

### **I. Centering**

*We take a moment to leave the concerns of the day and welcome a time of fellowship with God.*

In the name of the Father, and of the ✠ Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

### **II. Reading** Psalm 23 (NRSV)

*We read the Scriptures, hearing in their words the testimony of our forbearers to the faithfulness and love of God in Christ Jesus. Through them, God speaks the same promises to us today.*

A reading from Ezekiel.

**37** 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. <sup>2</sup> He led me all around them; there were very many lying in the valley, and they were very dry. <sup>3</sup> He said to me, “Mortal, can these bones live?” I answered, “O Lord God, you know.” <sup>4</sup> Then he said to me, “Prophecy to these bones, and say to them: O dry bones, hear the word of the Lord. <sup>5</sup> Thus says the Lord God to these bones: I will cause breath to enter you, and you shall live. <sup>6</sup> 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.”

<sup>7</sup> 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. <sup>8</sup> 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. <sup>9</sup> Then 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.” <sup>10</sup> I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood on their feet, a vast multitude.

<sup>11</sup> 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.’ <sup>12</sup> Therefore 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. <sup>13</sup> And you shall know that I am the Lord, when I open your graves, and bring you up from your graves, O my people. <sup>14</sup> 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.”

Thanks be to God. Amen.

### **III. Time for Reflection and Meditation**

*With others or alone, we take time to reflect or meditate on the reading.*

This passage is rich with descriptions and imagery. Take a moment to visualize the events. Elijah is told to prophesy twice. Why do you think that is? What makes each prophecy different? The breath, or spirit, of God is presented here as the final act of restoration to life. What does it mean that the Holy Spirit dwells in us? How do you see the Holy Spirit restoring life today?

#### **IV. Prayers of Intercession**

*Together with the all the faithful, we pray for the church, the world, and all of God's creation.*

We pray for the church universal, its ministry, and the mission of the gospel, especially  
for our bishops, Elizabeth and Tracie,  
for our partners in ministry, St. Bartholomew's Lutheran Church  
for pastors, deacons, and chaplains,  
and for all the faithful who proclaim your gospel in word and deed.

We pray for the well-being of creation, especially  
for new life which comes with Spring,  
for those working to repair the damage caused by disease prevention.

We pray for peace and justice in the world, the nations and those in authority, especially  
for all leaders as they discern a just response to the coronavirus pandemic,  
for all scientists who are working on a cure.  
for all doctors, nurses, and hospital employees who care for the sick

We pray for the poor, oppressed, sick, bereaved, lonely, especially  
for all suffering from the pandemic,  
for all whose health leaves them vulnerable to infection,  
for all for whom isolation is its own illness,  
for all who are suffering from anxiety.

We pray for those who have died in the faith, especially  
Bernice Washburne, Ed Sabisky, Esther Olson, and Betty Fenton.

*Other petitions may be added here.*

To you, O God, we entrust all those for whom we pray, bold in our confidence that your love is sure and your mercy endures forever. Amen.

#### **V. Lord's Prayer**

*In reciting the prayer taught to us by Christ, we remember our unity with all the faithful even when isolated and alone.*

Lord, remember us in your kingdom, and teach us to day.

Our Father in heaven,	as we forgive those
hallowed be your name,	who sin against us.
your kingdom come,	Save us from the time of trial
your will be done,	and deliver us from evil.
on earth as in heaven.	For the kingdom, the power,
Give us today our daily bread.	and the glory are yours,
Forgive us our sins	now and forever. Amen.

#### **VI. Releasing**

*We return to our work of serving our neighbors and world, renewed in our faith.*

The Lord bless *us/me* and keep *us/me*,  
The Lord's face shine on *us/me* with grace and mercy,  
The Lord look upon *us/me* with favor, and give *us/me* peace. Amen.