

CONTRAST

LENTEN EPISTLE
WORSHIP SERIES



THE FIFTH SUNDAY IN LENT

CONTRAST

Death/Life



Today's Worship

Not a single person has gone unaffected by it. All of us have had loved ones die, and we know that our lives on this earth will someday come to an end as well. And because death is an ugly, unnatural thing, people fear it. We're constantly trying to eat healthy, or exercise, or have medical procedures done, in order to stave off death. But we know it's inevitable. Someday, we will all die. And yet, for the Christian, death doesn't have to be something we fear. Because we know what comes next! On our Lenten walk to Calvary, the Church sees the Savior come face to face with death and defeat it completely. As he raises Lazarus from the dead, and as he promises that he is the Resurrection and the Life, who will give resurrection and life to all who believe!

Weekly Memory Passage: ¹³Then you, my people, will know that I am the LORD, when I open your graves and bring you up from them. ¹⁴I will put my Spirit in you and you will live, and I will settle you in your own land. Then you will know that I the LORD have spoken, and I have done it, declares the LORD.'''
(Ezekiel 37:13-14)

The Season of Lent

The word Lent comes from an Old English word for Spring (*lengten*), the time of the year when the days grow longer. For the last 1,700 years, the Church has set aside the 40 days between Ash Wednesday and Easter as a time of special preparation. It is a time of repentance and renewal. During Lent, our rejoicing is muted as we remember our Lord's suffering and death. But it is with a purpose: we know that the Lord who died took up his life again on Easter Sunday morning. So our 40 days of Lent are ones lived in the certain hope of the resurrection.

March 1	Adam/Christ
March 8	Works/Faith
March 15	Darkness/Light
March 22	Old Self/New Self
March 29	Death/Life
April 5	Exaltation/Humility (Palm Sunday)

SERVICE OF MORNING PRAISE

The Fifth Sunday in Lent

OPENING HYMN

What Wondrous Love Is This

Christian Worship (Red) 120



1 What won - drous love is this, O my soul, O my
2 When I was sink - ing down, sink - ing down, sink - ing
3 To God and to the Lamb I will sing, I will
4 And when from death I'm free, I'll sing on, I'll sing



soul! What won - drous love is this, O my soul!
down, When I was sink - ing down, sink - ing down,
sing; To God and to the Lamb I will sing;
on; And when from death I'm free, I'll sing on.



What won - drous love is this That caused the Lord of
When I was sink - ing down Be - neath God's right - eous
To God and to the Lamb, Who is the great I
And when from death I'm free, I'll sing his love for



bliss To bear the dread - ful curse for my soul, for my
frown, Christ laid a - side his crown for my soul, for my
Am, While mil - lions join the theme, I will sing, I will
me, And through e - ter - ni - ty I'll sing on, I'll sing



soul, To bear the dread - ful curse for my soul!
soul, Christ laid a - side his crown for my soul.
sing, While mil - lions join the theme, I will sing.
on, And through e - ter - ni - ty I'll sing on.

Text: *A General Selection of . . . Spiritual Songs*, Lynchburg, 1811, alt.
Tune: WONDROUS LOVE (12 9 66 12 9) *Southern Harmony*, New Haven, 1835.

M: O Lord, open my lips.

C: And my mouth shall declare your praise.

M: Hasten to save me, O God.

C: O Lord, come quickly to help me.

M: Give glory to God, our light and our life.

C: Come, oh, come, let us worship.

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

M: If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, God, who is faithful and just, will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. Let us then confess our sins to God our Father.

C: Most merciful God, we confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We justly deserve your punishment, here on earth and in eternity. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways to the glory of your holy name. Amen.

M: By the mercy of our almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and for his sake God forgives us all our sins. As a called servant of Christ, and by his authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son (+) and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

PRAYER AND PRAISE

M: During these days of Lent, let us implore God to give us renewal and his Holy Spirit. May we continue to abide in the true faith and at the last be received by him through the merits of Jesus Christ our Lord.

C: Amen.

M: Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

C: Amen.

