



New Covenant Presbyterian Church
March 24, 2023 10:00am Service



1125 Jamison Corner Road Middletown, DE
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The Worship of God

March 24, 2022 Fifth Sunday of Lent

Welcome and Announcements

Sharing Our Vision

Preparing Ourselves for Worship During the Musical Prelude ...



Who do you consider to be a friend, in the sense of a trusted relationship, as opposed to an acquaintance? Jesus considered many people he knew friends – as more than acquaintances. There were four qualities shared in these relationships. They are: (1) they accept you as you are; (2) they are faithful to you in ALL circumstances; (3) they can be honest with you in a caring, kind way; (4) they listen to you and comfort you when you are distressed. In order to HAVE such friends, we need to BE such friends, and it takes effort on all our parts.

Preparing to Meet God

Call to Worship

- L: When hope is overcome by despair, we have the assurance that God restores life.
- P: *We cling to that assurance because there are times when death would be a better description of our existence.***
- L: We are not the first to feel that way. Israel one time felt like a valley of dry bones, and God's message was that they would be revived.
- P: *Our God is full of life, and we know that God wants to share that life with us. Praise the Lord!***

Hymn # 326

Spirit of God, Descend Upon My Heart

*1-Spirit of God, descend upon my heart;
Wean it from earth, through all its pulses move;
Stoop to my weakness, mighty as thou art,
And make me love thee as I ought to love;*

*2-Hast thou not bid us love thee, God and King;
All, all thine own: soul, heart, and strength, and mind?
I see thy cross, there teach my heart to cling.
O let me seek thee, and O let me find!*

*3-Teach me to feel that thou art always nigh;
Teach me the struggles of the soul to bear,
To check the rising doubt, the revel sigh;
Teach me the patience of unanswered prayer.*

*4-Teach me to love thee as thine angels love,
One holy passion filling all my frame;
The baptism of the heaven-descended Dove,
My heart an altar, and thy love the flame.*

Prayer of Confession



If we weren't aware of what you want, Lord God - if we really thought we were doing all that we could – we wouldn't be here confessing. But we are here because we haven't done what we could do, and we haven't been obedient to your Word. We acted as if we knew full well how you wanted us to act. Please forgive us for our carelessness, our mistakes, and our ill will. We can do better, and we commit ourselves to do so with your help, most loving and forgiving God. And now, holy God, we turn to you in silent prayer to share our concerns and to seek your forgiveness.....Amen.

Assurance of Pardon

L: Hear the Good News: God is rich in mercy.

P: ***Through God's great love, we are brought to life with Christ even when we were dead in sin, and it is by grace that we are saved.***

L: Friends, believe the Good News of the Gospel -

P: ***In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven!***

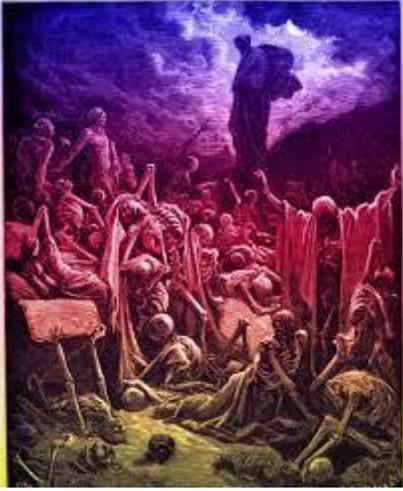
Meeting God in the Word

Children's Message

Prayer for Illumination

First Lesson *Ezekiel 37: 1-14* *The Valley of Dry Bones* *Lay Leader*

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, "Prophecy 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^[b] 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 command-ed 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.”

