

# SJUMC Online Worship Guide

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**March 26, 2023**

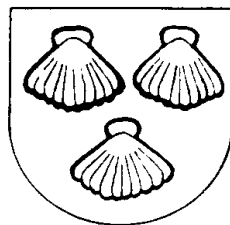
**9:30 am**

**“Can these bones live?”**

**ONLINE WORSHIP SERVICE**

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Administrative Assistant: Kenna Haj      |      Bell Choir Director: Laural Clark  
Director of Music Ministry: Antuan Hairston      |      Organist: Clarice Snyder  
Pastor: Rev. Patricia Abell



**Saint James United Methodist Church**

Marriottsville, MD

## WE GATHER

**Prelude**      “Christ, the Life of All the Living” Flor Peeters, A. W. Leupold      *Offered by Clarice Snyder*  
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**Welcome**      *Rev. Patricia Abell*

**Introit**      “I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say”      *Chancel and Handbell Choirs*  
English folk melody (Kingsfold)  
Harmonization by Ralph Vaughn Williams  
Arr. Marty Wheeler Burnett  
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**Call to Worship**      *Antuan Hairston*

ONE: Have you ever felt washed up, brittle, worn-down to the bone?  
**ALL: Have you ever felt grief lay heavy on your back?**  
Have you ever felt like hope was out of reach?  
**Have you ever wondered, can these bones live?**  
If you have, then you are in the right place, for this is God’s house. Hope lives here.  
**So, come. Rest your weary bones.**  
**Let us worship Holy God.**

**Call to Confession**      *Antuan Hairston*

**Prayer of Confession**      *Antuan Hairston*

**Jesus of Nazareth,**  
**I confess: I forget that you know this feeling.**  
**I forget that you, too, have wept.**  
**I forget that you, too, have lost.**  
**I forget that you, too, have gathered at the tomb,**  
**have grieved for a friend, have felt the sting of humanity.**  
**Forgive me for all the times I place blame on you.**  
**Forgive me for all the times I create distance, imagining that you could never feel what I**  
**feel. Forgive me for allowing the valley of dry bones to be a sea of space between us.**  
**Pour yourself into the cracks in my heart. Bring these bones back to life. Bring me closer to**  
**you. With gratitude I pray, amen.**

**Words of Forgiveness**      *Antuan Hairston*

ONE: Friends, you could spend your whole life ignoring God,  
pushing God away, or trying to solve the world’s problems all on your own,  
and God would still love you all the same.  
Even in our shortcomings, we are God’s beloved.  
So hear and believe this good news:  
**ALL: We are saved by grace through faith. We belong to God. We are not alone.**

**Passing the Peace** : The Peace of Christ be with you! **And also with you!**

**Opening Hymn** “Can These Bones Live?” LAUDA ANIMA (“Praise, My Soul, the King of Heaven”)

1. When the past is dead and buried  
Lifeless in the barren ground  
What good can emerge from ashes?  
Where can any life be found?  
Breathe in deep the rushing Spirit  
Life is growing all around

2. When our hearts are bowed in sorrow  
And the grief is newly wrought  
Crying. “If you’d only been here”  
Weeping for what we have lost  
Resurrect our hearts and spirits  
Living God whom we exalt

3. When our spirits feel so broken  
Wrapped in linens and entombed  
Without hope and without feeling  
As the storm clouds ‘round us loom  
Hear the words of life from Jesus  
“Come out, be unbound” and bloom

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**Time for Children**

**Rev. Patricia Abell**

**Scripture**

**Ezekiel 37:1-14 (CEB)**

**Antuan Hairston**

The LORD’s power overcame me, and while I was in the LORD’s spirit, he led me out and set me down in the middle of a certain valley. It was full of bones. <sup>2</sup> He led me through them all around, and I saw that there were a great many of them on the valley floor, and they were very dry.

<sup>3</sup> He asked me, “Human one, can these bones live again?”

I said, “LORD God, only you know.”

<sup>4</sup> He said to me, “Prophecy over these bones, and say to them, Dry bones, hear the LORD’s word! <sup>5</sup> The LORD God proclaims to these bones: I am about to put breath in you, and you will live again. <sup>6</sup> I will put sinews on you, place flesh on you, and cover you with skin. When I put breath in you, and you come to life, you will know that I am the LORD.”

<sup>7</sup> I prophesied just as I was commanded. There was a great noise as I was prophesying, then a great quaking, and the bones came together, bone by bone. <sup>8</sup> When I looked, suddenly there were sinews on them. The flesh appeared, and then they were covered over with skin. But there was still no breath in them.

