



**A service of prayer and word for Lent 5,
*start of Passiontide***

Greeting

In the name of God, Creator, Word, and Loving Spirit. Amen

God is with you

All And also with you

The Blessing of Water

Blessed are you, loving God, creator of the Universe,

All For you have blessed your people with the gift of water.

As the minister pours water the following is prayed

Gracious God, you have made water. We give thanks for water as it brings life in every place that it flows. We remember the dance of the dry bones in the desert and how they were knit together to proclaim your Spirit dwelling among your people. We recall that Wisdom is seen as a spring of living water that revives your people.

All For your water brings life.

As this water is blessed we recall that water is found in the essence of our lives. We recall that Jesus, through the tears of his own grief, raised Lazarus from the grave. We pray that we can be filled with tears of compassion.

Blessed are you, loving God, creator of the Universe,

All For you have blessed your people with the gift of water.

Our Church Family Prayer

Loving God,

All you've called us to be your family and to celebrate our life together in worship.

We pray for all the members of our family, and especially for our young people now, wherever they may be, and however they are continuing their worship.

Bless them, and each of us, in fun and learning, in friendship, and love. Amen.

First Reading

Ezekiel 37:1-14

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, "Prophesy 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, "Prophesy 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.

Psalm 130

Out of the depths have I called to you, O Lord; Lord, hear my voice; let your ears consider well the voice of my supplication.
If you, Lord, were to note what is done amiss, O Lord, who could stand?
For there is forgiveness with you; therefore you shall be feared.
I wait for the Lord; my soul waits for him; in his word is my hope.
My soul waits for the Lord, more than watchmen for the morning, more than watchmen for the morning.
O Israel, wait for the Lord, for with the Lord there is mercy;
With him there is plenteous redemption, and he shall redeem Israel from all their sins.
Glory to God, Creator, Word, Spirit
From the beginning, now, and for ever. Amen

Gospel

John 11.1-45

Now a certain man was ill, Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. Mary was the one who anointed the Lord with perfume and wiped his feet with her hair; her brother Lazarus was ill. So the sisters sent a message to Jesus, "Lord, he whom you love is ill." But 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." Accordingly, though Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus, after having heard that Lazarus was ill, he stayed two days longer in the place where he was. Then after this he said to the disciples, "Let us go to Judea again." The disciples said to him, "Rabbi, the Jews were just now trying to stone you, and are you going there again?" Jesus 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. But those who walk at night stumble, because the light is not in them." After saying this, he told them, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I am going there to awaken him." The disciples said to him, "Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will be all right." Jesus, however, had been speaking about his death, but they thought that he was referring merely to sleep. Then Jesus told them plainly, "Lazarus is dead. For your sake I am glad I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him." Thomas, who was called the Twin, said to his fellow disciples, "Let us also go, that we may die with him." When Jesus arrived, he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb four days. Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, some two miles away, and many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to console them about their brother. When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went and met him, while Mary stayed at home. Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. But even now I know that God will give you whatever you ask of him." Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again." Martha said to him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day." Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?" She said to him, "Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one coming into the world." 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." And when she heard it, she got up quickly and went to him. Now Jesus had not yet come to the village, but was still at the place where Martha had met him. 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. 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." When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her also weeping, he was greatly disturbed in spirit and deeply moved. He said, "Where have you laid him?" They said to him, "Lord, come and see." Jesus began to weep. So the Jews said, "See how he loved him!" But some of them said, "Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?" Then Jesus, again greatly disturbed, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone was lying against it. 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." Jesus said to her, "Did I not tell you that if you believed, you would see the glory of God?" So they took away the stone. And Jesus looked upward and said, "Father, I thank you for having heard me. 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." When he had said this, he cried with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!" 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." Many of the Jews therefore, who had come with Mary and had seen what Jesus did, believed in him.

Reflection

Prayers of Gratitude and Concern (Intercessions)

Let us pray to God, our refuge and stronghold.
For the health and well-being of our nation,
that all who are fearful and anxious
may be at peace and free from worry:
Loving God, hear us,

All **God, graciously hear us.**

For the isolated and housebound,
that we may be alert to their needs,
and care for them in their vulnerability:
Loving God, hear us,

All **God, graciously hear us.**

For our homes and families,
our schools and young people,
and all in any kind of need or distress:
Loving God, hear us,

All **God, graciously hear us.**

For a blessing on our local community,
that our neighbourhoods may be places of trust and friendship,
where all are known and cared for:
Loving God, hear us,

All **God, graciously hear us.**

We commend ourselves, and all for whom we pray,
to the mercy and protection of God.
Gracious God,

All **accept these prayers
for the sake of Jesus Christ,
our brother and saviour. Amen.**

The Disciples Prayer

All **Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come, your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.**

**Save us from the time of trial,
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours,
now and for ever. Amen.**

Prayer for the Week (Collect)

Almighty God,
your Christ came into the world
to free us all from sin and death.
Breathe upon us with the power of your Spirit,
that we may be raised to new life in Christ,
and serve you in holiness and righteousness all our days;
through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord.

All **Amen.**

A Prayer of Blessing

Christ give you grace to grow in holiness,
to deny yourselves, take up your cross, and follow faithfully;
and the blessing of our living God
Creator, Word and Holy Spirit,
be with you and those who you love,
this day and always.

All **Amen.**