

**Fifth Sunday in Lent – *Unfinished: Called to Regret***  
**March 26, 2023**

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.

**Greeting**

The Grace of our Lord, Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the Communion of the Holy Spirit be with you.  
**And also with you.**

**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**      **"Tree of Life and Awesome Mystery"**      **#334 vs. 1,2,3, L4**

**Prayer of the Day**

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.**

**Reading: Psalm 130 – We will read responsively by verse**

<sup>1</sup>Out of the depths

I cry to you, O Lord;

<sup>2</sup>**O Lord, hear my voice!**

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

<sup>3</sup>If you were to keep watch over sins,

O Lord, who could stand?

<sup>4</sup>**Yet with you is forgiveness,**

**in order that you may be feared.**

<sup>5</sup>I wait for you, O Lord; my soul waits;

in your word is my hope.

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

**more than those who keep watch for the morning.**

<sup>7</sup>O Israel, wait for the Lord, for with the Lord there is steadfast love;

with the Lord there is plenteous redemption.

**<sup>8</sup>For the Lord shall redeem Israel  
from all their sins.**

**Children's Message**

**Gospel: John 11:1-45**

<sup>1</sup>Now a certain man was ill, Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. <sup>2</sup>Mary was the one who anointed the Lord with perfume and wiped his feet with her hair; her brother Lazarus was ill. <sup>3</sup>So the sisters sent a message to Jesus, "Lord, he whom you love is ill." <sup>4</sup>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." <sup>5</sup>Accordingly, though Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus, <sup>6</sup>after having heard that Lazarus was ill, he stayed two days longer in the place where he was.

<sup>7</sup>Then after this he said to the disciples, "Let us go to Judea again." <sup>8</sup>The disciples said to him, "Rabbi, the Jews were just now trying to stone you, and are you going there again?" <sup>9</sup>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. <sup>10</sup>But those who walk at night stumble, because the light is not in them." <sup>11</sup>After saying this, he told them, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I am going there to awaken him." <sup>12</sup>The disciples said to him, "Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will be all right." <sup>13</sup>Jesus, however, had been speaking about his death, but they thought that he was referring merely to sleep. <sup>14</sup>Then Jesus told them plainly, "Lazarus is dead. <sup>15</sup>For your sake I am glad I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him." <sup>16</sup>Thomas, who was called the Twin, said to his fellow disciples, "Let us also go, that we may die with him."

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

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

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

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

The Gospel of the Lord.  
**Praise to You, O Christ**

**Sermon**

People of God, grace to you and peace from God, and from our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. AMEN

Continuing through out Lent theme - *Unfinished: Discovering God's Call in the Not Yet*, we today get the shortest verse in scripture. "Jesus wept." This verse for me has always been a verse of compassion. A truly human Jesus grieving the death of his dear friend, before bringing him back to life. But, what if that was regret?

From our Lent resource we hear:

Think of a time when tears welled up inside you and spilled over in weeping, not because of something joyful, but because of a deep sorrow. Sometimes our sorrows arise out of experience that are simply and profoundly sad. Other times our sorrows arise out of experiences that are marked by our own regrets. And still other times, it is both. Our experiences of regret can be powerful, even to the point of being debilitating. In such times, we can get lost in all that is unfinished, the "what ifs" and the "if onlys." Naming and facing our regrets, however, can actually help us turn hindsight into insight so that even our regrets can be experiences of call for us that 6 of 9 move us to something different in the future. When Jesus arrives at Lazarus' tomb after Lazarus died, he weeps. We don't really know the cause of his weeping, but I imagine that regret may have been part of his heartache. He wasn't there when Lazarus was ill. A beloved friend has died. Deep sorrow has ensued. There were things unfinished. Jesus' weeping calls to us amid our own regrets in a host of ways that not only comfort us but also move us to new ways of being and doing.

Jesus looks at this experience, his own decisions that impacted how this all plays out, and in a moment, he has regret. We often think of regret as a bad thing. "I'm going to take this thing on with no regret!" But is it so bad? Can we learn from it?

Regret is defined as: feel sad, repentant, or disappointed over (something that has happened or been done, especially a loss or missed opportunity)

Jesus is sad. He does regret. At the death of his beloved friend he wishes that he could have done more.

We can relate. We've likely had those same feelings. And, hopefully we've learned from those experiences. We've probably told ourselves many times before, "I won't do that again."

This moment of Jesus regret, is a moment of Jesus grieving, and it is a feeling that we share. And, in that realization we reflect on the following:

- It can be hard to name our regrets
- Regrets are powerful
- Naming our regrets can help transform them
- Jesus' sorrow gives permission for our own sorrow
- Jesus meets us in our regrets and sorrow
- Jesus promises (and brings) new life, even from our regrets

In our pondering these realities, and coming to our own understanding and grasp of our own openness, we ask ourselves these questions:

- How easy it is for me to name and learn from my regrets?
- What are my regrets from today?
- What insight do I gain from them?
- What do I need for tomorrow?

