

FIFTH SUNDAY IN LENT

March 29, 2020 - 10:00 AM

Living Springs Lutheran Church

4224 Hard Scrabble Road, Columbia, SC 29223
www.livingspringscolumbia.org



In today's gospel Jesus reveals his power over death by raising Lazarus from the dead. The prophet Ezekiel prophesies God breathing new life into dry bones. To those in exile or living in the shadows of death, these stories proclaim God's promise of resurrection. In baptism we die with Christ that we might also be raised with him to new life. At the Easter Vigil we will welcome the newly baptized as we remember God's unfailing promise in our baptism.

GATHERING: GOD-STORIES

As we gather, we reflect on God's work, with some visual examples on the display screens. You may send your photos and/or God Stories to GodAroundUs@livingspringscolumbia.org. Where have you seen or experienced God at work in yourself, in the lives of others, or the world this past week? Names are NOT required.

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

We stand as able

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Pastor: Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✝ one God, who is present, who gives life, who calls into existence the things that do not exist.

People: Amen.

Pastor: If you were to keep watch over sins, O Lord, who could stand? Yet with you is forgiveness, and so we confess.

(Silence for reflection - we kneel as able)

Pastor: Gracious God,

People: have mercy on us. We confess that we have turned away from you, knowingly and unknowingly. We have wandered from your resurrection life. We have strayed from your love for all people. Turn us back to you, O God. Give us new hearts and right spirits, that we may find what is pleasing to you and dwell in your house forever. Amen.

Pastor: Receive good news: God turns to you in love. "I will put my spirit in you, and you shall live," says our God. All your sin is forgiven in the name of ✝ Jesus Christ, who is the free and abounding gift of God's grace for you.

People: Amen.

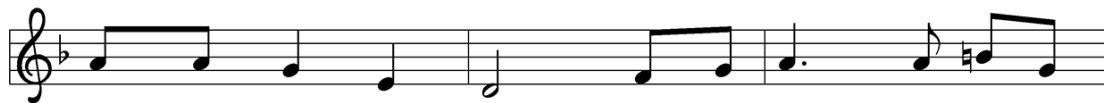
We focus on the cross as it enters the sanctuary.

GATHERING SONG

"Tree of Life and Awesome Mystery"



1 Tree of Life and awe - some mys - t'ry, in your
3 Christ, you lead and we shall fol - low, stum - bling



death we are re - born; though you die in all of
though our steps may be; one with you in joy and



his - t'ry, still you rise with ev - 'ry morn, still you
sor - row, we the riv - er, you the sea, we the



rise with ev - 'ry morn.
riv - er, you the sea.

Lent 5

God of all our fear and sorrow,
God who lives beyond our death,
hold us close through each tomorrow,
love as near as every breath.

APOSTOLIC GREETING

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

People: **And also with you.**

KYRIE AND PRAYER OF THE DAY

Pastor: In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

People: **Lord, have mercy.**

Pastor: For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

People: **Lord, have mercy.**

Pastor: For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God, and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.

People: **Lord, have mercy.**

Pastor: For the body of Christ, and for all who offer their worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord.

People: **Lord, have mercy.**

Pastor: Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.

People: **Amen. Amen.**

Pastor: 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.

People: **Amen.**

We are seated

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Jesus loves the little children, all the children of the world.

So we gather in His name, offering our love and praise.

Jesus loves the little children of the world.

(Tune by C.H. Woolston, Public Domain. Alt. Text by G. Donovan, Jr.)

FIRST READING

Lector: A reading from Ezekiel.

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, "Prophesy 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. 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 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. 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." (Ezekiel 37:1-14)

Lector: Word of God, Word of life.

People: Thanks be to God.

PSALM 130

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

People: O LORD, hear my voice!

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

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

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

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

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

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

People: For the LORD shall redeem Israel from all their sins.

SECOND READING

Lector: A reading from Romans.

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. (Romans 8:6-11)

Lector: Word of God, Word of life.

