



The Fifth Sunday in Lent
Worship with Holy Communion
March 26, 2023

***Good morning & welcome to Grace
in the Season of Lent.
We are so glad you are here!***

***Our mission is to invite and welcome all
to the fellowship of Christ in service to our community.***

Lent is the forty-day season (excluding Sundays) of penitence and preparation for the Three Days of Holy Week and Easter. The season began as a period of fasting leading up to the Vigil of Easter. Those preparing for baptism at Easter would fast and spend days in intense preparation. For those that were already baptized, Lent was a period to be renewed in their faith by studying the Bible, the Creed and the Lord's Prayer.

Although it was originally only a two-day period of preparation, Lent became a three-week preparatory period in the middle of the fourth century and then this was further expanded into six-weeks, or forty days. On our journey through Lent, we humbly pray for God to make our hearts clean while we rejoice that "now is the day of salvation." Returning to our baptismal call, we more intentionally bear the fruits of mercy and justice in the world.

Children are welcome in worship at Grace! The voices of children only enhance worship, and they are welcome in this space! There is also a Children's Message for them, just prior to the reading of scripture. And, if needed, there is a nursery available for any family to use.

Your bulletin contains the worship service in its entirety, **and your parts are printed in bold type.**

In thanksgiving to God for the saving grace shown to all of us in the death and resurrection of Christ, we celebrate the sacrament of Holy Communion each week. All are welcome at the Table. We do come forward to the front of the sanctuary for communion. The Pastor stands in the center of the aisle with the bread. Gluten-free bread is available, just let the pastor know and the dish will be offered to you, from which you may take your own wafer. Finally, both **wine (red)** and **juice (white)** are available, on both sides, based on your preference.

For those participating from home, please have a small glass of wine or juice and a small piece of bread available for all who are planning to commune. When we come to the Meal portion of the service, and the people who are present in person are coming forward, please eat your bread and drink your cup as you are moved to do so.

If you have questions about our worship service, please don't hesitate to ask someone around you. For more information about Baptism or Communion, about what Lutherans believe, or even about Grace Lutheran Church, please do not hesitate to reach out to our pastor.

Again, we're glad you're here! Welcome to worship!

GATHERING ~ The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

PRELUDE “*Erbarme dich, mein Gott – Have Mercy, My God*” J.S. Bach **BMV 244**

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.

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**

GATHERING SONG “*Oh, for a Thousand Tongues to Sing*” **ELW 886**

GREETING

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **And also with you.**

KYRIE



Ky - ri - e e - lei - son. Lord, have mer - cy.



Chris - te e - lei - son. Christ, have mer - cy.



Ky - ri - e e - lei - son. Lord, have mer - cy.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

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

BELL CHOIR OFFERING “When I Survey the Wondrous Cross” arr. R. Kauffman

WORD ~ God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

CHILDREN’S MESSAGE

THE 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.” And we read:

¹The 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. ²He led me all around them; there were very many lying in the valley, and they were very dry. ³He said to me, “Mortal, can these bones live?” I answered, “O Lord GOD, you know.” ⁴Then he said to me, “Prophecy to these bones, and say to them: O dry bones, hear the word of the LORD. ⁵Thus says the Lord GOD to these bones: I will cause breath to enter you, and you shall live. ⁶I 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.”

⁷So 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. ⁸I 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. ⁹Then he 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.” ¹⁰I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood on their feet, a vast multitude.

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

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM 130 (*The Psalm is read in unison*)

¹Out of the depths I cry to you, O LORD;

²O LORD, hear my voice!

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

³If you were to keep watch over sins, O LORD, who could stand?

⁴Yet with you is forgiveness, in order that you may be feared.

⁵I wait for you, O LORD; my soul waits; in your word is my hope.

⁶My soul waits for the Lord more than those who keep watch for the morning,
more than those who keep watch for the morning.

⁷O Israel, wait for the LORD, for with the LORD there is steadfast love;
with the LORD there is plenteous redemption.

⁸For the LORD shall redeem Israel from all their sins.

THE 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. And we read:

⁶To set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace.

⁷For 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, ⁸and those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

⁹But 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. ¹⁰But if Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness.

¹¹If 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.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



Noth-ing in all cre - a - tion can sep - a - rate us from the love of God.



Noth-ing in all cre - a - tion can sep - a - rate us from the love of God.

GOSPEL

John 11:1 – 45

The holy gospel, according to Saint John. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

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. And we read:

¹Now a certain man was ill, Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha.

²Mary was the one who anointed the Lord with perfume and wiped his feet with her hair; her brother Lazarus was ill. ³So the sisters sent a message to Jesus, “Lord, he whom you love is ill.” ⁴But 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.”

⁵Accordingly, though Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus, ⁶after having heard that Lazarus was ill, he stayed two days longer in the place where he was.

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

¹⁷When Jesus arrived, he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb four days.

