



Birchcliff Bluffs United Church

Ministers: All the People – wherever and however they gather

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March 29 – Lent 5

WE GATHER AS GOD’S PEOPLE

Prelude

Call to Worship

God the creator, is with us this day,

*We gather in the name of the One who made the sun and the moon;
the One who made the ocean waves and the prairie wind,
the One who made each of us and who calls us to this place just as we are.*

Christ, the One who taught of a loving God, is with us this day,

*In the shelter of God’s love we gather.
May this time be one brushed with hope, peace, and acceptance,
knowing that in celebrating our great diversity God’s love is most clearly known.*

Spirit, the power that binds us together in perfect harmony, is with us this day,

*Bound by the love of God, we rejoice and lift our prayer.
For here, though we are all so very different, we are united and we belong.
Here may we find the space to rest in the Creator and sing out to the Holy One.*

Response

Though I May Speak

VU 372

*Though I may speak with bravest fire,
and have the gift to all inspire,
and have not love, my words are vain,
as sounding brass, and hopeless gain.*

*Though I may give all I possess,
and striving so my love profess,
but not be given by love within,
the profit soon turns strangely thin.*

*Come, Spirit, come, our hearts control,
our spirits long to be made whole.
Let inward love guide every deed;
by this we worship, and are freed.*

Life & Work of the Church

Land Acknowledgement & Candle Lighting



Opening Hymn

Let All Things Now Living

VU 242

- 1 *Let all things now living a song of thanksgiving
 to God our Creator triumphantly raise;
who fashioned and made us, protected and stayed us,
 by guiding us on to the end of our days.
God's banners are o'er us, pure light goes before us,
 a pillar of fire shining forth in the night;
till shadows have vanished and darkness is banished,
 as forward we travel from light into Light.*

- 2 *By law God enforces, the stars in their courses
 and sun in its orbit obediently shine;
the hills and the mountains, the rivers and fountains,
 the depths of the ocean proclaim God divine.
We, too, should be voicing our love and rejoicing;
 with glad adoration a song let us raise:
till all things now living unite in thanksgiving,
 to God in the highest, hosanna and praise.*

Prayer for Grace *(based on Psalm 130)*

*Help us God, the bottom has fallen out of our lives.
Hear our cry for help God, Listen hard! Open your ears!
Listen to our cries for mercy.
If you, kept records on wrongdoings, who would stand a chance?
As it turns out, forgiveness is your habit, and that's why we worship you.
We pray to you God, our lives a prayer and wait for what you say and do.
Our lives are on the line before you and we are waiting and watching till morning.*

*We wait and watch for you because we know that with your arrival comes love;
with your arrival comes generous redemption.
No doubt about it.
Amen*

WE LISTEN FOR GOD'S WORD

And now for something completely different...



Hymn

This Is God's Wondrous World

VU 296

- 1 This is God's wondrous world,
 and to my listening ears
 all nature sings, and round me rings
 the music of the spheres.
 This is God's wondrous world;
 I rest me in the thought
 of rocks and trees, of skies and seas,
 God's hand the wonders wrought.
- 2 This is God's wondrous world:
 the birds their carols raise;
 the morning light, the lily white,
 declare their Maker's praise.
 This is God's wondrous world:
 God shines in all that's fair;
 in the rustling grass or mountain pass,
 God's voice speaks everywhere.
- 3 This is God's wondrous world:
 O let me ne'er forget
 that though the wrong seems oft so strong,
 God is the ruler yet.
 This is God's wondrous world:
 why should my heart be sad?
 Let voices sing, let the heavens ring:
 God reigns, let earth be glad!

Prayer of Illumination

Help us O God, to come to you with open lives to receive your words.

May we give them new life as we listen to what you have to say.

Open our hearts as we embark on this journey with each other and with you. Amen

Ezekiel 37:1-14

The Message

¹⁻² GOD grabbed me. GOD's Spirit took me up and set me down in the middle of an open plain strewn with bones. GOD led me around and among them—a lot of bones! There were bones all over the plain—dry bones, bleached by the sun.

