

The Fifth Sunday in Lent, year A

March 29, 2020 ✝ Mount Olive Lutheran Church



Worship in the home

As we live into this time of worshipping together while being physically apart, we have an opportunity to re-discover the joy of the early Church and their worship in homes.

As you consider where this might happen in your home, perhaps setting aside a place that you can use each week would be helpful. Even if it's a dining table that is used for other things during the week, having a cloth to cover the table in the color of the season (we're purple for Lent right now), a candle, and a cross, can remind you of the sanctity of all places. Such a place is holy because it is used for feeding (or other purposes, depending on where you choose) and, at times, for prayer. And remember, if you can find a way by phone or screen to invite others separated by distance into your time of prayer this morning, that will be a blessing to all.

One resource produced by a sibling congregation suggests placing a stone next to the candle today, to remember that God rolls away the stone that keeps us in death, and brings the light of Christ to our lives.

Focus on the Season: Fifth Sunday in Lent, year A

Jesus reveals his power over death by raising Lazarus from the dead. Ezekiel prophesies God's new life into dry bones. To those in exile or living in the shadows of death, looking for hope, these stories proclaim God's gift of life. In the power and presence of the risen Christ in our midst we live in that resurrection life now, on this side of the grave.

Feel free to print this document, or keep it open on the screen, to aid in your prayer today. The links are in the email, so you'll want to keep that open as well.



Centering and Gathering

In the Small Catechism, Martin Luther invites you to begin devotions – separately or together – making the sign of the cross and naming God into your midst:

In the name of the Father, and of the + Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen

MUSIC: "Spirit, Moving Over Chaos" David Ashley White
Sung by the Mount Olive Cantorei at the Lent Procession liturgy, March 1, 2020. [Link is in the email.](#)

Word

PRAYER OF THE DAY

[Link to a video of this and the readings is in the video](#)

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.

FIRST READING: Ezekiel 37:1-14

In the readings video

¹ The hand of the LORD came upon me, and brought me out by the spirit of the LORD and set me down in the middle of a valley; it was full of bones. ² God led me all around them; there were very many lying in the valley, and they were very dry. ³ God said to me, "Mortal, can these bones live?" I answered, "O Lord GOD, you know." ⁴ Then God 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. ⁶ 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."

⁷ 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. ⁸ 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. ⁹ Then God said to me, "Prophecy 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." ¹⁰ I prophesied as God commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood on their feet, a vast multitude.

¹¹ Then God 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.' ¹² Therefore prophesy, 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. ¹³ And you shall know that I am the LORD, when I open your graves, and bring you up from your graves, O my people. ¹⁴ 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."

Pause the video to sing or say the psalm together.

PSALM: 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 plen- | teous redemption.
For the LORD shall | redeem Israel * from | all their sins.

READING: Romans 8:6-11

In the readings video

Paul writes: ⁶ To set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. ⁷ 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, ⁸ and those who are in the flesh cannot please God. ⁹ 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. ¹⁰ But if Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. ¹¹ If the Spirit of the One who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, the One who raised Christ from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also through Christ's Spirit that dwells in you.

HOLY GOSPEL: John 11:1-45

¹ Now a certain man was ill, Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. ² Mary was the one who anointed the Lord with perfume and wiped his feet with her hair; her brother Lazarus was ill. ³ So the sisters sent a message to Jesus, "Lord, he whom you love is ill." ⁴ 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." ⁵ Accordingly, though Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus, ⁶ after having heard that Lazarus was ill, he stayed two days longer in the place where he was.

⁷ Then after this he said to the disciples, "Let us go to Judea again." ⁸ The disciples said to him, "Rabbi, the authorities were just now trying to stone you, and are you going there again?" ⁹ 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. ¹⁰ But those who walk at night stumble, because the light is not in them." ¹¹ After saying this, he told them, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I am going there to awaken him." ¹² The disciples said to him, "Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will be all right." ¹³ Jesus, however, had been speaking about his death, but they thought that he was referring merely to sleep. ¹⁴ Then Jesus told them plainly, "Lazarus is dead. ¹⁵ For your sake I am glad I was not there, so that you may trust in me. But let us go to him." ¹⁶ Thomas, who was called the Twin, said to his fellow disciples, "Let us also go, that we may die with him."