People of God, in this season of Lent we are reminded again and again that we do not go it alone. Regret is not something we need to hide from. It is normal. To think that regret is bad is to think that we aren't going to make mistakes in this beautiful thing we call life. And, we all know better than that.

But Jesus, again, remains constant. Amid the cries of "if you had only been here," matched with our own cries of "if I had only done something differently," Jesus remains. And he weeps. Right alongside us. A caring and compassionate savior inviting us to live in that moment when all you want to do is weep.

Thanks be to God. AMEN

Song of the Day "What Wondrous Love Is This"

### **The Apostles' Creed**

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
Creator of heaven and earth.  
I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried;  
he descended to the dead.  
On the third day he rose again;  
he ascended into heaven,  
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,  
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.  
I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic church, the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

### **Prayers of Intercession**

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

*A brief silence.*

Eternal God, you seal us by the Holy Spirit and mark us with the cross of Christ forever in baptism. Inspire us by your love as together we strive for justice and peace in all the earth. Merciful God,  
**receive our prayer.**

Creating God, by your word you have made all things, and you hate nothing you have made. Teach us to perceive the beauty of the breadth of your creation, from the grandest mountain range to the smallest springtime bud. Merciful God,  
**receive our prayer.**

Powerful God, you anoint kings and establish rulers. Guide the work of heads of state and elected officials (*specific leaders may be named*). Encourage them to lead with justice and to remove barriers that impede the well-being of all. Merciful God,  
**receive our prayer.**

Shepherding God, you lead us beside still waters and restore our souls. Keep watch over those who weep; tend all who are sick and comfort those who grieve (*We pray especially for Peyton, Matt, David, Verna, Irene, Connie, Clarice, Steve, Kathy, Val, Jacob, Keith and JoJo, Bob and Joanne, Bill and Bonnie, Frank and Heather, Bob and Sonja, Bill and Betty, Tom and Kay, Sherm and Mary, Sandy, family of Carol Bilderback*). Merciful God,  
**receive our prayer.**

God our host, you fill us at your table with more than we could ever ask. Feed us with hunger for justice. Equip the feeding ministries of this congregation and community (*especially*). Nourish us so we can nourish our neighbors. Merciful God,

**receive our prayer.**

God of history, with thanksgiving we remember our ancestors in faith who cared for your people (*especially Joseph, Guardian of Jesus*). We praise you for the ways they formed the faith of others and continue to inspire us. 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**

### **Offertory 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.**

## **Words of Institution**

### **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, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen**

## **Communion**

### **Prayer**

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.**

### **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**

**“Sent Forth by God’s Blessing”**

**#547**

### **Dismissal**

Go in peace, to love and serve the Lord.

**Okay! We will! Thanks be to God!**

And all of Good Shepherd said,

**AMEN!**

The funeral for Carol Bilderback will be at noon on Monday, March 27. Visitation will be 2 hours prior to the service.

Our prayers and sympathies to the family of LaRayne Whitwam. She lived at the Good Shepherd Apartments, attending services there. The service for LaRayne is Friday at Lenmark Funeral Home.

## March Financial Snapshot

The numbers as of Today:

Total Revenue **\$17,758**

March '22 Revenue \$21,340

Total Expenses **\$24,822**

March '23 Projected \$27,000

Current Difference

**\$7,064**

What we've learned:

We've pinpointed the source of high XCel bills of recent months. We hope to have fixed the issue.

Something To Celebrate:

Because of the generous response to the Ministry Objectives of our Stewardship Appeal, we have funds in the Property Reserve to make the repairs that need to be made!

Feeling Extra Generous?

Consider a special gift to recoup the cost of the last three months where our XCel bills were \$2,000 - \$3,000 higher than our normal highs.



Do not enter the church parking lot at the back entrance until further notice! We have a large hole at the end of the driveway that may cause issues for your cars. Enter from Wilson Avenue/Cedar St.

## GOOD SHEPHERD ENDOWMENT FUND GOOD FRIDAY QUILT RAFFLE

\$10/ticket Max 200 tickets sold



Pieced by LINDA HJERLEID  
Tied by LCGS Quilters  
68" x 70"



Pieced by JOANN FUERBRINGER  
Machine Quilted by Kristy Goettl  
66" x 74"



Pieced by SHARON SMITH  
Custom Quilted by Kristy Goettl  
68" x 70"



Lutheran Church of the  
**GOOD SHEPHERD**  
KNOWN - SEEN - LOVED

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The Stand in the Light Memory Choir will have their Spring Concert on Thursday, April 10 at 6:30 p.m. Their dress rehearsal is at 10 a.m. and open to the public.