

**SALEM UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**  
*12 High Street, Brookeville, Maryland 20833*  
*March 29, 2020*  
*Fifth Sunday in Lent*

Pastor: Rev. Dr. Sue Shorb-Sterling  
Music Director: Dr. Harry Dunstan  
Internet Technician: Brandon Savage

*Welcome to worship!*  
*Whoever you are, wherever you are on life's journey,*  
*—you are welcome here.*

*The Mission of the People of Salem United Methodist Church*  
*is to grow in Christian faith and express God's love to all.*

**Glorifying God**  
*Prelude—Music Before Worship*

**Welcome**

**Opening Song—“Great Is Thy Faithfulness” (#140 in the Red Book)**

Verse One  
“Great is Thy faithfulness,” O God my Father,  
There is no shadow of turning with Thee;  
Thou changest not, Thy compassions, they fail not  
As Thou hast been Thou forever wilt be.

Refrain  
“Great is Thy faithfulness!” “Great is Thy faithfulness!”  
Morning by morning new mercies I see;  
All I have needed Thy hand hath provided—  
Great is Thy faithfulness,” Lord, unto me!

Verse Two  
Summer and winter, and springtime and harvest,  
Sun, moon and stars in their courses above,  
Join with all nature in manifold witness  
To Thy great faithfulness, mercy and love.

Refrain

Verse Three  
Pardon for sin and a peace that endureth,  
Thine own dear presence to cheer and to guide;  
Strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow,  
Blessings all mine, with ten thousand beside!

Refrain

## Call to Worship (L: Leader; P: People)

L: Lord, we have seen better days.

**P: When all we know has changed, we can celebrate the Lord's day, a day full of new possibilities.**

L: Lord, our breath is being taken away by grief.

**P: Holy Spirit, breathe new life into us. Renew our connection with God and with one another in the midst of separation.**

L: Lord, we need signs of enduring hope.

**All: Christ, unbind the cloths that hold us in death. Speak to us through your word so we can be assured of the resurrected life we have in you.**

## Giving Thanks For Our Blessings

### A Prayer for Faith During This Pandemic (In Unison)

Healing and Empowering God, we want things to work out, yet all around us there are thousands who are ill and dying from Covid-19. We can doubt our faith in you to heal, or we can trust that even in the midst of this pandemic you can call us from death into life. When we lack such faith, take away our doubts and longings for assurance and give us spirits of trust and hope. We pray this and the prayer Jesus taught us to pray,

“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, forever. Amen.

### Song for Renewal—“Breathe on Me, Breath of God” (#420 in the Red Book)

#### Verse One

Breathe on me, Breath of God,  
fill me with life anew,  
that I may love the way you love,  
and do what you would do.

#### Verse Two

Breathe on me, Breath of God,  
until my heart is pure,  
until my will is one with yours,  
to do and to endure.

#### Verse Three

Breathe on me, Breath of God,  
so shall I never die,  
but live with you the perfect life  
for all eternity.

**Introducing Jesus Christ (as well as God the Father and the Holy Spirit!)**

Hebrew Lesson—Ezekiel 37:1–14 (New Revised Standard Version)

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, 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.” 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 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. 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.

Psalter—Psalm 130 (New Revised Standard Version)

L: Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord.

**P: Lord, hear my voice!**

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

**P: If you, O Lord, should mark iniquities, Lord, who could stand?**

L: But there is forgiveness with you, so that you may be revered.

**P: I wait for the Lord, my soul waits, and in his word I hope;**

L: My soul waits for the Lord, more than those who watch for the morning,

**P: More than those who watch for the morning.**

L: O Israel, hope in the Lord!

**P: For with the Lord there is steadfast love, and with him is great power to redeem.**

L: The Lord will redeem Israel from all its iniquities.

### **Scripture Song—“Out of the Depths” (#2136 in the Black Book)**

Out of the depths, O God, we call to you,  
Free us from fear of death, our faith and hope renew,  
Facing our lives, we need your love so much.  
Here in this community, heal us by your touch.

Out of the depths of fear, O God, we speak.  
Breaking the silences, the searing truth we seek.  
Safe among friends, our grief and rage we share.  
Here in this community, hold us in your care.

### **Epistle Lesson—Romans 8:6–11 (The Message)**

Those who think they can do it on their own end up obsessed with measuring their own moral muscle but never get around to exercising it in real life. Those who trust God's action in them find that God's Spirit is in them—living and breathing God! Obsession with self in these matters is a dead end; attention to God leads us out into the open, into a spacious, free life. Focusing on the self is the opposite of focusing on God. Anyone completely absorbed in self ignores God, ends up thinking more about self than God. That person ignores who God is and what he is doing. And God isn't pleased at being ignored.

But if God himself has taken up residence in your life, you can hardly be thinking more of yourself than of him. Anyone, of course, who has not welcomed this invisible but clearly present God, the Spirit of Christ, won't know what we're talking about. But for you who welcome him, in whom he dwells—even though you still experience all the limitations of sin—you yourself experience life on God's terms. It stands to reason, doesn't it, that if the alive-and-present God who raised Jesus from the dead moves into your life, he'll do the same thing in you that he did in Jesus, bringing you alive to himself? When God lives and breathes in you (and he does, as surely as he did in Jesus), you are delivered from that dead life. With his Spirit living in you, your body will be as alive as Christ's!

