

AT HOME WORSHIP – March 29, 2020

PREPARATION FOR WORSHIP – Take a minute or two of quiet to prepare for worship **CALL TO WORSHIP**

*We come to worship the God of life.
Raise us, Lord, from the tombs of death entrap us.
We come to worship the God of the living.
Raise us, Lord, from tombs of despair that drain life from us.
We come to worship a God of compassion.
Raise us, Lord, from tombs of callousness that cause us not to care.
We come to worship a God of action.
Raise us, Lord, to be servants of the living God bringing the light o. AMEN*

A BRIEF CONFESSION

*In honesty of heart and humbleness of spirit, we come before God in confession.
You search us, O Lord, and you know us well.
We seek your pardon, we ask your forgiveness, we need your mercy.
Forgive us where we've failed, heal us where we are broken.
Cast us not away from your presence. Renew a right spirit within us.
Our faith in the living Christ assures us that God's pardon is real, God's healing deep. AMEN.*

GREETING

*The Lord be with you
We wait for God to speak as we worship on this day.
Open our hearts to hear you, O Lord; fill our spirits with your presence. AMEN*

WORD

SCRIPTURE READINGS

1st reading – Ezekiel 37:1-10, 14

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 round 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. 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, 'Prophesy to the breath, prophesy, 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.

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.'

2nd reading – Psalm 130

Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord.

Lord, hear my voice!

Let your ears be attentive

to the voice of my supplications!

If you, O Lord, should mark iniquities,

Lord, who could stand?

But there is forgiveness with you,

so that you may be revered.

I wait for the Lord, my soul waits,

and in his word I hope;

my soul waits for the Lord

more than those who watch for the morning,

more than those who watch for the morning.

O Israel, hope in the Lord!

For with the Lord there is steadfast love,

and with him is great power to redeem.

It is he who will redeem Israel

from all its iniquities.

Gospel reading – John 11:1-45

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 for 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 for 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 upwards 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.

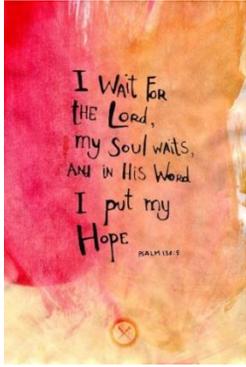
SERMON

5th Sunday of Lent

John 11:1-45

WAIT

In the Psalm we hear these words: **I wait for the Lord, my soul waits ...**



Screen 1

... Waiting, who likes waiting for anything, let alone for God to act and do something.

In the reading from John

this word “*wait*” does not appear in print, but the feeling of WAITING for Jesus to do something leaps off the page.

WAITING is a fact of life ... but that doesn't mean we like it.

PAGE 2

In fact, most of us, if given a choice,

would choose not to wait ... of course, there are exceptions like when there is something we don't want to do and so we wait until we absolutely have to do it.

But that kind of waiting falls into a special category called *procrastination* ... many approach filing their income tax returns this way, at least 20 to 25 percent of us do according the IRS

In general though, we don't

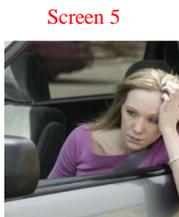
like waiting ... we are the “fast food” nation
we demand quick service
there is express mail & express scripts
many businesses advertise there is “no waiting” to receive their services.

WAITING is the scourge of the
technological world ... 4G is faster than 3G, and now it's 5G,
when computers are slow, we get frustrated,
when an email doesn't arrive almost as soon as we send it,
we think something must be wrong.

Look at these pictures ... all of us
have experienced the frustration of waiting captured in these images:



And this



leads to feeling like this: or like this:

In Psalm 130 we hear these words: **My soul waits for the Lord, my soul waits.**

And in the Lazarus story ... waiting for Jesus to arrive
was devastating as we hear in the words of Martha:

John 11:21

Martha therefore said to
Jesus, “Lord, if You had
been here, my brother
would not have died.

