printing process with added texture and color. As we go through Psalm 53, we read that there is no one that does good in the eyes of the Lord, that we are all corrupt and in ourselves, never going to be good. In this darkness, it's amazing how blind we are when we are trapped in our sin but how glorious it is when God opens our eyes to be found in Him and rejoice in His salvation. I chose to call out the hope that we have, resting on the truth that God will restore fortunes to His people—not if, but when. This is a beautiful truth.

The four posters have each been hand-rolled by letterpress printing and display their own symbolism, but work together as a cohesive unit.

(1) The pale gray ink signifies how blind we are to see the colorful life the Lord has for us when we choose our own way; when we are just man being swallowed by our corruption. (2) The blue ink signifies newness and the holiness in that is in Christ. (3) The red ink signifies the blood of the lamb—that Jesus' life and death on the cross has cleansed us from our sins. Now we are marked by His blood, not by our own goodness. (4) The purple (blue ink + red ink) signifies royalty. When all of these are in a series together, after our blindness has been opened to the holiness and the blood of Christ, we can see that His royalty and righteousness is what we are marked by (blue + red = purple).

### About the artist:

I was born and raised in Georgia, graduated from Miami University in Oxford, Ohio with a BFA in Graphic Design and have lived in Denver for three and a half years now. Change is one of my favorite things. Experiencing change in new places has shaped the love that I have for making a home wherever I am. I am passionate about design and the application it has in my everyday—both in and outside of the workplace. I currently work at Rocky Mountain College of Art + Design.