

The Fifth Sunday in Lent
St. Alban's Episcopal Church
March 29, 2020

Welcome

Opening Music – Hymn 457

1 Thou art the Way, to thee a - lone from sin and death we flee;
2 Thou art the Truth, thy word a - lone true wis - dom can im - part;
3 Thou art the Life, the rend - ing tomb pro - claims thy con - quering arm;
4 Thou art the Way, the Truth, the Life: grant us that way to know,

and all who would the Fa - ther seek, must seek him, Lord, by thee.
thou on - ly canst in - form the mind and pu - ri - fy the heart.
and those who put their trust in thee nor death nor hell shall harm.
that truth to keep, that life to win, whose joys e - ter - nal flow.

Presider: Bless the Lord who forgives all our sins.

People: *God's mercy endures forever.*

Presider: God sent the Son into the world, not to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him.

People: *God's mercy endures forever.*

Presider: God is our refuge and strength, a present help in time of trouble.

People: *God's mercy endures forever.*

Presider: Therefore we will not fear, though the earth be moved, though the mountains be tumbled into the depths of the sea;

People: *God's mercy endures forever.*

Presider: Though the waters roar and foam, though the mountains tremble with its tumult.

People: *God's mercy endures forever.*

Presider: Lamb of God, that takes away the sins of the world.

People: *Have mercy upon us.*

Presider: Lamb of God, that takes away the sins of the world.

People: *Have mercy upon us.*

Presider: Lamb of God, that takes away the sins of the world.

People: Grant us your peace.

The Collect of the Day

Presider: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Presider: Let us pray. Almighty God, you alone can bring into order the unruly wills and affections of sinners: Grant your people grace to love what you command and desire what you promise; that, among the swift and varied changes of the world, our hearts may surely there be fixed where true joys are to be found; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: Amen.

The Readings

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. 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.

Psalm 130

- 1 *Out of the depths have I called to you, O Lord; Lord, hear my voice; *
let your ears consider well the voice of my supplication.*
- 2 *If you, Lord, were to note what is done amiss, *
O Lord, who could stand?*
- 3 *For there is forgiveness with you; *
therefore you shall be feared.*
- 4 *I wait for the Lord; my soul waits for him; *
in his word is my hope.*
- 5 *My soul waits for the Lord, more than watchmen for the morning, *
more than watchmen for the morning.*

- 6 *O Israel, wait for the Lord, **
for with the Lord there is mercy;
7 *With him there is plenteous redemption, **
and he shall redeem Israel from all their sins.

Romans 8:6-11

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.

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 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.

The Sermon

The Very Rev. Sylvia Sweeney, PhD

The Nicene Creed

Leader: Let us join in affirming our faith, using the words of the Nicene Creed.

People: *We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.*

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father. Through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven: by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary, and was made man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son. With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified. He has spoken through the Prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

The Prayers of the People

In this holy season of Lent let us turn to God in prayer, saying:

Lord, hear our prayer.

For all the holy people of God, that we may be led by the Spirit to hunger for the word of life, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, hear our prayer.

For the peoples and nations of the world, and for those in authority, for our president, for congress, our courts and local government, that power and glory may not turn us from the way of justice and peace, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, hear our prayer.

For all who are afflicted and oppressed, that God will open our ears to their cry, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, hear our prayer.

For this community, that we may believe in our hearts and confess with our lips the word that is near, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, hear our prayer.

For our own needs and those of others. We pray especially for..., let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, hear our prayer.

For the departed, especially for those we now name..., that your will for them may be fulfilled, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, hear our prayer.

Strong and faithful God, hear us as we cry to you. Stretch out your hand to save us, that we may praise you for your mercy. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

The Confession

Presider: Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

People: God of mercy, you sent Jesus Christ to seek and save the lost. We confess that we have strayed from your truth, and from your holy will. We have failed in love, forgotten to be just, and have turned away from your wisdom. Forgive us our sins and restore us to your ways, for the sake of your Son, our only Savior, Jesus Christ the Lord. Amen.

Presider: Through the cross of Christ, God have mercy on you, pardon you, and set you free. Know that you are forgiven, and be at peace.

People: Amen.

The Peace

Presider: The peace of the Lord be always with you.

People: And also with you.

Anthem I Then Shall Live

Music: Jean Sibelius

Text: Gloria Gaither

I then shall live as one who's been forgiven.

I'll walk with joy to know my debts are paid.

I know my name is clear before my Father;

I am His child and I am not afraid.

So, greatly pardoned, I'll forgive my brother;

The law of love I gladly will obey.

I then shall live as one who's learned compassion.

I've been so loved, that I'll risk loving too.

I know how fear builds walls instead of bridges;

I'll dare to see another's point of view.

And when relationships demand commitment,

Then I'll be there to care and follow through.

Your Kingdom come around and through and in me;
Your power and glory, let them shine through me.
Your Hallowed Name, O may I bear with honor,
And may Your living Kingdom come in me.
The Bread of Life, O may I share with honor,
And may You feed a hungry world through me.

Closing Prayer

Presider: Let us pray together.

People: Almighty God, you have given us grace at this time with one accord to make our common supplication to you; and you have promised through your well beloved Son that when two or three are gathered together in his Name you will be in the midst of them: Fulfill now, O Lord, our desires and petitions as may be best for us; granting us in this world knowledge of your truth, and in the age to come life everlasting. Amen.

The Blessing

Presider: The peace of God, that passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of God's Son Jesus Christ our Lord; and may the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be upon you, and remain with you forever.

People Amen.

Closing Music – Hymn 470

1 There's a wide-ness in God's mer - cy like the wide-ness of the sea;
2 There is no place where earth's sor-rows are more felt than up in heaven;
3 For the love of God is broad-er than the mea-sure of the mind;

there's a kind-ness in his jus-tice, which is more than lib - er - ty.
there is no place where earth's fail-ings have such kind - ly judg-ment given.
and the heart of the E - ter - nal is most won - der - ful - ly kind.

There is wel-come for the sin-ner, and more gra-ces for the good;
 There is plen-ti-ful re-demp-tion in the blood that has been shed;
 If our love were but more faith-ful, we should take him at his word;

there is mer-cy with the Sa-vior; there is heal-ing in his blood.
 there is joy for all the mem-bers in the sor-rows of the Head.
 and our life would be thanks-giv-ing for the good-ness of the Lord.

The Dismissal

Presider: Let us bless the Lord.

People: *Thanks be to God.*