

St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church
229 South Broad Street
Jersey Shore, PA 17740
570-398-1676

Sunday, March 26, 2023

Fifth Sunday of Lent



Introduction to the day

In today's gospel Jesus reveals his power over death by raising Lazarus from the dead. The prophet Ezekiel prophesies God breathing new life into dry bones. To those in exile or living in the shadows of death, these stories proclaim God's promise of resurrection. In baptism we die with Christ that we might also be raised with him to new life. At the Easter Vigil we will welcome the newly baptized as we remember God's unfailing promise in our baptism.

SHARING OUR JOYS AND CONCERNS

PRELUDE

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,
who journeys with us these forty days,
and sustains us with the gift of grace.

Amen.

Let us acknowledge before God and one another
our need for repentance and God's mercy.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Holy God,

we confess to you our faults and failings.

Too often we neglect and do not trust your holy word;

we take for ourselves instead of giving to others;

we spoil rather than steward your creation;

we cause hurt though you call us to heal;

we choose fear over compassion.

Forgive us, renew us, and lead us,

as we seek to follow in your way of life.

Amen.

Hear the good news:

God so loved the world that God gave the only Son,
so that all may receive life.

This promise is for you!

God embraces you with divine mercy,

✠ forgives you in Christ's name,
and revives you in the Spirit's power.

Amen.

GATHERING SONG: *Oh, for a Thousand Tongues to Sing* 886

GREETING

P: The love of God poured into our hearts,
the saving grace of Jesus Christ,
and the abundant life of the Holy Spirit
be with you all.

C: And also, with you.

Kyrie p. 138

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: Let us pray.

Almighty God, your Son came into the world to free us all from sin and death. Breathe upon us the power of your Spirit, that we may be raised to new life in Christ and serve you in righteousness all our days, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

The assembly is seated.

WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

L: A reading from Ezekiel.

FIRST READING: Ezekiel 37:1-14

Ezekiel's vision of the valley of dry bones is a promise that Israel as a nation, though dead in exile, will live again in their land through God's life-giving spirit. Three times Israel is assured that through this vision they will know that "I am the LORD."

¹The 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, “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.” 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.”

L: The word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

L Let us read the Psalm responsively by verse.

PSALM: Psalm 130

¹Out of the depths

I cry to you, O LORD;

²**O LORD, hear my voice!**

Let your ears be attentive to the voice of my supplication.

³If you were to keep watch over sins,

O LORD, who could stand?

⁴**Yet with you is forgiveness,**

in order that you may be feared.

⁵I wait for you, O LORD; my soul waits;

in your word is my hope.

⁶**My soul waits for the Lord more than those who keep watch for the morning,**

more than those who keep watch for the morning.

⁷O Israel, wait for the LORD, for with the LORD there is steadfast love;

with the LORD there is plenteous redemption.

⁸**For the LORD shall redeem Israel**

from ¹all their sins.

L: A reading from Romans.

Second Reading: Romans 8:6-11

For Paul, Christian spirituality entails living in the reality of the Holy Spirit. The driving force behind our actions and values is not our sinful desire for self-satisfaction but the very Spirit by which God raised Jesus from the dead and will also raise us from the dead.

⁶To set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. ⁷For 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, ⁸and those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

⁹But 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. ¹⁰But if Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. ¹¹If 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.

L: The word of the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

The assembly stands.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



Re - turn to the Lord, your God, for he is gra - cious and
mer - ci - ful, slow to an - ger, and a - bound - ing in
stead - fast love, and a - bound - ing in stead - fast love.

P: The holy gospel according to St. John.

C: **Glory to you, O Lord.**

GOSPEL: John 11:1-45

Jesus is moved to sorrow when his friend Lazarus falls ill and dies. Then, in a dramatic scene, he calls his friend out of the tomb and restores him to life.

¹Now 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." ⁴But 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." ⁵Accordingly, though Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus, ⁶after having heard that Lazarus was ill, he stayed two days longer in the place where he was.

⁷Then after this he said to the disciples, "Let us go to Judea again." ⁸The disciples said to him, "Rabbi, the Jews were just now trying to stone you, and are you going there again?" ⁹Jesus 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. ¹⁰But those who walk at night stumble, because the light is not in them." ¹¹After saying this, he told them, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I am going there to awaken him." ¹²The 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.”

