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Worship
Fifth Sunday in Lent
March 26, 2023

GATHERING

Greeting and Announcements
Preparation for Worship

CALL TO WORSHIP

P The prophet asks: Can our soul-weary bones live again?

C **O God, you know!**

P We ask: Can we dance again after mourning, loss and grief?

C **O God, you know!**

P The gift is sure and unmistakable:

C **God's breath poured out as new life for weary souls!**

P Let us celebrate the gift of God's new life,

C **And come to worship God in laughter and dancing!**

You are invited to stand as you are comfortable.

GATHERING HYMN – "O For a Thousand Tongues to Sing" ELW 886 (vs 1,3,5)

1 Oh, for a thousand tongues to sing
my great Redeemer's praise,
the glories of my God and King,
the triumphs of his grace!

3 The name of Jesus charms our fears
and bids our sorrows cease,
sings music in the sinner's ears,
brings life and health and peace.

5 Look unto him, your Savior own,
O fallen human race!
Look and be saved through faith alone,
be justified by grace!

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,
who journeys with us these forty days,
and sustains us with the gift of grace.

Amen.

Let us acknowledge before God and one another
our need for repentance and God's mercy.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Holy God,

we confess to you our faults and failings.

Too often we neglect and do not trust your holy word;

we take for ourselves instead of giving to others;

we spoil rather than steward your creation;

we cause hurt though you call us to heal;

we choose fear over compassion.

Forgive us, renew us, and lead us,

as we seek to follow in your way of life.

Amen.

Hear the good news:

God so loved the world that God gave the only Son,
so that all may receive life.

This promise is for you!

God embraces you with divine mercy,

† forgives you in Christ's name,

and revives you in the Spirit's power.

Amen.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P Let us pray:

C Almighty God, your Son came into the world to free us all from sin and death. Breathe upon us the power of your Spirit, that we may be raised to new life in Christ and serve you in righteousness all our days, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

You may be seated

THE WORD

First Reading – Ezekiel 37:1-14

(Ezekiel's vision of the valley of dry bones is a promise that Israel as a nation, though dead in exile, will live again in their land through God's life-giving spirit. Three times Israel is assured that through this vision they will know that "I am the LORD.")

The hand of the LORD came upon me, and he brought me out by the spirit of the LORD and set me down in the middle of a valley; it was full of bones. He led me all around them; there were very many lying in the valley, and they were very dry. He said to me, "Mortal, can these bones live?" I answered, "O Lord GOD, you know." Then he said to me, "Prophecy to these bones, and say to them: O dry bones, hear the word of the LORD.⁵ Thus says the Lord GOD to these bones: I will cause breath to enter you, and you shall live. I will lay sinews on you, and will cause flesh to come upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and you shall live; and you shall know that I am the LORD."

So I prophesied as I had been commanded; and as I prophesied, suddenly there was a noise, a rattling, and the bones came together, bone to its bone. I looked, and there were sinews on them, and flesh had come upon them, and skin had covered them; but there was no breath in them. Then he said to me, "Prophecy to the breath, prophecy, mortal, and say to the breath: Thus says the Lord GOD: Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live." I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood on their feet, a vast multitude.

Then he said to me, "Mortal, these bones are the whole house of Israel. They say, 'Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost; we are cut off completely.' Therefore prophecy, and say to them, Thus says the Lord GOD: I am going to open your graves, and bring you up from your graves, O my people; and I will bring you back to the land of Israel. And you shall know that I am the LORD, when I open your graves, and bring you up from your graves, O my people. I will put my spirit within you, and you shall live, and I will place you on your own soil; then you shall know that I, the LORD, have spoken and will act, says the LORD."

Reader: Hear what the Spirit is saying to us.

Response: Thanks be to God.

Psalm 130

Out of the depths

I cry to you, O LORD;

O LORD, hear my voice!

Let your ears be attentive to the voice of my supplication.

If you were to keep watch over sins,

O LORD, who could stand?

Yet with you is forgiveness,

in order that you may be feared.

I wait for you, O LORD; my soul waits;

in your word is my hope.

**My soul waits for the Lord more than those who keep watch for the morning,
more than those who keep watch for the morning.**

O Israel, wait for the LORD, for with the LORD there is steadfast love;
with the LORD there is plenteous redemption.

**For the LORD shall redeem Israel
from all their sins.**

Second Reading – Romans 8:6-11

(For Paul, Christian spirituality entails living in the reality of the Holy Spirit. The driving force behind our actions and values is not our sinful desire for self-satisfaction but the very Spirit by which God raised Jesus from the dead and will also raise us from the dead.)

To set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. For this reason, the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law—indeed it cannot, and those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

But you are not in the flesh; you are in the Spirit, since the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. But if Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also through his Spirit that dwells in you.

Reader: Hear what the Spirit is saying to us.

Response: Thanks be to God.

You are invited to stand as you are comfortable

Gospel Acclamation –

I am the resurrection and the life; whoever believes in me will never die.