### **Gospel Lesson—John 11:1-15, 20–27, 31–35, 38–45 (Translated by Taylor Burton-Edwards)**

Now a certain man fell ill, Lazarus, from Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister, Martha. This was the Mary who anointed the Lord with perfume and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother, Lazarus, was ill. So the sisters sent to Jesus, saying: “Lord, the friend you love is ill.

When Jesus heard it, he said: “This illness doesn't end in death, but in the glory of God, so the son of God may be glorified through it.”

Now, Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus. Still, when he heard that Lazarus was ill, he stayed where he was two days more. Then, after that, he said to his disciples: “Let's go to Judea again.”

The disciples replied: “Rabbi, people in Judea want to stone us, and you’re taking us there again?”

Jesus answered: “Aren’t there twelve hours of daylight? If people walk in the daylight, they don’t stumble because they see the light of this world. But if they go walking at night, they do stumble, because there is no light in them. Lazarus, our friend, has fallen asleep. But I’m heading there to waken him!”

The disciples said, “Lord, if he’s asleep, he will get well.”

Jesus told them plainly: ‘Lazarus died. And I’m happy for your sake that I wasn’t there. This way, you might believe. So, let’s go to him!’

When Martha heard that Jesus was arriving, she went to greet him while Mary remained in the house. Martha said to Jesus, “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. Yet I know that whatever you ask God, God will give you.”

Jesus told her: “Your brother will rise again.”

Martha replied, “I know he will be raised at the resurrection on the last day.”

Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever entrusts their life to me, even though they should die, yet they will live. And everyone who is alive and entrusts their life to me shall not die in the age to come. Do you believe this?”

She replied, “Yes, Lord. I have believed that you are the Christ, the Son of God, the One who is coming into the world”

There were several religious leaders with Mary in the house, comforting her. They saw Mary get up and go out, and they followed her, assuming she was heading to the tomb to bewail there. But when Mary got to where Jesus was, she saw him, and fell at his feet, saying: “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.”

When Jesus saw her crying, and the religious leaders who had come with her were also crying, he was deeply disturbed and troubled, He asked, “Where have you laid him?”

The replied, “Lord, come and see.”

Then Jesus wept. (Silence) The Jews said, “See how much he loved him! Some said, “He healed the eye of the man born blind. Couldn’t he have kept Lazarus from dying?” So again, greatly disturbed, Jesus goes to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone covered the entrance.

Jesus said, “Roll the stone away.”

Martha, sister of the dead man, said to him: “Lord, already he smells bad. It’s been four days.”

Jesus replied, “Did I not say to you that if you believed you would see the glory of God?”

So they rolled away the stone. And Jesus lifted up his eyes and said: “Father, I thank you that you have heard me. Indeed, I have always known you hear me, but I have said this for the sake of the crowd standing around so they might believe you have sent me. Having said this, Jesus said in a loud voice, “Lazarus, come out!”

The dead man came out, bound foot and hand with strips of cloth, and his face was wrapped with a facecloth.

Jesus told them, “Unbind him, and let him go.”

### **Scripture Song—“When Jesus Wept” (#2106 in the Black Book)**

When Jesus wept, the falling tear in mercy flowed beyond all bound;  
When Jesus groaned, a trembling fear seized all the guilty world around.

#### **Growing in Faith and Knowledge**

Lenten Worship Series: Christ Acts For Us

Sermon Title: “A Glimpse of the Future”

Time of Reflection

#### **Growing in Love and Service**

A Prayer of Confession (In Unison)

Creator of Life, we confess that we are frightened by death. We have experienced the loss of loved ones and are experiencing the loss of so many in our world to the corona virus. As we long for our loved ones to be given new life like Lazarus, we slip away from our faith thinking, “It’s a nice story. Why can’t it be true for our loved one?” And so, when their bodies cannot be healed and they die, we slip away from our faith, proclaiming that it is a nice story. We need assurance of your Resurrection and the hope of our resurrection in you. Give us courage to face our fear. Give us awareness of the gift of your kingdom offered to all who have gone before us. Help us move away from the prison of death to the light of eternal life and hope. In Jesus’ Name, we pray. Amen.

#### **Words of Assurance**

Though darkness and death appear all around, there is the comforting healing light of God’s love shining on us and in us. On these beautiful, sunny spring days, feel the warmth of the presence of God and let go of your fear, for God is with us. Amen.

#### **Pastoral Prayer**

## **Offerings**

*Please set aside your offering and bring it when we are able to gather again. Or mail it to Salem United Methodist Church, 12 High St., Brookeville, MD 20833.*

Offertory

## **Closing Song—"Hymn of Promise" (#707 in the Red Book)**

### Verse One

In the bulb there is a flower;  
In the seed, an apple tree;  
In cocoons, a hidden promise: butterflies will soon be free!  
In the cold and snow of winter  
There's a spring that waits to be,  
Unrevealed until its season,  
Something God alone can see.

### Verse Two

There's a song in every silence,  
Seeking word and melody;  
There's a dawn in every darkness,  
bringing hope to you and me.  
From the past will come the future; what it holds, a mystery,  
Unrevealed until its season,  
Something God alone can see.

### Verse Three

In our end is our beginning;  
In our time, infinity;  
In our doubt there is believing;  
In our life, eternity,  
In our death, a resurrection;  
At the last, a victory,  
Unrevealed until its season,  
Something God alone can see.

Sending Forth Blessing

## **Congregational Response—"Shalom To You" (#666 in the Red Book)**

Shalom to you now, shalom, my friends.  
May God's full mercies bless you, my friends,  
In all your living and through your loving,  
Christ be your shalom, Christ be your shalom.