

## *Welcome to Worship*

March 22, 2020

Below is a suggested outline that you might follow – individually or with others with you in your place of refuge today. I hope you'll take the time to be in the Presence and to let the Presence be with you.

### **Gathering**

Begin by clicking on this link and either just listening or joining in:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cqORaqZtC9w>

### **Our Call to Worship**

This is the day that the Lord has made...

**Let us rejoice and be glad in it!**

### **Welcome**

Ah, welcome to the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday in the Season of Lent ... our 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday on our "Pilgrimage to Resurrection." If there is someone there with you this morning, joining in this time of worship, turn and give them a hug ... thank them for being with you. If there is not someone there with you, close your eyes and picture your friends who are joining with you in spirit at this time. Feel that friendship and that solidarity in the love of God.

For more encouragement this morning, I refer you to Psalm 46. I invite you to read it aloud, maybe letting persons there with you join in the reading.

### **Psalm 46**

- 1 God is our refuge and strength,  
a very present help in trouble.
- 2 Therefore we will not fear, though the earth should change,  
though the mountains shake in the heart of the sea;
- 3 though its waters roar and foam,  
though the mountains tremble with its tumult.
  
- 4 There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God,  
the holy habitation of the Most High.
- 5 God is in the midst of the city; it shall not be moved;  
God will help it when the morning dawns.
- 6 The nations are in an uproar, the kingdoms totter;  
he utters his voice, the earth melts.

7 The Lord of hosts is with us;  
the God of Jacob is our refuge.

8 Come, behold the works of the Lord;  
see what desolations he has brought on the earth.

9 He makes wars cease to the end of the earth;  
he breaks the bow, and shatters the spear;  
he burns the shields with fire.

10 “Be still, and know that I am God!  
I am exalted among the nations,  
I am exalted in the earth.”

11 The Lord of hosts is with us;  
the God of Jacob is our refuge.

Sit with that for a moment. Maybe read it again, entering into the assurance of the very presence of God in whatever might happen in the world around. Feel the inspiration of the intent of God – of peace, of refuge, of drawing together all nations.

**Let Us Sing** Listen or Join in: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3fkvyYNsjPc>

### **Some Announcements**

A couple of things I would like to lift up:

First, we have a team of volunteers on call to help anyone who might need it – run to the grocery store, pick up meds at the pharmacy, take away the garbage. If you have need, please call Diana at (603) 707-8361. And if you know of someone who might need a call or help who is in the community but not our congregation, please call in with their name too. And, if you want to be added to the team, please let Diana know.

Second, I hope you will tune into the daily reflections. I'll send them out as podcasts and as transcripts. You can subscribe to the podcasts on our church website. Please pass this on to anyone you're in contact with. This is a time to really believe in the good news and to share it!

Third, your leadership council is still meeting to make sure things are still being taken care of in the church. We are using a fantastic tool, Zoom, that allows everyone to conference over the internet with both real-time audio and video.

Finally, it's imperative that we keep up with our tithes and offerings even as we are away. A letter is forthcoming from our financial team to encourage you in this and to offer guidance on ways you can still make your offering. I thank you for your continued faithful support ... God thanks you...

If there are other announcements that need to be communicated, please email the office and Diana will pick them up and circulate them. Thank you.

### **Time of Prayer**

Won't you join me in a time of prayer:

- Let us give thanks for doctors and nurses putting themselves on the line for the sake of others
- Let us give thanks for techniques and technologies to understand and diagnose illnesses like this virus
- Let us give thanks for the knowledge and availability of medicines to help combat illnesses like this virus and the wisdom of those who prescribe it
- Let us give thanks for pharmacies that make it so convenient for us to get our medications
- Let us stop for a moment to connect to those fighting the virus right now
- Let us also stop to connect with one another in our frustrations, our anxieties, our fears, and our loneliness
- Let us give thanks for those who are a part of our faith connection here in Moultonborough who are reaching out to help each other and just be there for each other
- Take a moment to add your additional prayer thanks and concerns

### **Affirmation**

Let us join in our Modern Affirmation of Faith:

We believe in God the Father, infinite in wisdom, power and love, whose mercy is over all his works, and whose will is ever directed to his children's good.