P The holy Gospel according to John,

C **Glory to you, O Lord.**

Gospel Reading – John 11:1-45

(Jesus is moved to sorrow when his friend Lazarus falls ill and dies. Then, in a dramatic scene, he calls his friend out of the tomb and restores him to life.)

Now a certain man was ill, Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. Mary was the one who anointed the Lord with perfume and wiped his feet with her hair; her brother Lazarus was ill. So the sisters sent a message to Jesus, “Lord, he whom you love is ill.” But when Jesus heard it, he said, “This illness does not lead to death; rather it is for God’s glory, so that the Son of God may be glorified through it.” Accordingly, though Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus, after having heard that Lazarus was ill, he stayed two days longer in the place where he was.

Then after this he said to the disciples, “Let us go to Judea again.” The disciples said to him, “Rabbi, the Jews were just now trying to stone you, and are you going there again?” Jesus answered, “Are there not twelve hours of daylight? Those who walk during the day do not stumble, because they see the light of this world. But those who walk at night stumble, because the light is not in them.” After saying this, he told them, “Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I am going there to awaken him.” The disciples said to him, “Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will be all right.” Jesus, however, had been speaking about his death, but they thought that he was referring merely to sleep. Then Jesus told them plainly, “Lazarus is dead. For your sake I am glad I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him.” Thomas, who was called the Twin, said to his fellow disciples, “Let us also go, that we may die with him.”

When Jesus arrived, he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb four days. Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, some two miles away, and many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to console them about their brother. When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went and met him, while Mary stayed at home. Martha said to Jesus, “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. But even now I know that God will give you whatever you ask of him.” Jesus said to her, “Your brother will rise again.” Martha said to him, “I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day.” Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?” She said to him, “Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one coming into the world.”

When she had said this, she went back and called her sister Mary, and told her privately, “The Teacher is here and is calling for you.” And when she heard it, she got up quickly and went to him. Now Jesus had not yet come to the village, but was still at the place where Martha had met him. The Jews who were with her in the house, consoling her, saw Mary get up quickly and go out. They followed her because they thought that she was going to the tomb to weep there. When Mary came where Jesus was and saw him, she knelt at his feet

and said to him, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died." When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her also weeping, he was greatly disturbed in spirit and deeply moved. He said, "Where have you laid him?" They said to him, "Lord, come and see." Jesus began to weep. So the Jews said, "See how he loved him!" But some of them said, "Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?"

Then Jesus, again greatly disturbed, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone was lying against it. Jesus said, "Take away the stone." Martha, the sister of the dead man, said to him, "Lord, already there is a stench because he has been dead four days." Jesus said to her, "Did I not tell you that if you believed, you would see the glory of God?" So, they took away the stone. And Jesus looked upward and said, "Father, I thank you for having heard me. I knew that you always hear me, but I have said this for the sake of the crowd standing here, so that they may believe that you sent me." When he had said this, he cried with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!" The dead man came out, his hands and feet bound with strips of cloth, and his face wrapped in a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Unbind him, and let him go."

Many of the Jews therefore, who had come with Mary and had seen what Jesus did, believed in him.

P This is the Gospel of our Lord.

C Praise to you, O Christ.

You may be seated

Sermon

You are invited to stand as you are comfortable

HYMN OF THE DAY – "I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say" ELW 332

**1 I heard the voice of Jesus say,
"Come unto me and rest;
lay down, O weary one, lay down
your head upon my breast."
I came to Jesus as I was,
so weary, worn, and sad;
I found in him a resting-place,
and he has made me glad.**

**2 I heard the voice of Jesus say,
"Behold, I freely give
the living water, thirsty one;
stoop down and drink and live."
I came to Jesus, and I drank
of that life-giving stream;
my thirst was quenched, my soul revived,
and now I live in him.**

**3 I heard the voice of Jesus say,
"I am this dark world's light;
look unto me, your morn shall rise,
and all your day be bright."
I looked to Jesus, and I found
in him my star, my sun;
and in that light of life I'll walk
till trav'ling days are done.**

Text: Horatius Bonar, 1808-1889

AFFIRMATION OF OUR FAITH

P We affirm our faith with the words of the Apostles' Creed.

C **I believe in God the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.**

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.

You may be seated

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Sustained by God's abundant mercy, let us pray for the church, the world, and all of creation.

A brief silence.

You have breathed into us the breath of life. Enliven your church. Deepen our partnerships with our companion churches around the globe, and bless the work of missionaries who accompany them. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

Your spirit brings life to creation. Enliven the natural world and restore ecosystems in need of healing. Uplift prophetic voices that turn us to the needs of the soil beneath our feet and the air all around. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

You redeem the world and its peoples. Free us from systems of oppression. Unbind nations and societies from the sins of racism, sexism, and homophobia. Raise up leaders at all levels of government who work to promote the dignity of every human life. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

You weep when we weep. Be present with those who grieve or who are troubled by illness especially our loved ones; Tom, Beth, Judy, Gloria, Martha, Barb, Darlene, Brian and Don. You hear us when we call to you. Deliver us from the depths of our despair, and free us from the worries that bind us. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

Your Spirit of life dwells in our assembly. Bless the music ministries of this congregation and all who lead us in hymns of praise and thanksgiving and in songs of lament and prayer. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

P What else do the people of God want to lift up to God this day?.....
Merciful God,

C receive our prayer.

