

AMERICAN LUTHERAN CHURCH
305 Livingston St, Filley, NE
Pastor LuRae Hallstrom

EVENING PRAYER FOR LENT
Midweek Lenten Service, March 10, 2021

CALL TO WORSHIP: Psalm 78:1-8 NLT

P: O my people, listen to my instructions. Open your ears to what I am saying, for I will speak to you in a parable. I will teach you hidden lessons from our past—

C: stories we have heard and known, stories our ancestors handed down to us.

We will not hide these truths from our children; we will tell the next generation about the glorious deeds of the Lord, about his power and his mighty wonders.

P: For he issued his laws to Jacob; he gave his instructions to Israel.

C: He commanded our ancestors to teach them to their children,

P: so the next generation might know them—even the children not yet born—and they in turn will teach their own children.

C: So each generation should set its hope anew on God, not forgetting his glorious miracles and obeying his commands.

P: Then they will not be like their ancestors—stubborn, rebellious, and unfaithful, refusing to give their hearts to God.

HYMN: “**Raised from Death to Love and Living**”

(Please hum or sing softly. Tune-“Love Divine, All Loves Excelling”)

1. Raised from death to love and living, freed from sin to serve our Lord; Called to share His holy purpose, know His likeness here restored. Holy God, I stand before You, pardoned, cleansed, and reconciled. Help me live as in Your presence: Holy Father, holy child.

2. What a loving, faithful Father, Mighty God who knows each need. All His paths are truth and kindness when we daily let Him lead. Father God, I stand before You, pardoned, cleansed, and reconciled. Help me live as in Your presence: Caring Father, trusting child.

4. God, who planned and gave and suffered, took our pain and death and sin. What a price to buy a sinner! Where can gratitude begin? Father God, I bow before You; No response could be enough. Fill my life with all Your fulness: constant, holy, selfless love.

Words by Ken Bible. Music by Rowland H. Prichard. © 1984 by LNWhymns.com. Used by permission. CCLI License #2452533.

CONFESSION

P: Let us seek the living God whose love is close at hand.

Let us pray to the One who waits patiently to be found.

C: May we abandon our dishonest ways, and give up our unrighteous thoughts.

P: Let us come back to God with repentant hearts. Let us come fasting and weeping, sorry for your sins.

C: God is merciful and kind to those who return, God’s love is extravagant and forgiving to all who come near.

P: Let us change our lives and not our clothes,

Let us come back to the God who never leaves us.

**C: Though our sins are like scarlet wounds,
They will be washed away and become white as snow.**

(Pause to remind yourself of the places in which you have experienced God’s forgiveness and redemptive love)

P: Have mercy on us, O God, because of your unfailing love.

C: Because of your great compassion, blot out the sins that stain us.

P: Wash us clean from our guilt, and purify our hearts from our sin.

C: Renew our inner spirit to become steadfast and unswerving, so that we will be willing to obey you.

P: Do not turn us away from your loving presence O God, restore the joy of your salvation within us.

**C: The sacrifice you desire is a penitent spirit,
You will not reject a broken and repentant heart, O God**

P: God may we reach within this night, to the hidden places of our souls.

C: May we uncover the sins that bind us.

P: May we reach without this night, into the brokenness of our world.

C: May we expose our indifference to its cries.

P: May we reach down this night, into the pollution of creation.

C: May we admit to our part in its contamination.

P: God may we reach upward this night, into your forgiving embrace.

C: May we find the joy of eternal life. Amen.

GOSPEL: John 11:1-44

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

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

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

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

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

BIBLE MONOLOGUE – Lazarus

Virgil Jobman

The story of the raising of Lazarus is one of the most dramatic stories in all of scripture. It begins with Jesus and his disciples quite some distance from Bethany where Lazarus, Mary, and Martha lived. No modern embalming practices were available at the time, and bodies in this hot Middle Eastern climate were normally buried the same day as their death. If a family had some means, they might own their own burial cave. If not, bodies were buried in a common burial cave. In either case, a stone was usually rolled in front of the opening to keep the stench of decaying bodies in and predators out. When Jesus arrives, Lazarus had been in the tomb four days. In John 11:35, Jesus weeps at Lazarus's death. When it comes to this passage, some commentators say that Jesus wept because of his grief over the death of Lazarus, as well as out of compassion for the family. Other commentators say Jesus' tears were prompted by the unbelief of the people there. Immediately after this account of the raising of Lazarus, the Gospel of John records the beginnings of the plot to kill Jesus. Why now? Not only was Jesus a threat, but Lazarus—visible evidence of Jesus' miraculous power—also became a threat.

TIME FOR REFLECTION

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE:

P: Lord we have denied you, each time we refused to see you in the faces of the hungry and the homeless.

C: May the old in us pass away and all things become new.

P: Lord we have betrayed you, each time we have kept our distance from the anguish of the oppressed and the persecuted.

C: May the old in us pass away and all things become new.

P: Lord we have mocked you, each time we have pretended we do not know how radically you call us to live.

C: May the old in us pass away and all things become new.

P: Lord we are lost and have strayed, reconcile us to your image and make us new.

C: May the old in us pass away and all things become new.

P: All merciful One, God of infinite love and compassion, though we have strayed you have never abandoned us. In this season of repentance, we come confessing our sins and reaching out for the healing power of your forgiveness. Through Christ our Lord, give us renewed and truthful hearts that will follow you in all of our ways.

Let us pray together the prayer that Jesus taught us...

LORD'S PRAYER

BENEDICTION

P: Righteous God, compassionate and generous one who forgives our sins and has mercy on us

C: Fill our hidden places with your healing light. Breathe on us afresh this night and grant us rest.

P: May your compassion bloom in us. May your righteousness bear fruit. May your generosity encourage us to share.

All: May your love grow strong and deep within us. Breathe on us afresh this night and grant us rest. Amen

Permission to reprint/podcast/stream portions of this service obtained from One License with license #A-724367, CCLI with license #2497574 and Augsburg Fortress Liturgies Annual License #SB163629. Excerpts of this service ©2021 – Godspacelight.com. All Rights reserved

=====

WELCOME TO OUR MIDWEEK LENTEN SERVICE: The word Lent comes from the Anglo Saxon word *lencten* which means “spring.” Lent is the springtime of the church, a time of new life and growth that, in the Northern hemisphere, corresponds with the springtime awakening of the earth. In Lent, the community “prepares with joy for the Easter feast; that, fervent in prayer and in works of mercy, and renewed by Word and Sacrament, we may come to the fullness of grace prepared for those who love God.” In Lent, we are a community on pilgrimage. **Join us as we rejoice again in God’s forgiveness and mercy, traveling toward Holy Week and Easter, offering ourselves to be born anew, an Easter people.**

Please leave your offerings in the offering plate at the back of church following worship.

WORSHIP HELPERS:

Council – Dave Norton-President, Virgil Jobman-Vice President, Carol Frerichs-Secretary, Brenda Hippen-Treasurer, Linda Searcey-at large

PowerPoint Preparer/Presenter – Brenda Hippen

Audio/Video – Norm Flesner

Accompanist – Sandy Mahler