¹⁸Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, some two miles away, ¹⁹and many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to console them about their brother. ²⁰When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went and met him, while Mary stayed at home. ²¹Martha said to Jesus, “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. ²²But even now, I know that God will give you whatever you ask of him.” ²³Jesus 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 believe in me, even though they die, will live,²⁶ and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?”²⁷ She said to him, “Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one coming into the world.”

²⁸When 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.”²⁹ And when [Mary] 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 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.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 the Jews 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 the Jews 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?”

³⁸Then 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 believed, 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 believe that you sent me.”⁴³ When he 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.”

⁴⁵Many of the Jews, therefore, who had come with Mary, and had seen what Jesus did, believed in him.

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY

“Restore in Us, O God”

ELW 328

THE CREED ~ *Let us affirm our faith using the words of the Apostles' Creed*

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 power of 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. Amen

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

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, here at home, and throughout the world. Deepen our partnerships with our companion churches, especially the Metro Chicago Synod; the Lutheran Churches in Cuba, Guyana, Haiti and Suriname; and United Theological College in Jamaica. Send your Spirit to call and equip missionaries to do your work in the world, and move us to support and pray for them in their calling. 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, including our own, that turn us to the needs of the soil beneath our feet and the air all around. May we be faithful stewards of all that you have made. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

You redeem the world and its peoples. Free us from systems of oppression. Unbind nations, societies, and communities of faith 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. And stir up your Spirit in us, that we might work to demand justice and equity for all your people. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

You weep when we weep. Be present with those who grieve or who are troubled by illness. Comfort the dying, and those who love them, with your peace. 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. Today we lift up to you all the people of Ukraine; all those impacted by climate change; all those on our prayer list; and everyone we name before you now in our hearts. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Your Spirit of life dwells in our assembly. Bless the music ministries of this congregation, especially our Chancel and Bell Choirs, our guest musicians, and our music leaders, Jackie, Jackson and Leslie. Hear and receive our hymns of praise and thanksgiving and our songs of lament and prayer. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

You are the resurrection and the life. Even though we die, we will live. With thanksgiving, we remember and give thanks for all your saints who now live in your eternal love, especially those dear to us. 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 PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always. **And also with you.**

At this time, you are invited to share the peace, one with another.

MEAL ~ God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

CHANCEL CHOIR

“Just As I Am”

Ted McKinley

OFFERING

We give thanks to you, the people of Grace, for your faithful commitment to supporting our ministries through your giving. If you would like to offer a gift, the collection plate is located at the back of the sanctuary for your convenience. Thank you again.

OFFERING PRAYER

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

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING (Those moved to do so may rise.)

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Lift up your 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.**

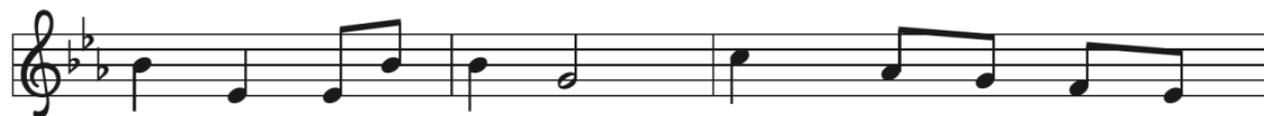
The presiding minister continues with the proper preface:

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



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and



God of might, heav - en and earth are full of your



glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the high - est.



Bless - ed is the one who comes in the name of the



Lord. Ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.



Ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

Blessed are you, O God of the universe. Your mercy is everlasting and your faithfulness endures from age to age.

Praise to you for creating the heavens and the earth. Praise to you for saving the earth from the waters of the flood.

Praise to you for bringing the Israelites safely through the sea.

Praise to you for leading your people through the wilderness to the land of milk and honey.

Praise to you for the words and deeds of Jesus, your anointed one. Praise to you for the death and resurrection of Christ. Praise to you for your Spirit poured out on all nations.

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.

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.

O God of resurrection and new life: Pour out your Holy Spirit on us and on these gifts of bread and wine. Breathe new life into us. Send us forth, burning with justice, peace, and love.

With your holy ones of all times and places, with the earth and all its creatures, with sun and moon and stars, we praise you, O God, blessed and holy Trinity, now and forever.

Amen

LORD'S PRAYER

Lord remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray:

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

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Come and receive Jesus, our strength in the wilderness. **Amen**

COMMUNION

LAMB OF GOD



Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on



us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have



mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the



world; grant us peace, grant us peace.

DISTRIBUTION OF COMMUNION

COMMUNION HYMNS

"I Am the Bread of Life"

ELW 485

"Come to the Table"

ELW 481

POST COMMUNION BLESSING

The body and blood of our Lord, Jesus Christ, strengthen you, and keep you in his grace.
Amen

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

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 ~ God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

BLESSING

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

SENDING SONG

"You Are the Way"

ELW 758

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Serve in love.
We will! Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

"Sheep May Safely Graze"

BWV 208

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