People: Thanks be to God.

We stand for the reading of the Gospel

GOSPEL LESSON

Pastor: The Holy Gospel according to John.

People: **Glory to you, O Lord.**

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. (John 11:1-45)

Pastor: The Gospel of the Lord.

People: **Praise to you, O Christ.**

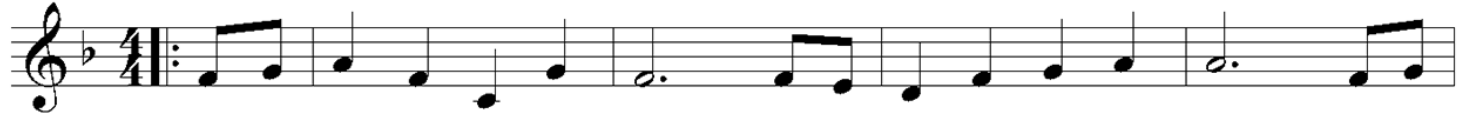
We are seated

MESSAGE

Rev. Eric Fink

HYMN OF THE DAY

"When it Seems the Day Will End"



1. When it seems the day will end, and all light give way to fear, we will
2. When it seems the day will end, sink-ing low un-der our skin, we are
3. When it seems the day will end, and a cold-ness fills our bones we will



speak your name a - gain to re - mind us you are here. New life ri - sing
dead and born a - gain, and with you now en - ter in.
walk the way you've been, and our hearts will be your home.



(echo) Ash - es fall - ing (echo) Joy and weep - ing (echo)



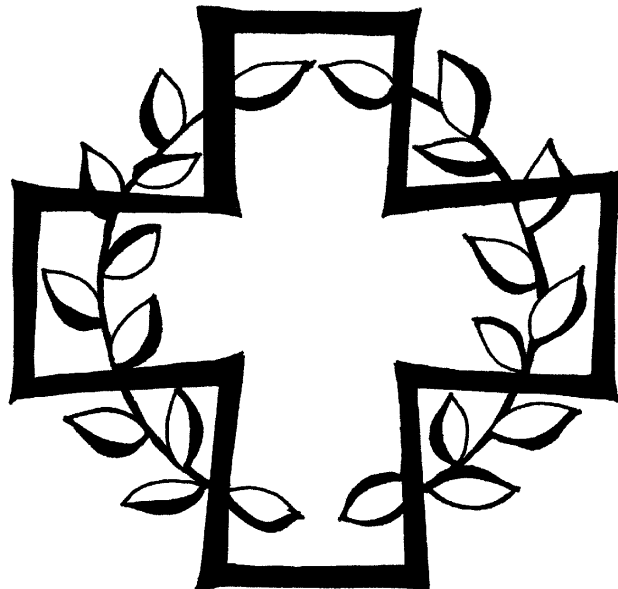
In your call - ing (echo)

APOSTLES' CREED

People: 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. Amen.



PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Assist: Turning our hearts to God who is gracious and merciful, we pray for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

+ A brief silence +

Assist: God of life, bind your faithful people into one body. Enliven the church with your Spirit and bless the work of those who work for its renewal. Accomplish your work of salvation in us and through us, for the sake of the world. Hear us, O God.

People: Your mercy is great.

Assist: God of life, you love the world you have made and you grieve when creation suffers. Restore polluted lands and waterways. Heal areas of the world ravaged by storms, floods, wildfires, droughts, or other natural disasters. Bring all things to new life. Hear us, O God.

People: Your mercy is great.

Assist: God of life, show redemption to all who watch and wait with eager expectation: those longing for wars to cease, those waiting for paperwork to finalize, those seeking wisdom in their positions of decision & power, and those in dire need of relief. Come quickly with your hope. Hear us, O God.

People: Your mercy is great.