¹⁷When Jesus arrived, he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb four days.¹⁸ Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, some two miles away,¹⁹ and many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to console them about their brother.²⁰ When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went and met him, while Mary stayed at home.²¹ Martha said to Jesus, “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.²² But even now I know that God will give you whatever you ask of him.”²³ Jesus said to her, “Your brother will rise again.”²⁴ Martha said to him, “I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day.”²⁵ Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live,²⁶ and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?”²⁷ She said to him, “Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one coming into the world.”

²⁸When 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.”²⁹ And when she heard it, she got up quickly and went to him.³⁰ Now Jesus had not yet come to the village, but was still at the place where Martha had met him.³¹ 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.³² 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.”³³ When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her also weeping, he was greatly disturbed in spirit and deeply moved.³⁴ He said, “Where have you laid him?” They said to him, “Lord, come and see.”³⁵ Jesus began to weep.³⁶ So the Jews said, “See how he loved him!”³⁷ But some of them said, “Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?”

³⁸Then Jesus, again greatly disturbed, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone was lying against it.³⁹ 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.”⁴⁰ Jesus said to her, “Did I not tell you that if you believed, you would see the glory of God?”⁴¹ So they took away the stone. And Jesus looked upward and said, “Father, I thank you for having heard me.⁴² 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.”⁴³ When he had said this, he cried with a loud voice, “Lazarus, come out!”⁴⁴ 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.”

⁴⁵Many of the Jews therefore, who had come with Mary and had seen what Jesus did, believed in him.

P: The gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

The assembly is seated.

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY: *My Faith Looks Up to Thee* 759

THE NICENE CREED p. 104

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

A: Sustained by God's abundant mercy, let us pray for the church, the world, and all of creation.

A brief silence.

You have breathed into us the breath of life. Enliven your church. Deepen our partnerships with our companion churches around the globe (*specific synods, dioceses, or congregations may be named*), and bless the work of missionaries who accompany them. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

A: Your spirit brings life to creation. Enliven the natural world and restore ecosystems in need of healing (*local natural places may be named*). Uplift prophetic voices that turn us to the needs of the soil beneath our feet and the air all around. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

A: You redeem the world and its peoples. Free us from systems of oppression. Unbind nations and societies from the sins of racism, sexism, and homophobia. Raise up leaders at all levels of government who work to promote the dignity of every human life. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

A: You weep when we weep. Be present with those who grieve or who are troubled by illness (*especially*). You hear us when we call to you. Deliver us from the depths of our despair, and free us from the worries that bind us. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

Your Spirit of life dwells in our assembly. Bless the music ministries of this congregation (*specific ensembles may be named*) and all who lead us in hymns of praise and thanksgiving and in songs of lament and prayer. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

A: You teach us to help and love others. Our partnership with the Ansbach-Würzburg Kirchenkreis has given us new opportunities to learn about the Lutheran Church in Germany and the history of the Lutheran Church. It also gives out opportunities to learn about how people are living out their faith in their ministries today. Empower in us a willingness to reach out to our sisters and brothers in Germany to learn their culture and the ministries of their churches, including support of the refugees from Ukraine. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

A: You are the resurrection and the life. Even though we die, we will live. With thanksgiving, we remember all your saints who now live in your eternal love. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

P: We lift our prayers to you, O God, trusting in your steadfast love and your promise to renew your whole creation; through Jesus Christ our Savior.

Amen.

Responding in Love

Our Offering of Music

CHOIR ANTHEM *Hold on to Hope*

The assembly stands.

OFFERTORY

Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit with me.

Cast me not away from your presence and take not your Holy Spirit from me.

Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and uphold me with your free Spirit.

OFFERING PRAYER

A: God of good gifts,
receive these and all our offerings
as we present them in faithful service
for the sake of your gospel.
Prepare our hearts to receive you in this meal
as you pour out your very presence
through Christ Jesus, the wellspring of eternal life. **Amen.**

GREAT THANKSGIVING P.144 *(in the beginning of the hymnal)*

Dialogue

Preface by the Pastor

Holy Holy Holy

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

Words of Institution

God of our weary years, God of our silent tears,
you have brought us this far along the way.

In times of bitterness, you did not abandon us,
but guided us into the path of love and light.

In every age you sent prophets
to make known your loving will for all humanity.

The cry of the poor has become your own cry;
our hunger and thirst for justice is your own desire.

In the fullness of time, you sent your chosen servant
to preach good news to the afflicted,
to break bread with the outcast and despised,
and to ransom those in bondage to prejudice and sin.

