



seeking:

Can these
bones live?

PRELUDE:

WELCOME:

CALL TO WORSHIP:

Have you ever felt bone-tired and worn-down?

Have you ever felt grief lay heavy on your back?

Have you ever felt like hope was out of reach?

Have you ever wondered, *can these bones live?*

If you have, then you are in the right place, for this is God's house.

Hope lives here.

So, come. Rest your weary bones.

Let us worship Holy God.

OPENING PRAYER:

Creator God,

Why is bad news so loud?

**In the midst of violence, hunger, and injustice,
it often feels like suffering has a microphone.**

How do we hear you? How do we find you?

How do we know that these bones can live?

We pray that you would rush through this room like a mighty wind.

Remind us that these bones *can* live and that good news rests in you.

Help us listen to the hope that you breathe into every word.

With open hearts we pray,

Amen.

GATHERING SONG: ELW 334 - *"Tree of Life and Awesome Mystery"*

1 Tree of Life and awesome myst'ry,
in your death we are reborn;
though you die in all of hist'ry,
still you rise with ev'ry morn,
still you rise with ev'ry morn.

2 We remember truth once spoken,
love passed on through act and word;
ev'ry person lost and broken
wears the body of our Lord,
wears the body of our Lord.

3 Christ, you lead and we shall follow,
stumbling though our steps may be;
one with you in joy and sorrow,
we the river, you the sea,
we the river, you the sea.

Lent 5

4 God of all our fear and sorrow,
God who lives beyond our death,
hold us close through each tomorrow,
love as near as ev'ry breath.
love as near as ev'ry breath.

Text: Latin hymn, 11th cent.; tr. Maurice F. Bell, 1862-1947, alt.
Outside USA: Text from *The English Hymnal* © Oxford University Press 1906.
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CHILDREN'S MESSAGE:

SPECIAL MUSIC: *"This Is My Body"* – Sanctuary Choir

FIRST LESSON: Ezekiel 37:1-14

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, "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." 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 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. 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.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION: "Let Your Steadfast Love" – ELW Setting 8

Let your steadfast love come to us, O Lord.

Let your steadfast love come to us, O Lord.

Save us as you promised; we will trust your word.

Let your steadfast love come to us, O Lord.

GOSPEL: John 11:1-45

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." ¹³Jesus, however, had been speaking about his death, but they thought that he was referring merely to sleep. ¹⁴Then Jesus told them plainly, "Lazarus is dead. ¹⁵For your sake I am glad I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him." ¹⁶Thomas, 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. ¹⁸Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, some two miles away, ¹⁹and many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to console them about their brother. ²⁰When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went and met him, while Mary stayed at home. ²¹Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. ²²But even now I know that God will give you whatever you ask of him." ²³Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again." ²⁴Martha said to him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day." ²⁵Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, ²⁶and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?" ²⁷She 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." ²⁹And when she heard it, she got up quickly and went to him. ³⁰Now Jesus had not yet come to the village, but was still at the place where Martha had met him. ³¹The 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. ³²When 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." ³³When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her also weeping, he was greatly disturbed in spirit and deeply moved. ³⁴He said, "Where have you laid him?" They said to him, "Lord, come

and see." ³⁵Jesus began to weep. ³⁶So the Jews said, "See how he loved him!" ³⁷But 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. ³⁹Jesus 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." ⁴⁰Jesus said to her, "Did I not tell you that if you believed, you would see the glory of God?" ⁴¹So they took away the stone. And Jesus looked upward and said, "Father, I thank you for having heard me. ⁴²I 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." ⁴³When he had said this, he cried with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!" ⁴⁴The 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.

SERMON: "Seeking Life" – Pastor Andrea Cain

SERMON SONG: ELW 574 - "Here I Am, Lord"

1 "I, the Lord of sea and sky,
I have heard my people cry.
All who dwell in dark and sin
my hand will save.
I, who made the stars of night,
I will make their darkness bright.
Who will bear my light to them?
Whom shall I send?"

Refrain

Here I am, Lord. Is it I, Lord?
I have heard you calling in the night.
I will go, Lord, if you lead me.
I will hold your people in my heart.

2 "I, the Lord of snow and rain,
I have borne my people's pain.

I have wept for love of them.
They turn away.
I will break their hearts of stone,
give them hearts for love alone.
I will speak my word to them.
Whom shall I send?" *Refrain*

3 "I, the Lord of wind and flame,
I will tend the poor and lame.
I will set a feast for them.
My hand will save.
Finest bread I will provide
till their hearts be satisfied.
I will give my life to them.
Whom shall I send?" *Refrain*

Text: Daniel L. Schutte, b. 1946
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AFFIRMATION OF FAITH:

**We believe that God loves us—
God loves us enough to weep when we are gone.
We believe that God does not give up on us—
breathing new life into tired bones.
We believe that God returns to us—
always seeking us when we are lost.
We believe that God holds hope for us—
so we hold onto hope as well.
We believe; help our unbelief.
In Christ's name we pray,
Amen.**

*written by rev. Sarah Speed |
sanctifiedart.org*

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION:

The peace of the Lord be with you.
And also with you.

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 and bless the work of missionaries who accompany them. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

You redeem the world and its peoples. Raise up leaders at all levels of government who work to promote the dignity of every human life. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

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. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

Your Spirit of life dwells in our assembly. Bless the music ministries of this congregation and all who lead us in worship. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

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,
receive our prayer.

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.

