

FAITH @ HOME

Week of March 29, 2020

Fifth Sunday in Lent

ADULT AND SMALL CHILD

READ: Ezekiel 37:1-7

REFLECT: Ezekiel had some pretty weird dreams! He dreamed about things that were old and dusty. But then, with God's help, they became healthy and new! Bones are so important to our bodies. They help us stand up and bend down. Bones keep our hearts and brains safe. But they don't do it alone; muscles, joints, skin and breath all work together. The same way that you, the grown-ups who love you, and God all work together.

RESPOND: Make a bone snack with pretzel sticks and mini marshmallows.

ABOUT OUR CONTRIBUTOR: HANNAH GRAHAM



For nearly 15 years, Hannah has served in a variety of Christian Formation roles. Hannah utilizes her knowledge of child and adolescent faith development in the classroom and in executing big picture planning to enhance the shaping of Christian community. She has led the Education for Ministry Program as a trained mentor and regularly contributes to Diocesan events, camps, retreats, and committee work. In addition to her ministry at St. Andrew's Episcopal Church in Glenwood, Maryland, Hannah devotes herself to growing in faith as a beloved child of God, wife and mother of three boys, ages 10 months-5 years old.

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ADULT AND ELEMENTARY

READ: John 11:1-45

REFLECT: Have you ever known someone who has moved away? A friend from school or a neighbor? A family member? After a while, your heart probably hoped and dreamed for them to come back for a visit, and at some point, they probably did-- for holidays, weekends, special occasions, or just because they love you and miss you.

But, have you ever known someone who died? At some point everyone will because all people live and die. Your heart will hope and dream for them to come back to visit, too. When they don't, this can make you sad, or mad, or even confused. There are lots of stories in the Bible about death and the sad and mad and confusing feelings that you and others may have felt. But there is more to the stories. In two weeks, on Easter, churches tell of how Jesus died but did not stay dead. Through this story, God promises that dying is not the end of God's story. Sadness and madness and confusion are not the end of God's story. God promises that one day the hopes and dreams of your heart will come true; that everyone you love will be together as God finishes telling all of you the story of God's love for you.

RESPOND: As a family, remember loved ones who have died. What did you love about them? What were some of your most joyful memories of them? What do you miss most about them? If any of you are struggling with the sad, mad, and confusing feelings, this might be a good time to share and listen. Pray together that God cares for them and for you until you are brought back together as God promises.

ABOUT OUR CONTRIBUTOR: PATRICK KANGRGA



Originally from Arkansas, Patrick Christopher Kangrga began in ministry by serving two years as a member of the Episcopal Service Corps in Maryland and in Massachusetts. After this he began a lay-professional journey with positions at parish and diocesan levels in New York and New Jersey. Most recently he has served as the Associate for Youth Ministries at Trinity Church in Menlo Park, California. He has primarily served youth with a short stint into ministry with children.

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ADULT AND YOUTH

READ: John 11:1-45

REFLECT: The raising of Lazarus from the dead is the final miracle Jesus performed before his trial and crucifixion. In this reading, a grieving Mary and Martha accompany Jesus to the tomb of Lazarus where Jesus, after the stone is rolled away, calls for Lazarus to emerge. Lazarus comes out of the tomb, still wrapped in the traditional cloth from burial around his hands, feet, and head. Lazarus is often remembered best from this story, but it is Mary and Martha who are really the central figures. It is their faith in Jesus as the Son of God who is 'resurrection and life' that allows them to see the glory of God revealed in the resurrection of Lazarus.

Jesus proclaims to Martha, "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" (John 11:25-26, NRSV). In the Episcopal liturgy for the Burial of the Dead, these words are the first spoken. They remind us that, even in death our faith cannot be broken, and we continue to live through Christ. As we begin to near Holy Week and the conclusion of Lent, we are reminded of Jesus' words to Martha and Mary apply to all of us, "Did I not tell you that if you believed, you would see the glory of God?" (John 11:40, NRSV).

RESPOND: It must have taken a lot of strength for Mary and Martha to go with Jesus to the tomb of their brother – to believe that faith was stronger than death. And yet, it was their faith that allowed them to witness a miracle. Jot down your answers to these questions in a journal: Where have you witnessed miracles in your own life? What does a faith strong enough to see the glory of God require of us? What does a world where we see the glory of God look like?

ABOUT OUR CONTRIBUTOR: KATE HUSTON



Kate Huston serves as the Director of Young and Young Adults and the Program Director for the IONA School of Formation in the Diocese of Oklahoma. Kate has worked in formation ministry for over 15 years and currently serves on the Forma Council. Before moving into full-time formation ministry, Kate had a faculty position in Political Science and continues to teach courses as an adjunct professor. Kate has a daughter, Brigid (6), and they love to read, watch the Great British Baking Show, and walk their 90-pound furball, Sully the Great Pyrenees.

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ADULT AND ADULT

READ: Psalm 130

REFLECT: In the movie called “50 First Dates,” Lucy had a rare memory problem. The part of her brain that controlled her short-term memory was damaged. She forgot everything she experienced every night. Henry enjoyed one-night stand after another. Lucy was the perfect conquest because she’d never remember him the next day.

Henry, however, fell in love. He was willing to do whatever was necessary to make her remember, giving himself fully to the relationship even though he knew that she would forget each day. She did remember, in a way, because she began to see him in her dreams. Life began when Henry and Lucy met because they dwelled in each other’s hearts.

That’s the kind of relationship we have with God; God lives in us and we live in God. Too often we forget what God has done and how much we are loved, but God never forgets and constantly comes to us in mercy and grace to make us fall in love with God again. We can rest in God’s promises knowing that God is always faithful.

RESPOND: Look through a photo album or a scrapbook. Think about the love you have for the people in those pages. Is there anything you have done, or are willing to do, to help them understand how much you love them? Think about the things God has done day after day to win your love. Do you desire God’s promises as much as God desires you?

ABOUT OUR CONTRIBUTOR: PEGGY HOPPES



Peggy Hoppes is a writer, artist, photographer and crafter; her creativity reflects her faith. She is married with two grown children. She began writing “A WORD FOR TODAY,” a devotional, in August 1999 which can be found at www.awordfortoday.org. Peggy teaches a Bible class at her church and has led workshops. She has published several books. Peggy shares her gifts to build up the church, to help Christians grow as disciples with living faith, and to be a witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ in the world.

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