

Liturgy for Word and Sacrament

**First Sunday in Lent - February 18th, 2018**

**Centering Ourselves**

**Prelude – Improvisation On  
Today's Hymns - Joel Gary**

**Welcome and News of Our Life Together**

*Pastor will welcome worshipers*

*Announcements*

**Passing the peace**

*Congregation is invited as they are willing and able to greet each other with the peace of Christ.*

*Liturgist invites the congregation to rise in body or spirit*

**Singing Together -“I Greet You, Sure Redeemer” #251**

*Liturgist invites the congregation to remain standing in body or spirit*

**Call to Worship:**

**L:** We look to you to give us our food in due season;

**C:** When you open your hand, we are filled with good things.

**L:** When you hide your face, we are dismayed.

**C:** When you send forth your spirit, you renew the face of the ground.

**All: Amen**

*Liturgist invites the congregation to be seated*

**Choral Anthem – Christ Hath A Garden – Robert Bridges/Gerald Near**

**Communion for the Season of Lent:**

**Invitation:**

You give us our food in due season, O loving provider: the grain that becomes our bread and the grapes of which we drink. Now you spread this table before us, and invite us to join with you and all our global family, around one Lord, receiving one bread. Let us come now in joy!

**Confession:**

*<chant by pastor>*

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*O Christ Thou Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world, have mercy upon us (2x)*

*O Christ Thou Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world, grant us thy peace. Amen*

P: We confess our sins before God and one another.

<Pause for silence and reflection. >

P: Merciful Lord,

**All: We come before you with heavy hearts.**

**We do not always follow our Savior's lead.**

**We insist on our own way, putting worldly things before you.**

**We doubt, we discriminate; we scatter—preferring darkness to the brilliance of your truth. For all this we ask your mercy and forgiveness, that our hearts may be made clean again. Amen.**

Assurance of Pardon:

**P:** As loving shepherds gather their sheep, so our God protects and cares for us. As patient as a parent for a wayward child, so is God's mercy for us. Let us rejoice that we have received forgiveness, and that every day our God seeks to renew us in the image of our Holy Parent, in the name of the Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer. Amen

Prayer:

P: God be with you.

**C: And also with you.**

P: Lift up your hearts.

**C: We lift them up to God.**

P: Let us give thanks to God Most High.

**C: It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

P: God of justice and compassion, in remembrance of these your mighty acts in Jesus Christ, we offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving as a holy and living sacrifice, in union with Christ's offering for us. Pour out your Holy Spirit on us, and on these gifts of bread and cup. Make them be for us the body and blood of Christ, that we may be for the world the body of Christ, redeemed by Christ's blood. By your Spirit make us one with Christ, one with each other, and one in ministry to all the world until Christ comes with peace, and all your children may feast united together.

With the faithful in every place and time, we praise with joy your holy name:

**[sung] Holy Holy Holy God of all power and might  
Heaven and earth are full of your glory  
Hosanna in the highest  
Blessed is the one who comes in the name of our God!  
Hosanna in the highest**

Telling the story:

We remember that on the night of betrayal and desertion, Jesus took bread, gave God thanks, broke the bread, and gave it to his disciples saying: “Take and eat. This is my body broken for you. Do this in remembrance of me.”

**In the same way**, Jesus also took the cup, after supper, saying: “Take and drink. This cup is the new covenant in my blood, poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.

**By eating this bread** and drinking this cup, we proclaim Christ’s death, celebrate Christ’s resurrection, and await Christ’s coming again.

Prayer of Consecration: Gracious God, we ask you to bless this bread and cup and all of us with the outpouring of your Holy Spirit. Through this meal, make us the body of Christ, the church, your servant people, that we may be salt, and light, and leaven for the furtherance of your will in all the world. Amen

Invitation to Receive: **(Those assisting with communion are invited forward)**

Holy God, Your kingdom is not of this world, O Lord, and your ways are not our ways. Your table is big enough for everyone, there is always room for one more, and your invitation comes with no conditions. Let us gladly come to the feast which feeds us, makes us whole, and sends us forth rejoicing, with your good news on our lips. Amen

We celebrate an open table, where all who hunger and thirst are welcome to this feast. Come of your own choice, and bring your hopes and your history, your deliberation and your doubts. Come as your whole self. We will serve communion by having you come forward and take a piece of bread, dip it in the unfermented grape juice, and then eat it. If you are uncomfortable coming forward, we will come to you.

