

Call to Worship

Come into the presence of the God of life – the God of resurrection – the God of everlasting life. In this season of Lent – in this journey toward the cross – let us remember that we are forever in the presence of the God of life. Come, let us worship!

Lenten Liturgy

God set the prophet down in a valley of dry bones

...asking, "Can these bones live?"

...commanding, "Hear the word of the Lord,"

...promising, "I will put my spirit in you, you shall live."

Jesus wept at the tomb of his friend

...hearing the grief, "Lord, if you had been here... "

...knowing the doubt, "Could not he...?"

...commanding life out of death, "Lazarus, come out!"

We are tempted by hopelessness and despair

...in our own pain, at the world's brokenness,

saying, "Our bones are dried up, our hope is lost."

Lord, have mercy

Christ, have mercy

Lord, have mercy. Let us pray...

Creator God, we wait for you and in your word we hope. For with you is steadfast love and great power to redeem. Help us to trust you and to share your resurrection life with all people and the whole creation. So may all be raised from despair to hope, from darkness to light, from death to life; through Jesus Christ, who is the resurrection and the life. Amen

Scripture **Ezekiel 37: 1-14** [NRSV]

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 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, "Prophecy to the breath, prophecy, 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 prophecy, 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.

This is the Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God!**

Message: **God's Spirit Within** (sent as a separate file)

> ***Up from the depths I cry to you***

90 (tune: Kingsfold)

† Pastoral Prayers and the Lord's Prayer

O God, we give thanks that you call each of us by name and unite us in a community of faith. Give us love enough to make a difference in your world – trust enough to follow even when the way before us is a challenge.

Holy One, bring your compassion to this world once more.

O God of peace and promise, you call us to love our enemies and to be peacemakers in the world you love. We pray today for people and places divided by ancient bitterness and current hostility, *(especially we remember...)*

Holy One, bring your compassion to this world once more.

O God of the bruised and broken, we are grateful that you know the things that bring us suffering and pain. We pray today for all those in need of healing and comfort...

O God of the lonely and sorrowing, we remember now in this moment of quiet those people we miss – those who grieve and those who are lonely... *(keep silence...)*

Holy One, bring your compassion to this world once more.

O God of promise and possibility, give us courage to face the future with confidence and hope, knowing you will sustain us. We offer our prayers together in words Jesus taught...

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 debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen

Blessing

Go into the world sharing care and compassion – participate in building a more humane and holy world. Let your regard for the dignity of all guide your path. And may the love of God, the grace of Jesus Christ and the nurture of the Spirit embrace and sustain us all.

> ***Go now in peace***

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