¹⁷ When Jesus arrived, he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb four days. ¹⁸ Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, some two miles away, ¹⁹ and many had come to Martha and Mary to console them about their brother. ²⁰ When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went and met him, while Mary stayed at home. ²¹ Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. ²² But even now I know that God will give you whatever you ask of him." ²³ Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again." ²⁴ Martha said to him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day." ²⁵ Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Those who trust in me, even though they die, will live, ²⁶ and everyone who lives and trusts in me will never die. Do you trust this?" ²⁷ She said to him, "Yes, Lord, I trust that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one coming into the world."

²⁸ When she had said this, Martha went back and called her sister Mary, and told her privately, "The Teacher is here and is calling for you." ²⁹ And when she heard it, she got up quickly and went to him. ³⁰ Now Jesus had not yet come to the village, but was still at the place where Martha had met him. ³¹ The people 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. ³² 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." ³³ When Jesus saw her weeping, and those who came with her also weeping, he was greatly disturbed in spirit and deeply moved. ³⁴ He said, "Where have you laid him?" They said to him, "Lord, come and see." ³⁵ Jesus began to weep. ³⁶ So some said, "See how he loved him!" ³⁷ But some of them said, "Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?"

³⁸ Then Jesus, again greatly disturbed, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone was lying against it. ³⁹ 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." ⁴⁰ Jesus said to her, "Did I not tell you that if you trusted, you would see the glory of God?" ⁴¹ So they took away the stone. And Jesus looked upward and said, "Father, I thank you for having heard me. ⁴² I knew that you always hear me, but I have said this for the sake of the crowd standing here, so that they may trust that you sent me." ⁴³ When Jesus had said this, he cried with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!" ⁴⁴ 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." ⁴⁵ Many of those, therefore, who had come with Mary and had seen what Jesus did, trusted in him.

SERMON

Watch

Pastor Joseph Crippen

The sermon is in a separate video, the link is in the email. Text is on the Mount Olive website, at www.mountolivechurch.org/worship/sermons/

HYMN: ELW 600, "Out of the Depths I Cry to You"

As we consider how God's Word has worked in and through us in reading and preaching, we sing our own response to the Word. Mount Olive sang this hymn, with Cantor Cherwien at the organ, on the Sixth Sunday after Pentecost, Lectionary 13 B, July 1, 2018. [Link is in the email.](#)

Out of the depths I cry to you; O Lord God, hear me calling.
Incline your ear to my distress in spite of my rebelling.
Do not regard my sinful deeds. Send me the grace my spirit needs; without it I am nothing.
All things you send are full of grace; you crown our lives with favor.
All our good works are done in vain without our Lord and Savior.
We praise you for the gift of faith; you save us from the grip of death;
our lives are in your keeping.
In you alone, O God, we hope, and not in our own merit.
We rest our fears in your good Word and trust your Holy Spirit.
Your promise keeps us strong and sure; we trust the cross, your signature,
inscribed upon our temples.
My soul is waiting for you, Lord, as one who longs for morning;
no watcher waits with greater hope than I for your returning.
I hope as Israel in the Lord, who sends redemption through the Word.
Praise God for grace and mercy!

Text: Martin Luther, 1483-1546; tr. composite

Text © 1978, 2006 Lutheran Book of Worship, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

Music: AUS TIEFER NOT, attributed to Martin Luther; harmonization by J. S. Bach, 1685-1750

INTERCESSORY PRAYERS

*Our Assisting Minister for today, Mark Pipkorn, has prepared intercessory prayers for us to pray this morning. As our prayers rise up from all over the metro area and beyond, once more we are joined together in Christ. Included in our prayers today for those who have died is **Carol Harper**, aunt to Linda Pipkorn and Joyce Brown.*

Pray these aloud, perhaps with one as leader if there are more than one gathered, and add any you feel drawn to add.

Turning our hearts to God, let us pray in confidence for the church, the world, and all of creation.