Assist: God of life, you weep with those who grieve. Unbind all who are held captive by anxiety, despair, or pain, especially *Margaret Blank, Evelyn Long; Charles Kauffman; JoAnn Pulse; Bill Bloss; the Kulger family; the Oquendo family; the Turnmire family; and those we name before you now, either silently or aloud...* Fill us with compassion and empathy for those who struggle, and keep us faithful in prayer. Hear us, O God.

People: Your mercy is great.

Assist: God of life, we give thanks for opportunities for this congregation to collaborate with our community in caring for the needs of our neighbors. Strengthen our ties with other local congregations, agencies, and services. Hear us, O God.

People: Your mercy is great.

Pastor: God of life, you are our resurrection. We remember all those who have died and trust that, in you, they will live again. Breathe new life into our dry bones, that we, too, might live with you forever. Hear us, O God.

People: Your mercy is great.

Pastor: God, our peace and our strength, we pray for our nation and the world as we face continued uncertainties around coronavirus. Protect the most vulnerable among us, especially all who are currently sick or in isolation. Grant wisdom, patience, and clarity to health care workers, especially as their work caring for others puts them at great risk. Guide us as we consider how best to prepare and respond in our families, congregations, workplaces, and communities. Give us courage to face these days not with fear but with compassion, concern, and acts of service, trusting that you abide with us always. Hear us, O God.

People: Your mercy is great.

Pastor: According to your steadfast love, O God, hear these and all our prayers as we commend them to you; through Christ our Lord.

People: Amen.

SHARING OF PEACE

Pastor: The peace of Christ be with you always.

People: And also with you.

We greet one another, with the words that the risen Jesus spoke to his disciples: "Peace be with you."

OFFERINGS ARE GIVEN

Offering may be dropped off at the office during the week or sent through the mail. For those who wish to give electronically, you may use the secure Givelify app.



OFFERING PRAYER

Assist: Let us pray. O Lord our God, maker of all things:

People: Through your goodness you have blessed us with these gifts. With them we offer ourselves to your service and dedicate our lives to the care and redemption of all that you have made, for the sake of him who gave himself for us, Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

THANKSGIVING FOR HOLY COMMUNION (IN TIME OF FASTING FROM THE MEAL)

Pastor: We have been made one as the body of Christ thought the waters of baptism. In our journey of faith & life, we have been fed with Christ's own body and blood. Even though we fast from the Lord's Supper on this day, we give thanks for the gift of Holy Communion, as we look forward to the joy of that day when we will again be gathered and fed at your table.

Pastor: O God most mighty, O God most merciful, O God our rock and our salvation, hear us as we offer our praise and give you thanks. When the earth was a formless void, you formed order and beauty. When Abraham and Sarah were barren, you sent them a child. When the Israelites were enslaved, you led them to freedom. Ruth faced starvation; David fought Goliath; the psalmists cried out for healing, and full of compassion, you granted the people your life. You entered our sorrows in Jesus our brother. He was born among the poor, he lived under oppression, he wept over the city. With infinite love, he granted the people your life.

We give you thanks and praise for the gift of Holy Communion and for the blessing it brings to your people. Even though we abstain from your meal this day for reasons you understand, we sense the power of your forgiveness and grace offered to us and the world through your Son. Awaiting that day when we may fully share in his meal, we still remember, and cherish in our hearts, the words uplifting this great and glorious gift which Jesus gave us:

People: 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."

We pause in silent prayer and reflection, giving thanks to God for all the times we have been fed with our Lord's body & blood.

SONG FOR REFLECTION

"We Come to the Hungry Feast"



1 We come to the hun - gry feast hun - gry for a word of peace.
2 We come to the hun - gry feast hun - gry for a world re - leased
3 We come to the hun - gry feast hun - gry that the hun - ger cease,



To hun - gry hearts un - sat - is - fied the love of God is
from hun - gry folk of ev - 'ry kind, the poor in bod - y,
and know - ing, though we eat our fill, the hun - ger will stay



not de - nied. We come, we come to the hun - gry feast.
poor in mind. We come, we come to the hun - gry feast.
with us; still we come, we come to the hun - gry feast.