Screen 7

Lord, if you had been here my brother would not have died.

You just read the story ... you know how it goes ... Jesus had been summoned to the home of Martha & Mary because their brother, Lazarus, was ill ... what does Jesus do when he hears that his friend Lazarus is on his death bed – He loiters in Judea for two long days, unruffled. Only then, after two days does he gather his disciples and head for Bethany.

Does it help to know that Jesus has a plan,
that his delay is all “*for God’s glory*” as spoken of in verse 4? ... I’m
not so sure.

If you are on the waiting end of things,
as Mary & Martha were, it must have been very painful and gut-wrenching to watch their
brother slip away into death while they waited for Jesus to arrive.

WAITING ... We don’t like it.

When I was child,

we had a family doctor ... his name was Doctor Thomas, he was the family guru and my
parents trusted him with every physical ill that would befall us.

When at age six I broke my jaw in an automobile accident,
I was taken to the hospital, ex-rayed, and sent home, with the diagnosis that
I had a swollen jaw and with some ice and aspirin, I would be fine.

Dr. Thomas looked at me
the next day and in about five seconds said that I had a broken jaw, that I looked like
Popeye ... ex-rays at another hospital confirmed his diagnosis.

Dr. Thomas was like God ... he practiced

in the days when doctors were transitioning from making house calls to holding office hours

only ... and his office hours extended, sometimes into the late hours of the evening.

As the years went by,

Dr. Thomas made fewer & fewer house calls, most all his patients had to call to make an

appointment and then go to his office to wait ... and I mean WAIT.

PAGE 4

It was not uncommon to have to

wait to see him for an hour or more ... the longest I remember waiting to see him was almost three hours.

But we all knew

that the reason we were waiting so long is that probably he was making an important house call ... cause he still did that for patients who were too sick to come to the office.

Who knows ... maybe Jesus was in the midst

of some important ministry when he got the word of Lazarus being ill;

maybe he was tending to

other sick people and had to finish with them first ... could be that he couldn't just drop everything and then "*high-tail-it*" to Lazarus' bedside.

John 11:6

When therefore He
heard that he was sick,
He stayed then two
days longer in the place
where He was.

At any rate, we're not given the reasons

as to why Jesus was delayed in getting to Lazarus' bedside ... we're simply told

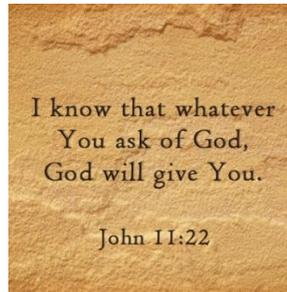
Screen 8

that upon getting the news, he stayed two days longer in the place where he was.

And with those words (*he stayed two days longer in the place where he was*) ... with those words the “*Waiting Game*” begins ... this is not about belief and faith ... Mary and Martha believed that Jesus could do the miraculous.

Lord, if you had been here my brother would not have died ... they said

Though these are words of disappointment & sorrow ... they are also words of proclamation that in Jesus God acts to heal, to mend, and to bring wholeness to the broken.



Screen 9

Martha (after expressing her disappointment) goes as far as to say: **But even now, I know that God will give you whatever you ask of him.**

PAGE 5

This is not about faith, per se ... it is about living in the mix of *Chronos Time* & *Kairos Time*

Chronos Time, named after the Greek God of time



Screen 10

is time as we know it and live it ... 60 minutes in an hour
24 hours in a day
7 days in a week ... and so on.

Kairos Time is God's time ... This is spiritual time, time that has no sequence or chronology,
but time that glimpses the fullness of God

Kairos time is difficult to understand ... visual representations such as these
try to capture it, but fall short.



Screen 11



Screen 11



Screen 11

Madeleine L'Engle, an author who writes with powerful theological overtones

in much of her work said in her book "Walking on Water" that there are two types of time:

"Kairos" time and "chronos" time. ... Kairos time occurs when a good dinner party with
friends feels like it lasts for hours but was only one
hour.