<sup>9</sup> He said to me, “Prophecy to the breath; prophecy, human one! Say to the breath, The LORD God proclaims: Come from the four winds, breath! Breathe into these dead bodies and let them live.”

<sup>10</sup> I prophesied just as he commanded me. When the breath entered them, they came to life and stood on their feet, an extraordinarily large company.

<sup>11</sup> He said to me, “Human one, these bones are the entire house of Israel. They say, ‘Our bones are dried up, and our hope has perished. We are completely finished.’ <sup>12</sup> So now, prophecy and say to them, The LORD God proclaims: I’m opening your graves! I will raise you up from your graves, my people, and I will bring you to Israel’s fertile land. <sup>13</sup> You will know that I am the LORD, when I open your graves and raise you up from your graves, my people. <sup>14</sup> I will put my breath<sup>[a]</sup> in you, and you will live. I will plant you on your fertile land, and you will know that I am the LORD. I’ve spoken, and I will do it. This is what the LORD says.”

**John 11:1-45 (CEB)**

A certain man, Lazarus, was ill. He was from Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. (<sup>2</sup> This was the Mary who anointed the Lord with fragrant oil and wiped his feet with her hair. Her brother Lazarus was ill.)

<sup>3</sup> So the sisters sent word to Jesus, saying, “Lord, the one whom you love is ill.”

<sup>4</sup> When he heard this, Jesus said, "This illness isn't fatal. It's for the glory of God so that God's Son can be glorified through it." <sup>5</sup> Jesus loved Martha, her sister, and Lazarus. <sup>6</sup> When he heard that Lazarus was ill, he stayed where he was. After two days, <sup>7</sup> he said to his disciples, "Let's return to Judea again."  
<sup>8</sup> The disciples replied, "Rabbi, the Jewish opposition wants to stone you, but you want to go back?"  
<sup>9</sup> Jesus answered, "Aren't there twelve hours in the day? Whoever walks in the day doesn't stumble because they see the light of the world. <sup>10</sup> But whoever walks in the night does stumble because the light isn't in them."  
<sup>11</sup> He continued, "Our friend Lazarus is sleeping, but I am going in order to wake him up."  
<sup>12</sup> The disciples said, "Lord, if he's sleeping, he will get well." <sup>13</sup> They thought Jesus meant that Lazarus was in a deep sleep, but Jesus had spoken about Lazarus' death.

<sup>14</sup> Jesus told them plainly, "Lazarus has died. <sup>15</sup> For your sakes, I'm glad I wasn't there so that you can believe. Let's go to him." <sup>16</sup> Then Thomas (the one called Didymus) said to the other disciples, "Let us go too so that we may die with Jesus." <sup>17</sup> When Jesus arrived, he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four days. <sup>18</sup> Bethany was a little less than two miles from Jerusalem. <sup>19</sup> Many Jews had come to comfort Martha and Mary after their brother's death. <sup>20</sup> When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went to meet him, while Mary remained in the house. <sup>21</sup> Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother wouldn't have died. <sup>22</sup> Even now I know that whatever you ask God, God will give you."  
<sup>23</sup> Jesus told her, "Your brother will rise again."<sup>24</sup> Martha replied, "I know that he will rise in the resurrection on the last day."

<sup>25</sup> Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me will live, even though they die. <sup>26</sup> Everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?"  
<sup>27</sup> She replied, "Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Christ, God's Son, the one who is coming into the world."  
<sup>28</sup> After she said this, she went and spoke privately to her sister Mary, "The teacher is here and he's calling for you." <sup>29</sup> When Mary heard this, she got up quickly and went to Jesus. <sup>30</sup> He hadn't entered the village but was still in the place where Martha had met him. <sup>31</sup> When the Jews who were comforting Mary in the house saw her get up quickly and leave, they followed her. They assumed she was going to mourn at the tomb.  
<sup>32</sup> When Mary arrived where Jesus was and saw him, she fell at his feet and said, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother wouldn't have died."

<sup>33</sup> When Jesus saw her crying and the Jews who had come with her crying also, he was deeply disturbed and troubled. <sup>34</sup> He asked, "Where have you laid him?" They replied, "Lord, come and see."

<sup>35</sup> Jesus began to cry. <sup>36</sup> The Jews said, "See how much he loved him!" <sup>37</sup> But some of them said, "He healed the eyes of the man born blind. Couldn't he have kept Lazarus from dying?"