You are the resurrection and the life. Even though we die, we will live. With thanksgiving, we remember all your saints who now live in your eternal love. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

We lift our prayers to you, O God, trusting in your steadfast love and your promise to renew your whole creation; through Jesus Christ our Savior.

Amen.

THE MEAL

OFFERING HYMN – “Jesus is a Rock in a Weary Land” ELW 333

Refrain

***Jesus is a rock in a weary land,
a weary land, a weary land;
my Jesus is a rock in a weary land,
a shelter in a time of storm.***

No one can do like Jesus,
not a mumbling word he said;
he went walking down to Lazarus' grave,
and he raised him from the dead. *Refrain*

When Jesus was on earth,
the flesh was very weak;
he took a towel and girded himself
and he washed his disciples' feet. *Refrain*

Yonder comes my Savior,
him whom I love so well;
he has the palm of victory
and the keys of death and hell. *Refrain*

Text: African American spiritual

OFFERTORY – “Make Me a Servant”

Make me a servant, humble and meek.
Lord, let me lift up those who are weak.
And may the prayer of my heart always be;
Make me a servant, make me a servant,
Make me a servant today.

You are invited to stand as you are comfortable

OFFERING PRAYER

P Let us pray.

C God of good gifts, receive these and all our offerings as we present them in faithful service for the sake of your gospel. Prepare our hearts to receive you in this meal as you pour out your very presence through Christ Jesus, the wellspring of eternal life. Amen.

GREAT THANKSGIVING

P The Lord be with you.

C **And also with you.**

P Lift up your hearts.

C **We lift them up to the Lord.**

P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C **It is right to give God our thanks and praise.**

PREFACE

P It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ. You call your people to cleanse their hearts and prepare with joy for the paschal feast, that, renewed in the gift of baptism, we may come to the fullness of your grace. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

“Holy, Holy, Holy” (Haugen)

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power, God of might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest, hosanna in the highest.

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

P Holy, mighty, and merciful Lord, Heaven and earth are full of you glory. In great love you sent to us Jesus, your Son, who reached out to heal the sick and suffering, who preached good news to the poor, and who, on the cross, opened his arms to all.

P In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

P Again after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

P Remembering, therefore, his death, his resurrection, and ascension, we await his coming in glory.

P Pour out upon us the Spirit of you love, O Lord, and unite the wills of all who share this heavenly food, the body and blood of Jesus Christ, our Lord; to whom with you and the Holy Spirit, be all honor and glory, now and forever.

C Amen, amen, amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

P Gathered into one, let us pray as Jesus taught us:

C Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever and ever. AMEN.

COMMUNION INVITATION

P Come and receive Jesus, our strength in the wilderness.

You may be seated

COMMUNION HYMN

Kristan

You are invited to stand as you are comfortable

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

P Let us pray.

C Embodied God, at your table, we have tasted the goodness of Jesus.

With the eyes of our hearts open to your promise, empower us to hear the needs of our neighbors and touch the world with your love.

Amen.

SENDING

BENEDICTION

P God, the giver of love, ✠ Christ, the resurrection and the life, and the Holy Spirit of rebirth bless you in this Lenten journey.

C Amen.

CLOSING HYMN – “What Wondrous Love Is This” ELW 666 (vs 1,3,4)

**1 What wondrous love is this,
O my soul, O my soul!
What wondrous love is this, O my soul!
What wondrous love is this
that caused the Lord of bliss
to bear the dreadful curse
for my soul, for my soul,
to bear the dreadful curse for my soul?**

**3 To God and to the Lamb
I will sing, I will sing;
to God and to the Lamb I will sing;
to God and to the Lamb,
who is the great I AM,
while millions join the theme,
I will sing, I will sing,
while millions join the theme, I will sing.**

**4 And when from death I'm free,
I'll sing on, I'll sing on;
and when from death I'm free, I'll sing on;
and when from death I'm free,
I'll sing God's love for me,
and through eternity
I'll sing on, I'll sing on;
and through eternity I'll sing on.**

Text: North American folk hymn, 19th cent., alt.

DISMISSAL

P Go in peace. Serve in love.

C Thanks be to God.

**Bethany's Mission Statement –
Accepting
Serving
Loving . . .
We Share God's Embrace**

Accompanist: Kristan Youn

Today's Assistants: Lector: Nick Toronto
Communion: Moe Aaby & Kim Hepola
Ushers: Colette & Nick Toronto