³ GOD said to me, "Son of man, can these bones live?"

I said, "GOD, only you know that."

⁴ GOD said to me, "Prophecy over these bones: 'Dry bones, listen to the Message of GOD!'"

⁵⁻⁶ GOD, the Master, told the dry bones, "Watch this: I'm bringing the breath of life to you and you'll come to life. I'll attach sinews to you, put meat on your bones, cover you with skin, and breathe life into you. You'll come alive and you'll realize that I am GOD!"

⁷⁻⁸ I prophesied just as I'd been commanded. As I prophesied, there was a sound and, oh, rustling! The bones moved and came together, bone to bone. I kept watching. Sinews formed, then muscles on the bones, then skin stretched over them. But they had no breath in them.

⁹ He said to me, "Prophecy to the breath. Prophecy, son of man. Tell the breath, 'GOD, the Master, says, Come from the four winds. Come, breath. Breathe on these slain bodies. Breathe life!'"

¹⁰ So I prophesied, just as GOD commanded me. The breath entered them and they came alive! They stood up on their feet, a huge army.

¹¹ Then GOD said to me, "Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel. Listen to what they're saying: 'Our bones are dried up, our hope is gone, there's nothing left of us.'

¹²⁻¹⁴ "Therefore, prophecy. Tell them, 'GOD, the Sovereign, says: I'll dig up your graves and bring you out alive—O my people! Then I'll take you straight to the land of Israel. When I dig up graves and bring you out as my people, you'll realize that I am GOD. I'll breathe my life into you and you'll live. Then I'll lead you straight back to your land and you'll realize that I am GOD. I've said it and I'll do it. GOD's Decree.'"

Hymn:

Breathe on Me, Breath of God

VU 382

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 my will is one with thine,
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.*

John 11:1-45 New Revised Standard Version (NRSV)

Now a certain man was ill, Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. ² Mary was the one who anointed Jesus with perfume and wiped his feet with her hair; her brother Lazarus was ill. ³ So the sisters sent a message to Jesus, “the one whom you love is ill.”

⁴ 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.” ⁵ Accordingly, though Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus, ⁶ after having heard that Lazarus^[b] was ill, he stayed two days longer in the place where he was.

⁷ Then after this he said to the disciples, “Let us go to Judea again.” ⁸ The disciples said to him, “Rabbi, some of the people were just now trying to stone you, and are you going there again?”

⁹ 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. ¹⁰ But those who walk at night stumble, because the light is not in them.” ¹¹ After saying this, he told them, “Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I am going there to awaken him.” ¹² The disciples said to him, “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.”

¹⁷ When 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 people 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, “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.” 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, I believe that you are the Messiah, the chosen of God, the one coming into the world.”

²⁸ 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.” 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 people 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, "If you had been here, my brother would not have died." ³³ When Jesus saw her weeping, and the people 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, "Come and see." ³⁵ Jesus began to weep. ³⁶ So the people 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?"

³⁸ Then 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, "But 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, "Abba God, 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."

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

The word of God for the People of God

Thanks be to God

Hymn:

O Mary, Don't You Weep

*O Mary, don't you weep, don't you mourn
O Mary, don't you weep, don't you mourn
Pharaoh's army got drowned, and
O Mary, don't you weep.*

*1 One of these mornings, bright and fair
Gonna take my wings and cleave the air
Pharaoh's army got drowned, and
O Mary, don't you weep.*

*O Mary, don't you weep, don't you mourn
O Mary, don't you weep, don't you mourn
Pharaoh's army got drowned, and
O Mary, don't you weep.*

*2 When I get to heaven gonna sing and shout
Ain't nobody there gonna turn me out
Pharaoh's army got drowned, and
O Mary, don't you weep.*

