



CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH of AUSTIN

An Open & Affirming Congregation in the United Church of Christ

Order of Worship for 3/26/2023

Fifth Sunday in Lent

Rev. Amelia Fulbright, Transitional Pastor

Prelude

Improvisation on "Give Me a Clean Heart"

Welcome

Call to Worship (Today's prayers are by Rev. Sarah A. Speed | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org)

Leader: Have you ever felt washed up, brittle, worn-down to the bone?

People: Have you ever felt grief lay heavy on your back?

Leader: Have you ever felt like hope was out of reach?

People: Have you ever wondered, *can these bones live?*

Leader: If you have, then you are in the right place, for this is God's house. Hope lives here.

People: So, come. Rest your weary bones. Let us worship Holy God.

*Hymn:

"O Love, How Vast, How Flowing Free"

New Century Hymnal #209

*Invocation

Creator God, why is bad news so loud?

*In the midst of gun violence, hunger, melting ice caps, transphobia, war, anxiety, and so much more,
it often feels like suffering has a microphone.*

How do we hear you? How do we find you? How do we know that these bones can live?

*Today we bring our raw selves into this space asking that once more you would
rush through this room like a mighty wind.*

Remind us that these bones can live.

Speak to us in your still, small voice

and let it be loud enough to speak to the sorrow of the day.

We know that good news rests in you, and we know that you are here.

*So help us listen, not to the bad news of the day alone,
but to the hope that you breathe into every word.*

With open hearts we pray, amen.

Listening To the Sacred Text: John 11:1-45

Listening for the Spirit in Silence:

Word and words, O God. Help us to hear the One among the many.

Reflecting: “Can these bones live?”

***Hymn of Reflection:** “Can These Bones Live?” See Handout.

Affirming Our Faith

Leader: We believe that God loves us—

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

Leader: We believe that God does not give up on us—

People: breathing new life into tired bones.

Leader: We believe that God returns to us—

People: always seeking us when we are lost.

Leader: We believe that God holds hope for us—

People: so we hold onto hope as well.

Leader: We believe, help our unbelief.

People: In Christ’s name we pray, amen.

Invitation to Generosity

Offering our gifts and our prayers

Offertory Music: “Erbarme Dich” J. S. Bach

***Doxology** (Tune: *Old Hundredth, New Century Hymnal #780*)

Praise God from whom all blessings flow.

Praise God, all creatures here below.

Praise God for all that love has done.

Creator, Christ, and Spirit One. Amen.

***Prayer of Dedication**

Announcements

***Sending Song:** “What Wondrous Love is This?” New Century Hymnal #223

***Benediction**

Postlude: “Regrets” A. Gretchaninov

*** Please rise as you are able, in body or in spirit.**

Leading In Today’s Service:

Laura Martin, Director of Music

Carolyn Thompson, Liturgist

Jonathan Geer, Piano

Liz Lee, Cello

Britt Hicks, Director of Online Ministries

John Goff, Usher

Amy Harris, Violin