

Friends in Christ,

Once again, this week we offer you this “at-home” worship service for the fifth Sunday in Lent. Until further notice, we will continue to send this to you each week by mail or email. By Palm Sunday, April 5, we plan to offer another opportunity to view this worship virtually. Next week, you will receive further information about this possibility.

Given the uncertainty of this present time, please know that there will be no April Glory Banner. We will continue to communicate with you each week through mail/email.

Whether we worship in-person or apart, we are certainly united in the power and presence of the Holy Spirit. May you continue to walk these days in the strength of our Lord and Savior, Jesus the Christ!!

Yours in Christ,  
*Pastor Lee*

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**FIFTH SUNDAY in LENT**  
**March 29, 2020**  
**Cross of Glory Lutheran Church**

**CONFESSION and FORGIVENESS**

Blessed be the Holy Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, one God, who is present, who gives life, who calls into existence the things that do not exist.

**Amen**

If you were to keep watch over sins, O Lord, who could stand? Yet with you is forgiveness, and so we confess:

*(a time of silence)*

Gracious God,

**have mercy on us. We confess that we have turned away from you. We have wandered from your resurrection life. We have strayed from your love for all people. Turn us back to you, O God. Give us new hearts and right spirits that we may find what is pleasing to you and dwell in your house forever. Amen.**

Receive the good news: God turns to you in love. “I will put my spirit in you, and you shall live,” says our God. All your sin is forgiven in the name of Jesus Christ, who is the free and abounding gift of God’s grace to you.

**Amen.**

**GATHERING WORSHIP SONG**

“Here I Am to Worship”

<b>Verse 1</b>	Light of the world You stepped down into darkness Opened my eyes let me see Beauty that made This heart adore You Hope of a life spent with You	<b>Chorus</b>	So here I am to worship Here I am to bow down Here I am to say that You're my God And You're altogether lovely Altogether worthy Altogether wonderful to me
<b>Verse 2</b>	King of all days Oh so highly exalted Glorious in heaven above Humbly You came To the earth You created All for love's sake became poor		And I'll never know how much it cost To see my sin upon that cross And I'll never know how much it cost To see my sin upon that cross

## **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Let us pray:

**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.**

## **PSALM 130**

<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.**

## **ANTHEM**

Wondrous Love ~ Marie Pooler

*What wondrous love is this, O my soul, O my soul!  
What wondrous love is this, O my soul,  
What wondrous love is this, that caused the Lord of bliss,  
To bear the dreadful curse, for my soul, for my soul,  
To bear the dreadful curse, for my soul.  
To God and to the Lamb, I will sing, I will sing.  
To God and to the Lamb, I will sing,  
To God and to the Lamb, who is the great I am,  
While millions join the theme, I will sing, I will sing,  
While millions join the theme, I will sing.  
And when from death I'm free, I'll sing on, I'll sing on,  
And when from death I'm free, I'll sing on,  
And when from death I'm free, I'll sing and joyful be,  
And through eternity, I'll sing on, I'll sing on,  
And through eternity, I'll sing on.*

## **GOSPEL READING** John 11:17-44

<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.

## **SERMON**

### **“When God Cried”**

John 11:17-44

*God of grace open our minds and our hearts to recognize your love  
and your power wherever they appear. Amen.*

Not all pastors like sharing children’s sermons in Sunday morning worship, but not me. I like them!

Through the years, I’ve found the honesty and actions of children to be so refreshing and surprising. For example, children have handed me a variety of things at this time- from used gum, to very used Kleenex, to “do you want to hold my doll.” Many times I’ve been caught off guard by things that children have said- like “Guess what Mommy told Daddy” or “Do you like wearing a dress in worship? (This was, of course, in reference to a pastor’s alb/gown.)

I will never forget a children’s sermon where one little girl sat next to me crying. She looked at me with a sad face and wiped tears from her eyes. When I asked her what was up? She sniffled and seemed a bit embarrassed. I quietly told her that it was ok and that if something was bothering her that she could talk to me. She said, “No, it’s not about me, it’s about you.” I was kind of stunned and just said, “Me? What do you mean?” She sniffled again and then said, “Well, it’s just that we all have hair on the top of our heads, but you don’t have any. I worry about you!” Her comment brought the congregation to laughter and we were all moved by her tears.