In Hopelessness and Near Despair

Christian Worship Supplement (Blue) 738 vs. 3-4

The musical score is written in 4/4 time with a key signature of one flat (Bb). It consists of six staves of music with lyrics underneath. The lyrics are: I trem - ble as I feel your hand, Ex - For - giv - en, free of guilt and shame, Grant pec - ting re - tri - bu - tion, Yet hear no curse or me some time to ren - der A gift to glo - ri - re - pri - mand, But grace and ab - so - lu - tion: With fy your name, Love to re - flect your splen - dor: This you there is for - give - ness, Lord, You world must know what I have learned, That speak the sweet, con - sol - ing Word, And you be - stow what none has earned: The I am sure you love me! joy of full for - give - ness!

PRAYER OF THE DAY

M: Let us pray.

Eternal God and Father, help us to remember Jesus, who obeyed your will and bore the cross for our salvation that through his anguish, pain, and death we may receive forgiveness of sins and inherit eternal life; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

THE WORD

FIRST LESSON: Ezekiel 37:1-14

The Valley of Dry Bones

The hand of the LORD was on me, and he brought me out by the Spirit of the LORD and set me in the middle of a valley; it was full of bones. ²He led me back and forth among them, and I saw a great many bones on the floor of the valley, bones that were very dry. ³He asked me, “Son of man, can these bones live?”

I said, “Sovereign LORD, you alone know.”

⁴Then he said to me, “Prophesy to these bones and say to them, ‘Dry bones, hear the word of the LORD!’ ⁵This is what the Sovereign LORD says to these bones: I will make breath enter you, and you will come to life. ⁶I will attach tendons to you and make flesh come upon you and cover you with skin; I will put breath in you, and you will come to life. Then you will know that I am the LORD.’”

⁷So I prophesied as I was commanded. And as I was prophesying, there was a noise, a rattling sound, and the bones came together, bone to bone. ⁸I looked, and tendons and flesh appeared on them and skin covered them, but there was no breath in them.

⁹Then he said to me, “Prophesy to the breath; prophesy, son of man, and say to it, ‘This is what the Sovereign LORD says: Come, breath, from the four winds and breathe into these slain, that they may live.’” ¹⁰So I prophesied as he commanded me, and breath entered them; they came to life and stood up on their feet—a vast army.

¹¹Then he said to me: “Son of man, these bones are the people of Israel. They say, ‘Our bones are dried up and our hope is gone; we are cut off.’ ¹²Therefore prophesy and say to them: ‘This is what the Sovereign LORD says: My people, I am going to open your graves and bring you up from them; I will bring you back to the land of Israel. ¹³Then you, my people, will know that I am the LORD, when I open your graves and bring you up from them. ¹⁴I will put my Spirit in you and you will live, and I will settle you in your own land. Then you will know that I the LORD have spoken, and I have done it, declares the LORD.’”

M: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

SECOND LESSON: Romans 8:11-19

Death in the flesh, Life in the Spirit

¹¹ And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies because of his Spirit who lives in you. ¹² Therefore, brothers and sisters, we have an obligation—but it is not to the flesh, to live according to it. ¹³ For if you live according to the flesh, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live. ¹⁴ For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God. ¹⁵ The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. And by him we cry, “*Abba*, Father.” ¹⁶ The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God’s children. ¹⁷ Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory. ¹⁸ I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. ¹⁹ For the creation waits in eager expectation for the children of God to be revealed.

M: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL: John 11:17-27, 38-45

Jesus raises Lazarus from the dead

¹⁷ On his arrival, Jesus found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four days. ¹⁸ Now Bethany was less than two miles from Jerusalem, ¹⁹ and many Jews had come to Martha and Mary to comfort them in the loss of their brother. ²⁰ When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went out to meet him, but Mary stayed at home.

²¹ “Lord,” Martha said to Jesus, “if you had been here, my brother would not have died. ²² But I know that even now God will give you whatever you ask.”

²³ Jesus said to her, “Your brother will rise again.”

²⁴ Martha answered, “I know he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day.”

²⁵ Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; ²⁶ and whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe this?”

²⁷ “Yes, Lord,” she replied, “I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, who is to come into the world.”

³⁸ Jesus, once more deeply moved, came to the tomb. It was a cave with a stone laid across the entrance. ³⁹ "Take away the stone," he said.

"But, Lord," said Martha, the sister of the dead man, "by this time there is a bad odor, for he has been there four days."

⁴⁰ Then Jesus said, "Did I not tell you that if you believe, you will see the glory of God?"