So, Jesus comes to the tomb of Lazarus

two days after he was summoned ... that's Chronos time, the Kairos time comes in the words

of Jesus, “**Lazarus, come out!**” ... “**Unbind him and let him go**”

Those are words that “catch us up” in Kairos time ... the Fullness of God is glimpsed in Lazarus coming out of the tomb; and we are called to participate in that fullness of God – “**Unbind him and let him go**”

PAGE 6

Screen 12



WAITING

... waiting, perhaps can be Kairos time, or at least, a prelude to Kairos time.

My soul waits for the Lord, is the psalmist’s call for Kairos time, a spiritual time to glimpse the fullness of God in an event.

In the midst of this pandemic “time” in which we find ourselves ... we are

“*waiting*”- week by week,
day by day,
hour by hour ... and now we are told, maybe month by month
for this pandemic to end.

We are, by the nature of our human existence, caught-up

in the Chronos time of this pandemic ... but there is also a Kairos time in which we can live and wait during this pandemic time too.

My sister-n-law in Nashville

sent this poem to Jill last week ... it was written by Lynn Ungar.

It captures, I believe, the Kairos time in which we can choose to live
as these Chronos moments of pandemic tick by day by day ... I share it with you here as a way of
ending this Sunday morning message on this Chronos day of March 29, 2020.

In speaking of Pandemic, Lynn Ungar writes:

What if you thought of it
as the Jews consider the Sabbath —
the most sacred of times?

Cease from travel.

Cease from buying and selling.

Give up, just for now,
on trying to make the world
different than it is.

Sing. Pray. Touch only those
to whom you commit your life.

Center down.

And when your body has become still,
reach out with your heart.

Know that we are connected
in ways that are terrifying and beautiful.
(You could hardly deny it now.)

Know that our lives
are in one another's hands.
(Surely, that has come clear.)

Do not reach out your hands.

Reach out your heart.

Reach out your words.

Reach out all the tendrils
of compassion that move, invisibly,
where we cannot touch.

Promise this world your love —
for better or for worse,
in sickness and in health,
so long as we all shall live.

*Lynn Ungar is a minister for the Church of the Larger Fellowship.
Her first book of poetry is "Blessing the Bread."*

AMEN

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

We believe in a Mighty God whose greatness is revealed in mercy and compassion. We believe that God created the vastness of the universe and yet knows each of us by name.

We believe in Jesus Christ who is the purest expression of God's mercy. In Jesus' deeds of compassion, in his faithfulness to God, in his wisdom of things spiritual we are given both an example and vision of God's desire for our lives. In Jesus' death and resurrection we are given the promise that life triumphs over death in all its forms.

We believe in the powerful presence of God's Spirit that energizes our lives. It is this Spirit that calls us to faithfulness, forms us into a worshipping community, and empowers us to live lives of service bringing forward the goodness of God to all creation. AMEN.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Pray to God for patience and the wisdom to see that waiting is God working in God's time for the good of us and the world.

Pray for the world ... for peace and healing, for the hungry and the homeless

Pray for the people of Bethany, our Grand Canyon Synod, The ELCA

Pray for all of us in this difficult time of the Corona Virus and those ill with the virus.

Pray for our leaders, both in our nation and throughout the world, to make decisions in this time that are wise and in the best interest of all.

Offer your own prayer concerns

OFFERING – **Please mail your weekly offering to the church** (thank you)

PRAYER OF BLESSING

God of all bounty and love; we give, as a thank offering, gifts we have first received from your hand. We now return a portion of our blessings for the work of our church and the ministries we do in your name. Bless these offerings into actions that proclaim your love, mercy and compassion. AMEN.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

SENDING

BENEDICTION

*The LORD bless you and keep you;
the LORD make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you;
the LORD lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace. AMEN*

DISMISSAL

*Be prayerful, wait patiently for God to speak, and always work diligently to serve the Lord.
With God's blessing upon your life go, be the light of Jesus in all you do and say.*