When a person cries, we notice, don't we? It's hard not to sometimes. People cry in lots of different ways. Some people are loud criers-big gasps of air, lots of sounds. Other people are more subtle with their tears-a wipe of the eyes, maybe a tear track here or there. Why we cry plays a role too, right? Sometimes our tears come from joy, at other times our tears come from concern or hurt. Regardless of why someone might be crying, or how they cry, we take notice. Today in our Gospel, we come to that moment in scripture when God cries. We benefit from getting to hear how the whole series of events unfolded. According to John's gospel, Jesus gets word that a dear friend of his, Lazarus, is very sick. When Jesus and his friends finally make their way to the home of Lazarus, it's too late. Lazarus has died and been buried for four days. In fact, I learned as I prepped for this sermon that the King James Version says, "He Stinketh."

Lazarus was dead and his sisters, Martha and Mary, were both upset. Independent of one another, both say the same thing: "Jesus, if you had been here, Lazarus wouldn't have died." Then Mary, the sister with whom Jesus was perhaps closest, began to weep. Some of us (most of us?) know that kind of weeping. The gut-wrenching, soul-searing, gasping-for-breath sobbing. We don't even need to have experienced an actual death of a person, here, either. The death of a dream, a relationship, health, a job, a hope is just as real for us.

What is mighty in this passage is the response of Jesus. We are told that "Jesus began to weep" (vs. 35 NRSV) In the King James Version it is only two words- "Jesus wept." Whether it is two or four verses, it is the shortest verse in the Bible. Yet, it is truly one of the most profound passages in all of scripture!

When Jesus saw Mary crying, he cried. He enters into her weeping too. The text says that he was greatly disturbed in spirit and deeply moved." The word, here, in Greek that we translate as "greatly disturbed in spirit" is *enebrimestato*, and the root is the same as the word in Greek used for a horse snorting, and even in anger! We know that sound of weeping, hardly mild and mere weeping, in fact, but instead lamenting to the point of snorts of grief, hurt and anger. We know it and we have most likely done it. As it turns out, so has Jesus. So has Jesus! When we hurt, Jesus hurts with us. When we struggle, Jesus is struggling with us. When we cry, God in Christ is weeping with us.

This may be the shortest verse in the Bible, but it is saturated with powerful, personal truth- especially for a time like this as we deal with the uncertainties and difficulties of the COVID-19 pandemic. For as long as humanity has considered the Almighty, we have contemplated the presence of God within the despair of life- catastrophe, disaster, suffering, loss. In all these spaces and more, we have asked, "Where is God? Where is God now?" In this account of John 11, in the shortest verse of scripture, we receive our answer! Where is God when we suffer? Where is God at this time of global pandemic? God is certainly with us but there is more. God is also the one crying the loudest at this time.

We need to know that not everything that happens in this life- this side of heaven- is the will of God. Yet, there is Good News! Our Gospel for today assures us that God stands with us at the fallout, in the hospital room, amidst the pain, as we deal with the unknown, and in all these times and places...God weeps. God's heart is deeply moved, and God enters in and knows and feels our pain. We have a God who cries and hurts with us. Jesus, the word made flesh, shares our lot as well as our life fully and completely. This truly is our hope! This is the hope that unbinds us and sets us free from our graves of fear, darkness and despair.

But there is more! God not only identifies with and feels our hopes and hurts, but God also invites us to see ourselves as vehicles through whom God's presence and care can be known by others. Did you notice in the Gospel how Jesus asked others to "unbind" Lazarus? He could have easily done this himself but instead he calls out for others to do it. He works through others. In like manner, Jesus calls each of us to be partners with him in reaching out to others. Do we see ourselves this way? What would it be like to imagine that through your compassion, presence and love, God is working through you to unbind, renew and encourage others? Yes,

God is always with us and for us, but isn't it often through others that God's care for us is made more real?