*O Mary, don't you weep, don't you mourn
O Mary, don't you weep, don't you mourn
Pharaoh's army got drowned, and
O Mary, don't you weep.*

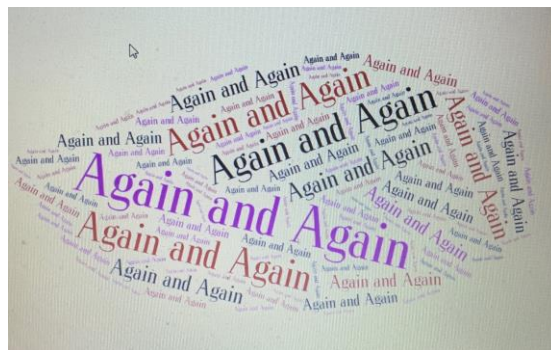
3 *When I get to heaven gonna put on my shoes
Gonna run about and spread the news
Pharaoh's army got drowned, and
O Mary, don't you weep.*

*O Mary, don't you weep, don't you mourn
O Mary, don't you weep, don't you mourn
Pharaoh's army got drowned, and
O Mary, don't you weep.*

*O Mary, don't you weep, don't you mourn
O Mary, don't you weep, don't you mourn
Pharaoh's army got drowned, and
O Mary, don't you weep.*

Sermon

Again and Again



Hymn

I Heard the Voice of Jesus

VU 626

1 *I heard the voice of Jesus say,
 'Come unto me and rest;
lay down, O weary one, lay down
 your head upon my breast.'*
*I came to Jesus as I was,
 weary and worn and sad;
I found in him a resting place,
 and he has made me glad.*

2 *I heard the voice of Jesus say,
 'Behold, I freely give
the living water; thirsty one,
 stoop down, and drink, and live.'
I came to Jesus, and I drank
 of that life-giving stream;
my thirst was quenched, my soul revived,
 and now I live in him.*

3 *I heard the voice of Jesus say,
 'I am this dark world's light;
look unto me, your morn shall rise,
 and all your day be bright.'
I looked to Jesus, and I found
 in him my star, my sun;
and in that light of life I'll walk
 till travelling days are done.*

WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD

Offering *Invitation*

Prayers of the People



Lord's Prayer

*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,
the power, and the glory
for ever and ever. Amen.*

BLESSING AND SENDING FORTH

Closing Hymn

Morning Has Broken

VU 409

- 1 *Morning has broken like the first morning,
blackbird has spoken like the first bird.
Praise for the singing! Praise for the morning!
Praise for them, springing fresh from the Word!*
- 2 *Sweet the rain's new fall sunlit from heaven,
like the first dewfall on the first grass.
Praise for the sweetness of the wet garden,
sprung in completeness where God's feet pass.*
- 3 *Ours is the sunlight! Ours is the morning
born of the one light Eden saw play!
Praise with elation, praise every morning,
God's recreation of the new day!*

Benediction & Commissioning



Postlude

Other Resources for Today

Psalm 130 New Revised Standard Version (NRSV)

Out of the depths I cry to you, O LORD.

² *Lord, hear my voice!*

*Let your ears be attentive
to the voice of my supplications!*

³ *If you, O LORD, should mark iniquities,
Lord, who could stand?*

⁴ *But there is forgiveness with you,
so that you may be revered.*

⁵ *I wait for the LORD, my soul waits,
and in his word I hope;*

⁶ *my soul waits for the Lord
more than those who watch for the morning,
more than those who watch for the morning.*

⁷ *O Israel, hope in the LORD!
For with the LORD there is steadfast love,
and with him is great power to redeem.*

⁸ *It is he who will redeem Israel
from all its iniquity.*

Romans 8:6-11 New Revised Standard Version (NRSV)

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

⁹ *But you are not in the flesh; you are in the Spirit,^[b] since the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. ¹⁰ But if Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit^[c] is life because of righteousness. ¹¹ If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ^[d] from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also through^[e] his Spirit that dwells in you.*