



Worship
March 26, 2023, 11:15 am
Fifth Sunday in Lent

+Stand as you are able



Gathering

Welcome and Announcements
Lighting of the Christ Candle
Centering Music

+Call to Worship

Have you ever felt washed up, brittle, worn-down to the bone?

Have you ever felt grief lay heavy on your back?

Have you ever felt like hope was out of reach?

Have you ever wondered, can these bones live?

If you have, then you are in the right place, for this is God's house. Hope lives here.

So, come. Rest your weary bones.

Let us worship Holy God.*

+Hymn *I Sing the Mighty Power of God #32*

Call to Confession

Friends, there is nothing that we have to keep hidden from God—not our anger, our grief, or the ways in which we have fallen short. In confession, we speak honestly and are met with grace. So let us not hold back. Let us bring our full selves to this prayer, knowing that God is already running to meet us. Let us pray:*

Prayer of Confession

Jesus of Nazareth,

I confess: I forget that you know this feeling.

I forget that you, too, have wept. I forget that you, too, have lost. I forget that you, too, have gathered at the tomb, have grieved for a friend, have felt the sting of humanity.

Forgive me for all the times I place blame on you. Forgive me for all the times I create distance, imagining that you could never feel what I feel. Forgive me for allowing the valley of dry bones to be a sea of space between us. Pour yourself into the cracks in my heart. Bring these bones back to life. Bring me closer to you. With gratitude I pray, amen.*

(Moment of silent prayer.)

Assurance of Pardon

Friends, you could spend your whole life ignoring God, pushing God away, or trying to solve the world's problems all on your own, and God would still love you all the same. Even in our shortcomings, we are God's beloved. So hear and believe this good news:

We are saved by grace through faith. We belong to God. We are not alone.

Response of Praise *Great are You, Lord (Great is the Lord) #614*

Passing of the Peace

L: Be kind to one another, and tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ has forgiven you. May the peace of Christ be with you.**

P: And also with you.

Anthem

Hearing the Word

Prayer for Illumination

Creator God,

Why is bad news so loud? In the midst of gun violence, hunger, melting ice caps, and anxiety, it often feels like suffering has a microphone.

How do we hear you? How do we find you? How do we know that these bones can live?

Today we bring our raw selves into this space asking that once more you would rush through this room like a mighty wind.

Remind us that these bones can live.

Speak to us in your still, small voice and let it be loud enough to speak to the sorrow of the day.

We know that good news rests in you, and we know that you are here.

So help us listen, not to the bad news of the day alone, but to the hope that you breathe into every word.

With open hearts we pray, amen.

Gospel Reading **Ezekiel 37:1-14** 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. 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.

Hymn *Breathe on Me, Breath of God #286*

Gospel Reading **John 11:1-16** Now 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.”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 Jews 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 believe. 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.”

Sermon

Responding to the Word

Affirmation of Faith

We believe that God loves us—**God loves us enough to weep when we are gone.**

We believe that God does not give up on us—**breathing new life into tired bones.**

We believe that God returns to us—**always seeking us when we are lost.**

We believe that God holds hope for us—**so we hold onto hope as well.**

We believe, help our unbelief. **In Christ’s name we pray, amen.**

Offering Prayer

Giver of all good gifts, accept our offerings of money, time and talents that we give in response to your generosity to us. Guide us in the way we share our resources and in the way we use the offerings, for the benefit of our community and the world. Amen.

Celebration of the Lord’s Supper

Joys and Concerns

Invitation to the Table

Friends, if we are honest with ourselves and with God, we are all seeking something.

Some of us long for a place to belong. Others seek permission to be who we are made to be.

Some of us are hungry for connection, hungry for justice, or hungry for a glimpse of the Divine. No matter what it is your soul longs for, there is good news to be found here.

Friends, this is Christ’s table. We are the guests. He is the host. There is a seat here with your name on it. Thanks be to God for a love like that.*

Great Prayer of Thanksgiving

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.**

Holy God, you made the world to hum in harmony; you listened and you called it good. In time we broke off from singing the song and went our own way, but you called us back and when the time was right you came in flesh and blood to live as one of us.

In Christ, dividing walls are broken down— no Jew or Greek, male and female, slave or free. You are there on every spectrum, in every color, at every table.

By your Spirit, make us one. By your Spirit, make us whole. By your Spirit, make this bread and wine your body and blood, that we may know communion with you and with each other. Take our hearts, our lives, our hands; mold us, change us, and send us out, that we may be your body in the world you so love, for the sake of Jesus Christ, in whose name we pray. Amen. Hear us now as we pray Christ's prayer together:** ***Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial, and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.***

Words of Institution

Communion of the People

Prayer after Communion

God of manna and mustard seeds, we came to this Table hungry and we leave feeling full

—

full of hope,
full of promise,
full of what could be.

For we not only found glimpses of you at this Table, but we caught a glimpse of the way things could be: in a meal where all are welcomed and all are fed. Is there anything holier than that?

So thank you for nourishing our curiosity alongside our spirit and our conviction. May we always seek you the way you seek after us. With grateful hearts we pray, amen.*

Taking the Word into the World

+Song *Will You Let Me Be Your Servant* 727

+Charge and Benediction

As you leave this place, may God bless you with seeking.

Seek out the hungry.

Seek the weary.

Seek the good in every person you pass.

Seek out the hopeful.

Seek the faithful.

Seek God in each of us.

As you seek and as you wonder, may you find what you are looking for.

In the name of our loving God, who is always seeking us, go now in peace. Amen.*

**Prayers by Rev. Sarah A. Speed | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org.*

***Prayers from the Book of Common Worship, PCUSA, Kindle Edition.*

Toll free conference call number (844) 855-4444, access code 654132#
Worship will also be connected through Facebook Live

COMMUNITY OF FAITH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT - MARCH 26, 2023

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Focal Scriptures for

Sunday, April 2

Matthew 21:1-11

In Our Thoughts & Prayers

Betty Murphy

Ruth Roeber

The McDermott family

Johanna Willis

The Kleier family

Jean Jennings' family

Emilee Walden

Kelly Montana

Lynda Jaeger

Ron Carlin

Ella Grace Marksberry

Worship Services

Join us for in-person services at 710 Western Reserve Rd., Crescent Springs, KY. You can also worship with us online via Facebook Live, or by joining the conference call. Worship services begin at 11:15 am.

Lenten Study

We will be having a Lenten study before worship on Sundays at 10:15 am, using materials from our Lenten Series, "Seeking: Honest Questions for Deeper Faith." Coffee and snacks may be shared. Contact Rev. Sharon for more information.

Liturgists Needed

Liturgists are needed to help lead worship. Please sign up on the sheet on the welcome table. Thank you!

"One Great Hour of Sharing" Special Offering

The "One Great Hour of Sharing" special offering will be collected until Sunday, April 9. This offering supports the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, the Presbyterian Hunger Program, and Self-Development of People.

Save the Date: CLASP Carrabba's Spring FUNd- Raisier

On Tuesday and Wednesday, April 25-26, Carrabba's restaurant at the Crestview Hills Town Center will sponsor a FUNd-raiser on behalf of CLASP. For every person who brings a CLASP coupon to the restaurant that day, Carrabba's will donate 20% of the purchase price to CLASP. Both dine-in and carryout meals will qualify for a donation. Coupons will be available shortly in the bulletin, and on the Community of Faith website and Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/cofnky>).