LORD'S PRAYER & BENEDICTION

Pastor: Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us:

People: **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.**

Pastor: Now is the acceptable time. Now is the day of salvation. Holy God, speaking, spoken, and inspiring, ✝ bless you, unbind you, and send you in love and in peace.

People: Amen.

SENDING SONG

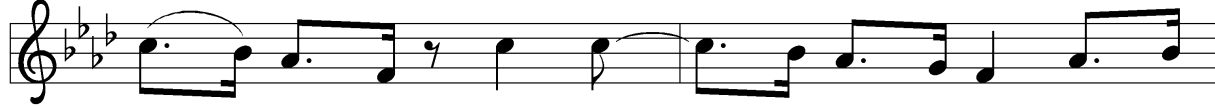
"Jesus is a Rock in a Weary Land"

(We focus on the processional cross as it is carried out.)


Refrain – All



Je - sus is a rock in a wea - ry land, a wea - ry land, a




wea - ry land; my Je - sus is a rock in a




wea - ry land, a shel - ter in the time of storm.

Leader or All




1 No one can do like Je - sus, not a
2 When Je - sus was on earth, the . .
3 Yon - der comes my Sav - ior, him . .



mum - bling word he said; he went walk - ing down to Laz -
flesh was ver - y weak; . . he took a towel and gird -
whom I love so well; . . he has the palm of vic -

Refrain



- a - rus' grave, and he raised him from the dead.
ed him - self and he washed his dis - ci - ples' feet.
- to - ry and the keys of death and hell.

DISMISSAL

Assist: Go in peace. Grow Deeper in the Cross. Share the good news!

People: Thanks be to God.

LENTEN DEVOTIONAL ITEM

During Lent, the back partition walls are partially closed, as a reminder that we are on a journey that leads through the closed tomb to the joy of Easter. Please exit through the main doors, where each household will receive a weekly devotional item to add to your Lenten cross. The walls will be symbolically re-opened for Easter worship, as we rejoice in the Good News of the stone rolled away from our Savior's tomb!



Seasonal Emphasis

"If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross & follow me." Mark 8:34

FIFTH SUNDAY IN LENT:

Can These Bones Live?

Before it is anything else, today's gospel is an up-close, deeply personal story of grief. Even the movements seem familiar: Jesus is on the way, then present to each sister. At last, he stands outside the tomb of his friend who has died, and whom the community mourns.

In today's first reading, we are swept up with Ezekiel and deposited into a wilderness valley full of dry, dead bones. In the valley, God asks Ezekiel, "Mortal, can these bones live?" (Ezek. 37:3). Of Lazarus in our gospel reading for today, we, like Ezekiel, might also respond: "O Lord God, you know." How can dry bones come to life? And how could a dead man ever possibly live again? Indeed, we might wonder if it will be enough, ever could be enough, that Jesus is "the resurrection and the life" (John 11:25). At the same time, we easily understand and echo Martha and Mary, who were both accusing angrily and confessing hopefully when they said, "Lord, if you had been here . . ." (John 11:21, 32).

As John tells it, Lazarus has been in the tomb four days by the time Jesus arrives. By then the whole village is awash in grief. When Jesus weeps too, they are amazed at his loving devotion: here is a strong sign of connection, a visible reminder that Jesus is truly present among human community, not above it. In the end, Jesus does what we could never imagine was even a remote possibility. He calls to the one entombed; he summons life, like the Spirit blowing over the valley in Ezekiel. God is up to something! Here, a sign of signs: God is making all things new.

New life is emerging from the tombs of our world and from the shadowed corners of our hearts. May Jesus' resurrecting power be felt deep in our own bones!

✠ COMMEMORATIONS FOR TODAY ✠

Hans Nielsen Hauge, renewer of the church, died 1824

Hauge was a layperson who wished to revitalize the church in Norway. As a result of a mystical experience, he felt called to preach. Many professionals in the church feared his motives and influence, and he was imprisoned for leading unauthorized gatherings.