We believe in Jesus Christ, Son of God and Son of man, the gift of the Father's unfailing grace, the ground of our hope, and the promise of our deliverance from sin and death.

We believe in the Holy Spirit as the divine presence in our lives, whereby we are kept in perpetual remembrance of the truth of Christ, and find strength and help in time of need.

We believe that this faith should manifest itself in the service of love as set forth in the example of our blessed Lord, to the end that the kingdom of God may come upon the earth.

Amen.

I invite you to let this music experience wash over you:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t4Svh-9ohg4>

### **Giving of Our Tithes & Offerings**

Thank you for your faithfulness in these times. Oh Lord, we give you thanks for all the gifts you shower upon us. Please bless us in our ways of reaching deeply into those blessings to continue to support your efforts to not only get us through these challenging times, but to draw us and others closer to you and to the resurrected Christ. It is with the heart and mind of Jesus that we pray. Amen.

### **The Word & Pastoral Reflection**

Our reading today comes from that ancient book of Ezekiel. Ezekiel was a prophet and a priest in the days of Israel's exile following the invasion and other throw by the Babylonians. Ezekiel was very critical of the lack of faithful living by the Hebrew people. He said they deserved the suffering they were receiving. Yet, he also knew a compassionate God that wanted life for the people.

And so, Ezekiel penned one of the most memorable visions of hope that can be found in the Hebrew Bible:

#### **Ezekiel 37:1-14**

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

7 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. 8 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. 9 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,[d] and breathe upon these slain, that they may live." 10 I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood on their feet, a vast multitude.

11 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.' 12 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. 13 And you shall know that I am the Lord, when I open your graves, and bring you up from your graves, O my people. 14 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."

Please go to the link on the email for today's message from Pastor Bob: **Breathe the Breath of God**

**Let Us Hear and Join in Singing:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v= Qci7E8nQ o>

### **Benediction**

Go in Christ and Christ will go in you! ☺

### Some Humor for Your Day

There was an elderly couple who in their old age noticed that they were getting a lot more forgetful, so they decided to go to the doctor. The doctor told them that they should start writing things down so they don't forget. They went home and the old lady told her husband to get her a bowl of ice cream. "You might want to write it down," she said. The husband said, "No, I can remember that you want a bowl of ice cream." She then told her husband she wanted a bowl of ice cream with whipped cream. "Write it down," she told him, and again he said, "No, no, I can remember: you want a bowl of ice cream with whipped cream." Then the old lady said she wants a bowl of ice cream with whipped cream and a cherry on top. "Write it down," she told her husband and again he said, "No, I got it. You want a bowl of ice cream with whipped cream and a cherry on top." So he goes to get the ice cream and spends an unusually long time in the kitchen, over 30 minutes. He comes out to his wife and hands her a plate of eggs and bacon. The old wife stares at the plate for a moment, then looks at her husband and asks, "Where's the toast?"

Why is it that your nose runs, but your feet smell?

I couldn't figure out why the baseball kept getting larger. Then it hit me.

If Mary had Jesus, and Jesus is the lamb of God, does that mean Mary had a little lamb?

A man was driving and saw a truck stalled on the side of the highway that had ten penguins standing next to it. The man pulled over and asked the truck driver if he needed any help. The truck driver replied, "If you can take these penguins to the zoo while I wait for AAA that will be great!" The man agreed and the penguins hopped into the back of his car. Two hours later, the trucker was back on the road again and decided to check on the penguins. He showed up at the zoo and they weren't there! He headed back into his truck and started driving around the town, looking for any sign of the penguins, the man, or his car. While driving past a movie theater, the truck driver spotted the guy walking out with the ten penguins. The truck driver yelled, "What are you doing? You were supposed to take them to the zoo!" The man replied, "I did and then I had some extra money so I took them to go see a movie."