**These are the gifts of God for all people of God. The table is set, come, for all is ready.**

**Comm: Eat This Bread**

Communion is distributed. (The Communion Hymn is sung *during* the distribution, after the choir has been served.)

Prayer of Thanksgiving:

O God, we thank you for knowing when we are hungry, before we ourselves know it. We thank you for the friendship of Christ that has a meal ready for us when we are weary with the long night's working and have come up empty, powerless to provide for ourselves. Grant us the humility and enthusiasm to keep coming back to warm our hands around this campfire, Christ's feast of love, now, and in all our days. Amen.

**Responsive Psalm:**

**Response:** Your ways, O Lord, are love and truth, to those who keep your covenant.

**Morning Text:** John 11:1-44

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.”

**Children's Circle – Burying the Alleluia**  
**Sermon: Lord, If You Had Been Here**

*The liturgist invites the congregation to rise in body or spirit and sing the next hymn*

**Singing together - "Listen To Your Savior Call" #250**

<NOTE: This can be one slide like we did at Ash Wednesday, with "...*Lord of Life.*" **Hear our prayer.**" >

**Praying together:** *The pastor will request the congregation share its joys and concerns*

We pray for the church, the world, and all those in need.

<A brief silence.>

L: Your word stirs the breath within us. May our every utterance be a proclamation to your glory, a witness of what our God can do. Lord of Life,

**C: Hear our prayer.**

L: Everything gets its life from you, from the moment of its birth until its final breath. So fill us with a love for your world and all that dwells within it, that we dedicate our lives to the care of all that you have made. Lord of Life,

**C: Hear our prayer.**

L: As winter lingers and all appears to be lifeless on the surface, keep us in certain hope that life is at work deep underground, awaiting its moment to spring forth in due course and rejoice in the sun of your mercy. Lord of Life,

**C: Hear our prayer.**

L: God, you answer all who call on you. As you eased the grief of Mary and Martha, so comfort those who have lost someone dear to them. Be with those who face the end of their lives. And bless all who suffer with your healing touch, **especially...** Lord of Life,

**C: Hear our prayer.**

L: With all the saints who dwell in your eternal resurrection, unite us at length, and keep us in communion with your whole church on earth. Lord of Life,

**C: Hear our prayer.**

<Here other petitions may be offered. >

L: Receive our prayers and our thanksgiving for your daily blessings of mercy. For the sake of Jesus, who taught us to pray.

**All: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen**

**Honoring Our Covenants:**

**Leader:**

Sometimes, it may seem like all is lost, like Mary and Martha felt about their brother Lazarus, in the tomb for four days. Yet when we ask, God will show up with gifts beyond our wildest dreams – life anew. When we share our gifts with others, we allow God to work through us to help all those who need us.

*Ushers will come forward to receive the offering*

**Offertory: Aria on “Jewels” – Dale Wood**

*Ushers will bring the offering plates forward during the singing of the doxology*

**Bringing forward our gifts: Doxology**

Praise God throughout these forty days  
Praise Christ our Lord whom God did raise  
and praise the Spirit who imparts  
God's love in Christ into our hearts. Amen

**Prayer:**

When you open your hand, O God, we are filled with good things. May these gifts here offered be signs of our overflowing gratitude and the love which embraces all your children. Amen.

**Singing together: “O Come To Me, You Weary ” #484**

**Benediction:**

Mindful of your mercy, forgiveness, and instruction, O God,  
we go into the world renewed, refreshed,  
and full of courage to be your people.  
We go in peace to work for justice. Amen.

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**Postlude: Toccata from Suite Gothique – Leon Boëllmann**