In the night in which he was betrayed,
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,
and gave it for all to drink, saying:
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

For as often as we eat of this bread and drink from this cup
we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

Remembering, therefore, his death and resurrection,
we await the day when Jesus shall return
to free all the earth from the bonds of slavery and death.
Come, Lord Jesus! And let the church say, Amen.

Amen.

Send your Holy Spirit, our advocate,
to fill the hearts of all who share this bread and cup
with courage and wisdom to pursue love and justice in all the world.
Come, Spirit of freedom! And let the church say, Amen.

Amen.

Join our prayers and praise with your prophets and martyrs of every age,
that, rejoicing in the hope of the resurrection,
we might live in the freedom and hope of your Son.
Through him, with him, in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all glory and honor is yours, almighty Father, now and forever.

Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER P. 145

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

P: Come and receive Jesus, our strength in the wilderness.

COMMUNION

When giving the bread and cup, the communion ministers say

The body of Christ, given for you.

The blood of Christ, shed for you.

and each person may respond **Amen.**

Communion Song *Lamb of God You Take Away p.146*

SONG AFTER COMMUNION *Jesus, Remember Me*

Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.

Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.

The assembly stands.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

A: Embodied God,

at your table, we have tasted the goodness of Jesus.

With the eyes of our hearts open to your promise,

empower us to hear the needs of our neighbors

and touch the world with your love. **Amen.**

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

BLESSING

God, the giver of love,

✠ Christ, the resurrection and the life,

and the Holy Spirit of rebirth

bless you in this Lenten journey. **Amen.**

SENDING SONG: *You Are The Way 758*

DISMISSAL

P: Go in peace. Serve in love.

C: Thanks be to God.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Remember in prayer: Rowan Aldridge, Jim Allen, Donna Batschelet, Ron Brundick, Agnes Cryder, Don & Helen Delaney, Joanne Fisher, Joann Hall, Mick Miller, David Mitchell, Cora Pelletier, the Snyder family, the Welshans family, and all of our shut-ins.

We also remember in prayer Family Promise; Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton – ELCA; Bishop Craig A. Miller - USS; for our Companion Synods in Liberia and Ansbach-Wurzburg, Germany; and we pray for peace in Ukraine and an end to war.

We pray for the safety of our military troops around the world including Mark Baier, Isaac Boring, Jade Cordrey, Ben Cramer, Trevor and Nehemiah Eberhart, Patrick Hamlin, Paul Laidacker, Kenny Leitch, Steven Moore, Maddison Myers, Tyler O’Neal, Adam Shaffer, Richie Speicher, Aaron Stabley, Paul St. James, Kevin Titus, and Jenna White. We also lift up in prayer

their families who strive to keep a normalcy in the family and continue on often with added stress.

The flowers on our altar are in memory of my husband, Malcolm by Joyce Hudson.

The Sanctuary Candle in March is in memory of loved ones by Pastor and Mrs. Aucker.

The Lutheran Church Women's Prayer Chain is a vital ministry of St. John Lutheran. Anyone in need of prayers is asked to contact any of the following persons:

Gloria Ely – 570-873-3597 Joyce Braucht - 570-398-2852

MANY THANKS for the cards, calls, food, prayers and love given during my recent surgery. I did very well and I'm sure it's because of all your positive thoughts! Love Becky

Christian Education is seeking volunteers to lead Children's Church once a month. If interested please see Cathy Eisner. The 4th and 5th Sundays are open.

NO NEED TO STAY HOME !!! We now have the volunteers to supervise toddlers/babies, childrensay up to age 6 in the **NURSERY**. Ken Dougherty will have a sign-up sheet if you would be willing to help out in the **NURSERY**.

NURSERY TOYS. Molly and I will be cleaning out the nursery in a few weeks and throwing away broken toys. We will be looking for some toys that can replace the ones we will be getting rid of. If you have any toys that are like new and have all their pieces and you would like to donate to the church nursery we would be very appreciative. If you could put them in one of the classrooms upstairs that is not being used that would be great. Thank you so much! Carol Yost

PLEASE HELP THE EASTER BUNNY !! Candy donations are needed for the annual Easter Egg Hunt on April 8. Please turn in your donations by Tuesday, April 4.

EASTER SUNRISE BREAKFAST - Plans are being made and phone calls are going out to have our breakfast after the early service. Some volunteers are needed following the Easter Egg Hunt on Saturday, April 8 to set up the room. After the hunt, please stay a few minutes to help set up table and chairs.