Last week, I shared with a small group at Cross of Glory how when I was a boy, I had a rocket. I would pedal this rocket around my world which at that time was largely up and down the sidewalk leading to our house. When I was done playing, I was careful to place the rocket in the garage for safety. One day, however, I left the rocket out in the farmyard. My older brother, Paul, accidentally backed over it with a tractor. It was now a flat rocket. Being the strong child that I was, I sat down on the front steps and cried and cried. Soon, my sister Sally came by, sat down next to me and asked what the matter was. I answered, "My rocket is ruined, and I don't know what to do." My sister looked at me for a moment and then said, "Lee, I don't know what to do either. But I'm going to sit right here with you and cry with you." And she did! And the world was a much better place.

The tag line of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is: *God's work, our hands.*" Couldn't we add to this "God's work...our hearts, our listening to others, our presence with others in difficult times, our understanding, our care, our...."

At this time, we all need the assurance that we have a powerful and mighty God who also is a God who sheds tears for us. Others need this assurance as well. Loss is real, uncertainty is real, grief is real. Never underestimate, however, the opportunity that we all have in the ongoing work of God to be present, to enter in and to renew others in God's world.

May all joy-especially at this time- be yours in believing! Amen.

**HYMN                      ELW 632    verses 1, 2, 4 & 6    "O God, Our Help in Ages Past"**

**1** O God, our help in ages past,  
our hope for years to come,  
our shelter from the stormy blast,  
and our eternal home:

**2** Under the shadow of your throne  
your saints have dwelt secure;  
sufficient is your arm alone,  
and our defense is sure.

**4** A thousand ages in your sight  
are like an evening gone,  
short as the watch that ends the night  
before the rising sun.

**6** O God, our help in ages past,  
our hope for years to come,  
still be our guard while troubles last  
and our eternal home.

**CONFESSION OF FAITH      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.**

**OFFERING**

(This would be the time to put your offering into an envelope and mail it to Cross of Glory Lutheran Church, 5929 Brooklyn Blvd., Brooklyn Center, MN 55429. **Please remember the needs of your financial support for God's ongoing work even as we do not gather for corporate worship.**)

**OFFERING RESPONSE** (tune: #883) “Praise God from Whom all Blessings Flow”

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;  
Praise God, all creatures here below;  
Praise God above, ye heav'nly host;  
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. AMEN.**

**PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH**

Holy God, as we live each day in the midst of a virus we cannot see, touch us and fill us anew with the assurance of your presence with us and your care surrounding us. Lord in your mercy....

**.Hear our prayer.**

Holy One, there are so many issues and situations that cause division between your children. May we find a commonness in our desire for health. May we take seriously our individual roles in working for the good of all. Let us not horde out of fear and panic. Let us not use our common threat as a tool for judgement on people or powers. Lord in your mercy...

**Hear our prayer.**

Holy God, continue to bless the mission and ministry of Cross of Glory. Guide the work of the call committee and all those who share their gifts of leadership in this community of faith. Lord in your mercy....

**Hear our prayer.**

Holy One, be especially present with those who are most vulnerable at this time. Give courage, wisdom and strength to those who are ministering to the sick and hurting. Surround us all, O God, with your peace, strength and hope. Lord in your mercy...

**Hear our prayer.**

Holy God, may we always remember that we are not alone in life. Let us raise our voices with the voice of all your children in a community of common faith:

**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.**

**SENDING HYMN**

**ELW 618 verses 1 & 3 “Guide Me Ever, Great Redeemer”**

- |          |  |          |   |
|----------|--|----------|---|
| <b>1</b> | Guide me ever, great Redeemer,<br>pilgrim through this barren land.<br>I am weak, but you are mighty;<br>hold me with your pow'rful hand.<br>Bread of heaven, bread of heaven,<br>feed me now and evermore,<br>feed me now and evermore. | <b>3</b> | When I tread the verge of Jordan,<br>bid my anxious fears subside;<br>death of death and hell's destruction,<br>land me safe on Canaan's side.<br>Songs and praises, songs and praises,<br>I will raise forevermore,<br>I will raise forevermore, |
|----------|--|----------|---|

**BENEDICTION**- Now is the acceptable time. Now is the day of salvation. Holy God, speaking, spoken, and inspiring, ✚ bless you, unbind you, and send you in love and in peace. **Amen.**

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

**THANKS BE TO GOD!**

**Thank you to everyone that has already donated  
to the *Raise the Roof!* Campaign. So far donations total \$4,355.00.**