<sup>38</sup> Jesus was deeply disturbed again when he came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone covered the entrance. <sup>39</sup> Jesus said, "Remove the stone."

Martha, the sister of the dead man, said, "Lord, the smell will be awful! He's been dead four days."

<sup>40</sup> Jesus replied, "Didn't I tell you that if you believe, you will see God's glory?" <sup>41</sup> So they removed the stone. Jesus looked up and said, "Father, thank you for hearing me. <sup>42</sup> I know you always hear me. I say this for the benefit of the crowd standing here so that they will believe that you sent me." <sup>43</sup> Having said this, Jesus shouted with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!" <sup>44</sup> The dead man came out, his feet bound and his hands tied, and his face covered with a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Untie him and let him go."

<sup>45</sup> Therefore, many of the Jews who came with Mary and saw what Jesus did believed in him.

**Anthem**

**"Calvary Melody"**

**Handbell Choir**

Brian Childers

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**Message**

**SEEKING: Can these bones live?**

**Rev. Patricia Abell**

\*Please stand as able

## Response to the Word – Affirmation of Faith

*Rev. Patricia Abell*

ONE: We believe that God loves us—

**ALL: God loves us enough to weep when we are gone.**

We believe that God does not give up on us—

**breathing new life into tired bones.**

We believe that God returns to us—

**always seeking us when we are lost.**

We believe that God holds hope for us—

**so we hold onto hope as well.**

We believe, help our unbelief.

**In Christ's name we pray, amen.**

## Prayer for God's People, Church, & World

*Antuan Hairston*

Let us pray for the needs of the world,

Out of the depths we cry to you, O Lord.

**Lord, hear our voices and be attentive to our prayers.**

*Ps. 130:1–2*

We pray for those whose hope is lost, who feel dried up and cut off from you.

**By your grace, open their graves; bring them back to the land of the living.**

*Ezek. 37:11–12*

We pray for those who are oppressed, held captive by the power of death.

**Release them from their chains; unbind them and let them go!**

*John 11:44*

We pray for those who weep, lost and lifeless in fear and regret.

**Grant them the peace of your presence; show them what your love can do.**

*John 11:32–33*

We pray for those who are dying, the light of life fading in their eyes

**Help them to believe in you so that they may live and never die.**

*John 11:25–26*

We thank you, O Lord, for having heard our prayers.

**Enable us to trust in you, and thus to see your glory; through Jesus Christ, the resurrection and the life. Amen.**

*John 11:40–41*

Now let us pray in the name of Jesus, who taught us to pray:

## Lord's Prayer

## Offertory

“Lenten Nocturne”

*Handbell Choir*

Dan R. Edwards

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## \*Doxology

“Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow”

*UMH 95*

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## Offering Prayer

\*Please stand as able

**\*Closing Hymn**

“This Is the Day of New Beginnings”

**UMH 383**

1. This is a day of new beginnings  
Time to remember and move on  
Time to believe what love is bringing  
Laying to rest the pain that's gone

2. For by the life and death of Jesus  
Love’s mighty Spirit now as then  
Can make for us a world of difference  
As faith and hope are born again

3. Then let us with the Spirit's daring  
Step from the past and leave behind  
Our disappointment guilt and grieving  
Seeking new paths and sure to find

4. Christ is alive and goes before us  
To show and share what love can do  
This is a day of new beginnings  
Our God is making all things new

5. In faith we'll gather 'round the table  
To taste and share what love can do  
This is a day of new beginnings  
Our God is making all things new

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**Benediction**

**Postlude**

“We Thank Thee, Lord Jesus Christ” J. S. Bach

**Offered by Clarice Snyder**

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**Questions for Reflection**

*Why did Jesus weep in John 11:35?*

*Was it out of compassion for Mary and Martha? Out of love for his friend Lazarus?*

*Out of frustration with the people’s lack of understanding or faith?*

*Think about someone in your life who is grieving.*

*Find a way to extend to that person the grace and peace of Christ.*

**Household Prayer: Morning**

*O God, I know that you are the Lord, for you gave me my life, and caused me to rise this day.*

*Put your Spirit within me, and let my words and actions help others to know*

*that you are my Lord and my God. Amen.*

**Household Prayer: Evening**

*My soul waits for you, O Lord, more than those who watch for morning, more than those who watch for*

*morning. Help me to sleep this night in peace, trusting that you will awaken me;*

*through Jesus Christ my Savior.. Amen.*

**RESOURCES:**

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