Pictorial Directory

The last pictorial directory of the members of St. John Lutheran was created in 2009. Over the past fourteen years we have had a number of changes with births, new members, and deaths, along with the pandemic that had a significant impact upon us. It was suggested that we create a new pictorial directory so people have a visual picture of our members.

We also need information from you to verify what we have on file. We have no birthdates on some people. We have a lot of young adults who moved away from home but we have no addresses, phone numbers or emails for them. Just their parent's address.

So, we are asking each of you to send us a photo of yourselves and send it by email to St. John Lutheran Church at: stjohn@stjl.org

Please take a close-up photo of ourselves or your family. Use your cell phone or have someone else take your photo and email it to St. John. Please send us a close-up photo. A dot standing out in the field will not show your smiley face.

Please also send us your address, email, and phone number to update the directory and make sure it is accurate. A number of people provided their home phone number years ago but have since discontinued their home phone and use only their cell phones. If you do not want your cell phone listed, please note that when you send us your photo and information
Current church directories are always available without photos. Just ask Pastor to print one out for you. It only takes a few minutes. Remember the directory is only as good as the information that we have available.

Special Thanks to Shelby Rice for volunteering to coordinate the pictorial directory project. Contact her for any information regarding photos. You can text your pictures directly to Shelby 570.506.4934

Youth Ministry

Middle and High School Youth – Youth Group Meeting Monday, March 27, 6:00 p.m. at St. John. Dinner provided. Topic: Applying for a job – thoughts about this summer.

Camp Mt. Luther is seeking adult camp counselors for the summer camping season. You must be a high school graduate this summer and have experience working with children and youth. Check the Camp Mount Luther website for information.

Camp Mt. Luther has a new way to send out their summer camp flyers and registration. There is a QR code available here at the church on the bulletin board and in the annual report that you scan and read. You can download the registration, medical, and other forms from the QR code.

Turn in registrations to Molly Hollick. **Deadline is April 9**

LENTEN SERVICES

These will be traditional services in the sanctuary with no meal.

Lent 5, March 29, 7:00 pm at St. John Lutheran

Palm Sunday, April 2, 9:30 am at St. John Lutheran.

We need volunteers to read the Passion of St. Matthew.

A sign-up list is posted on the bulletin board in the Tower, 2nd floor.

Maundy Thursday, April 6, 7:00 pm at St. John Lutheran

Good Friday, Stations of the Cross, April 7 at St. James Lutheran

Easter Vigil Egg Hunt for the children, April 8 at 11:00 am.

Set up for Easter Sunrise Breakfast following the Egg Hunt

Easter Resurrection of Our Lord, Sunday, April 9, 6:00 am and 9:30 am, St. John Lutheran

Easter Sunrise Breakfast following the 6:00 a.m. service

Holy Humor Sunday, April 16, 9:30 a.m. Rumor has it that the Blues Brothers will return to St. John! “Holy Humor Sunday” celebrations of Jesus’ resurrection on the Sunday after Easter. The custom was rooted in the musings of early church theologians that God played a practical joke on the devil by raising Jesus from the dead. ***Please plan to wear tie dye or very bright colors!***

Calendar

Sunday, March 26, 2023

5th Sunday of Lent

- 8:30 a.m. Sunday School
- 9:30 a.m. Children's Church and Worship Service
- 10:30 a.m. Choir Rehearsal
- 1:00 p.m. Worship at Nippenose Village

Monday, March 27, 2022

- 1:00 p.m. Bible Study Chapter 20 of Proverbs
- 6:00 p.m. Middle and High School Youth Group (Steps in applying for a job)

Wednesday, March 29, 2023

- 10:00 a.m. Trinity Episcopal Worship
- 7:00 p.m. Lent Service 5 at St John

Sunday, April 2, 2023

Palm Sunday

- 8:30 a.m. Sunday School
- 9:30 a.m. Children's Church and Worship Service
- 2:00 p.m. Catechism Class

JESUS' ENEMIES
DECIDE TO KILL HIM
BECAUSE HE
RAISES LAZARUS?

YES.)



WWW.AGNUSDAY.ORG

IT'S LIKE THE **LAST
STRAW** FOR THEM. A FEW
VERSES LATER THEY'VE
DECIDED HE HAS TO DIE.)



GIVEN HOW THINGS
WORKED FOR LAZARUS,
THEY THOUGHT JESUS
WOULD **STAY DEAD?**



JOHN 11:1-45

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