L: This is the Word of the Lord. **P: Thanks be to God.**

Second Reading

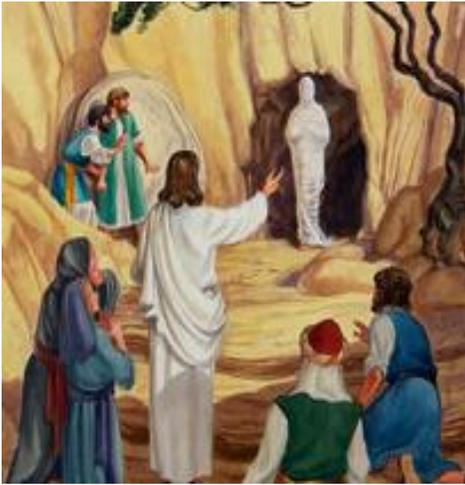
John 11: 1-45

The Death of Lazarus

Carol

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,¹ 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.

L: This is the Word of the Lord. **P: Thanks be to God.**

Responding to the Word

Hymn # 316

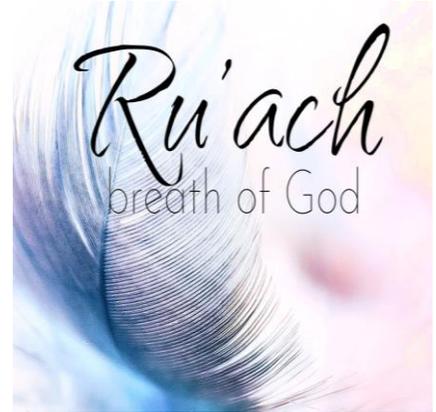
Breathe on Me, Breath of God

*1-Breathe on me, Breath of God, fill me with life anew,
That I may love what thou dost love, and do what thou wouldst do.*

*2-Breathe on me, Breath of God, until my heart is pure,
Until with thee I will one will, to do and to endure.*

*3-Breathe on me, Breath of God, till I am wholly thine,
Until this earthly part of me glows with thy fire divine.*

*4-Breathe on me, Breath of God, so shall I never die,
But live with thee the perfect life of thine eternity.*



*Litany of Faith

L: O Jesus, from the desire of being esteemed, deliver me please.

P: *From the desire of being extolled, deliver me please.*

L: From the desire of being preferred to others, deliver me please.

P: *From the desire of being consulted, deliver me please.*

L: From the fear of being ridiculed, deliver me please.

P: *From the fear of being suspected, deliver me please.*

L: From the fear that others may be loved more than I, deliver me please.

A: *Holy and loving God, deliver me from any thoughts or feelings that pull me away from you and your intention for my life. May it be so.*

Prayers of the People and the Lord's Prayer

Cares Chorus: *I cast all my cares upon you. I lay all of my burdens down at your feet.
And anytime, I don't know what to do, I cast all my cares upon you.*

The Call to Celebrate Our Gifts

God provided all that we need, and so we are called to return a portion of our blessings to God to be used in God's service. We so appreciate all that each of you shares for our church's ministry. May we all give sacrificially for God's glory.

Prayer of Dedication: Loving God, lead me in the way you want me to go, and make my spirit and my heart willingly go where you send me. Amen.

Going Out to Serve

*Hymn # 411

Arise, Your Light Is Come!

*1-Arise, your light is come! The Spirit's call obey;
Show forth the glory of your God, which shines on you today.*

*2-Arise, your light is come! Fling wide the prison door;
Proclaim the captives' liberty, good tidings to the poor.*

*3-Arise, your light is come! All you in sorrow born,
Bind up the brokenhearted ones and comfort those who mourn.*

*4-Arise, your light is come! The mountains burst in song!
Rise up like eagles on the wing; God's power will make us strong.*



*Blessing

L: Each day, as you encounter life, look for God in every experience and person.

P: *God wants us to live abundantly, so we will look for signs of life rather than death, and live as God's resurrection people.*

L: And may the love, grace and fellowship of God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit...

*Response

*He is Lord – He is Lord,. He has risen from the dead, and he is Lord.
Every knee shall bow, every tongue confess, that Jesus Christ is Lord.*