Faithful and loving God, even as we are physically separated, bind your faithful people into one body. Send your Holy Spirit that we may hear your voice with clarity and guide your church that whether isolated or together, we may continually sing Your praise, and be the bearers of Your Word for the sake of the world. *God, in Your mercy . . .*

We pray for our leaders, those who work to plan and act to keep us safe. Give them good counsel, wisdom in their decisions, and clarity in their communication, so that we all may work together for the common good. Grant a quick end to the spread of disease and a return to a society in which all can once again be productive. *God, in Your mercy . . .*

We pray for the safety and well-being of our health care workers, our first responders, and those who continue to provide us with the necessities of daily life. Protect them and their families and keep them healthy. Provide them with the resources they require, and give them the needed rest and respite from their work. *God, in Your mercy . . .*

We pray for those suffering illness, those struggling with addiction or loneliness, and those grieving the loss of family or friends, and all those we name before you now: . Grant them Your healing

power and enfold them in Your holy presence. Grant that all of us may keep foremost in our hearts the hope of the resurrection and the knowledge of eternal life. *God, in Your mercy . . .*

We pray for those people and organizations with whom we partner in mission. We especially remember Common Hope in Guatemala in their work with the education of children and the support of their families, and for EPES in Chile as it works to build community health. We pray for our partners here in our neighborhood, Community Emergency Services and the Sabathani Community Center as they rise to meet of new demands during our current crisis. *God, in Your mercy . . .*

We pray for those who celebrate the anniversaries of their baptism in Christ and their entrance into Your Church, especially Walter, Peter, Brian, Amanda, Penny, Evelyn, Dennis, Randy, Carol, Larry, Joyce, and Jamielle. Remind us that we die daily to sin and are continually renewed and given life in your Spirit. *God, in Your mercy . . .*

We give thanks for the beauty and wonder of Your creation. Even as times may seem dark and our lives are disrupted, we look out on a world that is reawakening. Give us eyes and ears that see the sun, new growth, and early flowers, and that hear the birds whose song greets us in the morning. Inspire us to love, nurture, protect, and become better stewards of Your creation. *God, in Your mercy . . .*

Add any petitions you feel drawn to pray.

We give thanks for the saints of the church and for those members of Your body who have gone before us. We remember the saints Hans Nielsen Hauge, John Donne, and Amalie Sieveking. We remember your servant Carol, and we remember all of those who taught, inspired, and guided us in our spiritual growth, whom we name before you now: . Help us that we also may convey Your love to those around us and be Your witnesses in our daily lives. *God, in Your mercy . . .*

Whatever else you see that we and the world need, grant us O God, for the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen

OFFERING

There are ways to continue to give of your gifts to our shared work at Mount Olive during this time apart. The Olive Branch has suggested ways both electronic and by mail. See:

<https://www.mountolivechurch.org/resources/olive-branch-newsletter/>

PEACE

Please greet others with Christ's peace. If you haven't called someone to join this prayer together, perhaps you might take the time now to call another and wish them peace.

HYMN: ELW 666, "What Wondrous Love Is This?"

Pondering the great gift of God's life that our Scripture today proclaimed, and trusting in God's loving presence with all the world in this crisis, this hymn seems appropriate for this day. Mount Olive sang this, with Cantor Cherwien at the organ, at the Lent Procession, March 1, 2020.

What wondrous love is this, O my soul, 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?

When I was sinking down, sinking down, sinking down,
when I was sinking down, sinking down, sinking down,
when I was sinking down beneath God's righteous frown,
Christ laid aside his crown for my soul,
for my soul, Christ laid aside his crown for my soul.

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.

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.

Music: WONDROUS LOVE: William Walker, Southern Harmony, 1835, and (sts. 3, 4) Southern Harmony, 1854.

CONCLUDING PRAYER AND BLESSING

Pray the Lord's Prayer together.

Someone may offer a blessing on behalf of all:

The peace of God, which passes all understanding, guard and keep our hearts and minds in +
Christ Jesus. Amen.

Go in peace to love and serve as Christ!