OFFERING:

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING:

In days of old, God was seen as far from the people. But we know Christ, and in him we know God. When we share what we have out of love, our hearts grow closer to God, and we shine with Christ's glory. Let us offer our gifts to God today.

The Hunger Jar is an offering above and beyond regular offering. A special hunger designated on March 25/26 sponsors underprivileged children in Maricopa County with the annual Shop with the Sheriff Day at the 2023 "Cops for Kids" Event.

You are invited to share your gifts in worship while others give electronically at www.desertcross.org with the giving button, text giving, or by QR code. We give thanks for all the ways you support God's mission of outreach through Desert Cross that changes lives for the sake of the gospel.

OFFERING RESPONSE: ELW 186 - "Create in Me a Clean Heart"

Create in Me a Clean Heart *Offering Song*

The musical score is written on four staves in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The melody is simple and hymn-like, with lyrics written below each staff. The lyrics are: 'Cre-ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re-new a right spir-it with-in me. Cast me not a-way from your pres-ence, and take not your Ho-ly Spir-it from me. Re-store to me the joy of your sal-va-tion, and up-hold me with your free Spir-it.'

Cre-ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re-new a right
spir-it with-in me. Cast me not a-way from your pres-ence, and take
not your Ho-ly Spir-it from me. Re-store to me the joy of
your sal-va-tion, and up-hold me with your free Spir-it.

Music: Richard W. Hillert, b. 1923

Music © 1978 *Lutheran Book of Worship*, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

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OFFERING PRAYER:

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.

HOLY COMMUNION: CONFESSION & FORGIVENESS:

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism.

CALL TO CONFESSION:

Friends in faith,
there is nothing that we have to keep hidden from God—
not our anger, our grief, or the ways in which we have fallen short.
In confession, we speak honestly and are met with grace.
So let us bring our full selves to this prayer, knowing that God is already running to meet us. Let us pray:

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Jesus of Nazareth,
We confess: we forget that you, too, have wept and have lost.
Forgive us for all the times we place blame on you and create distance,
imagining that you could never feel what we feel.
Forgive us for allowing the valley of dry bones to be a sea of space between us.
Pour yourself into the cracks in our hearts.
Bring these bones back to life.
Bring us closer to you.
With gratitude we pray,
Amen.

WORDS OF FORGIVENESS:

We could spend our whole lives pushing God away, or trying to solve the world's problems all on our own, and God would still love us all the same.
Even in our shortcomings, we are God's beloved.
So hear and believe this good news:
You are saved by grace through faith. ✝
You belong to God. We are not alone.
Amen.

INVITATION TO THE TABLE

Are you seeking? Come to the table of forgiveness, love, and new life and be drawn more deeply into the fullness of life and the heart of God.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION:

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, 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 for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us:

LORD'S PRAYER: ELW p.134

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 trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
forever and ever. Amen.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION:

Come and receive Jesus, our strength in the wilderness. All are welcome!

COMMUNION DISTRIBUTION:

Come forward to receive the bread and a cup of wine/juice. Alert an usher for communion in your seat. Children may commune or receive a blessing. All are welcome.

DISTRIBUTION SONGS:

ELW 494 - "For the Bread Which You Have Broken"

1 For the bread which you have broken,
for the wine which you have poured,
for the words which you have spoken,
now we give you thanks, O Lord.

2 By this promise that you love us,
by your gift of peace restored,
by your call to heav'n above us,
hallow all our lives, O Lord.

3 With the saints who now adore you,
seated at the heav'nly board,
may the church still waiting for you
keep love's tie unbroken, Lord.

4 In your service, Lord, defend us;
in our hearts keep watch and ward;
in the world to which you send us
let your kingdom come, O Lord.

Text: Louis F. Benson, 1855-1930, alt.
Text © Robert F. Jefferys Jr.

ELW 481 - "Come to the Table"

1 Come to the table of mercy,
prepared with the wine and the bread.
All who are hungry and thirsty,
come, and your souls will be fed.
Come at the Lord's invitation;
receive from his nail-scarred hand.
Eat of the bread of salvation;
drink of the blood of the Lamb.

Text: Claire Cloninger, b. 1942
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Cody Road, Mobile, AL 36695; Juniper Landing Music (admin. Word Music); and
Word Music (ASCAP).

POST-COMMUNION BLESSING & PRAYER:

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.
Amen.

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.

BENEDICTION:

As you leave this place,
may God bless you with seeking.
Seek out God in each of us.
As you seek and as you wonder,
may you find what you are looking for.
In the name of our loving God, +
who is always seeking us,
go now in peace.

Amen.

SENDING SONG: ELW 328 - *"Restore in Us, O God"*

1 Restore in us, O God,
the splendor of your love;
renew your image in our hearts,
and all our sins remove.

2 O Spirit, wake in us
the wonder of your pow'r;
from fruitless fear unfurl our lives
like springtime bud and flow'r.

3 Bring us, O Christ, to share
the fullness of your joy;
baptize us in the risen life
that death cannot destroy.

4 Three-personed God, fulfill
the promise of your grace,
that we, when all our searching ends,
may see you face to face.

Text: Carl P. Daw Jr., b. 1944

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DISMISSAL:

P: Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE:

Thank you for supporting the Desert Cross mission.

Here are the ways you can donate today:

ONLINE GIVING:



Get your smart phone and
scan the QR-code with
your phone camera

SECURE TEXT GIVING:

Text "GIVE" to
833-636-1502

USPS:

8600 S. McClintock Drive
Tempe, AZ 85284