⁴¹ So they took away the stone. Then Jesus looked up and said, "Father, I thank you that you have heard me. ⁴² I knew that you always hear me, but I said this for the benefit of the people standing here, that they may believe that you sent me."

⁴³ When he had said this, Jesus called in a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!" ⁴⁴ The dead man came out, his hands and feet wrapped with strips of linen, and a cloth around his face.

Jesus said to them, "Take off the grave clothes and let him go." ⁴⁵ Therefore many of the Jews who had come to visit Mary, and had seen what Jesus did, believed in him.

M: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise be to you, O Christ.



HYMN OF THE DAY

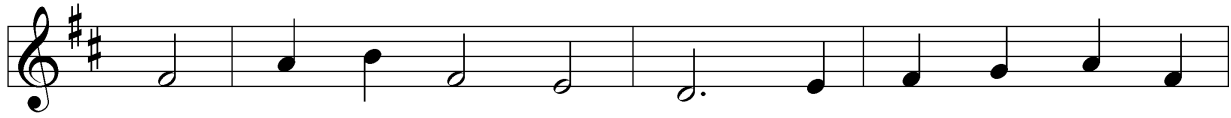
My Song Is Love Unknown

Christian Worship (Red) 110

(Printed on page 9 in the worship folder)

110

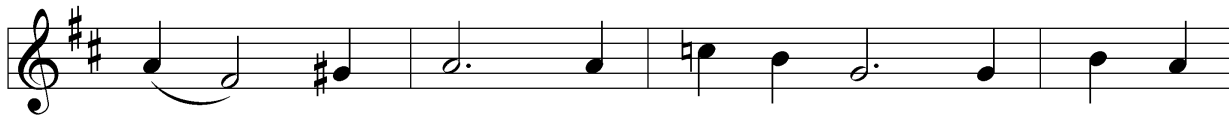
My Song Is Love Unknown



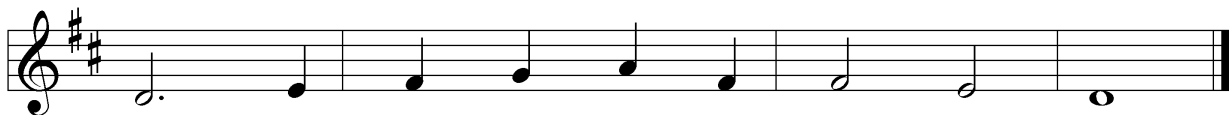
1 My song is love un - known, My Sav - ior's love to
 2 He came from his blest throne Sal - va - tion to be -
 3 Some - times they strew his way And his sweet prais - es
 4 Why? What has my Lord done? What makes this rage and
 5 They rise and needs will have My dear Lord made a -



me, Love to the love - less shown That they might
 stow, But such dis - dain! So few The longed - for
 sing, Re - sound - ing all the day Ho - san - nas
 spite? He made the lame to run; He gave the
 way. A mur - der - er they save; The Prince of



love - ly be. Oh, who am I That for my
 Christ would know! But oh, my friend, My friend in -
 to their King. Then "Cru - ci - fy!" Is all their
 blind their sight. Sweet in - ju - ries! Yet they at
 life they slay. Yet cheer - ful he To suff'r - ing



sake My Lord should take Frail flesh and die?
 deed, Who at my need His life did spend!
 breath, And for his death They thirst and cry.
 these Them - selves dis - please And 'gainst him rise.
 goes That he his foes From death might free.

6 In life no house, no home
 My Lord on earth might have;
 In death no friendly tomb
 But what a stranger gave.
 What may I say?
 Heav'n was his home
 But mine the tomb
 Wherein he lay.

7 Here might I stay and sing;
 No story so divine,
 Never was love, dear King,
 Never was grief like thine.
 This is my friend,
 In whose sweet praise
 I all my days
 Could gladly spend!

Text: John 11:17-27, 38-45

The Dead Man Came Out

CONFESSION OF FAITH FOR LENT

This is what the Bible teaches and, therefore, what we believe.

We believe in Jesus Christ; He is the true God from all eternity – almighty, all-knowing, present in all places. He is a man from Nazareth – weak in the flesh, fearful of future sorrow, tortured by pain. He was tempted like us, yet like we will never know. But he triumphed over temptation; he refrained from his full might and glory; he submitted humbly to the Father’s will; he chose death, to give us life. We believe that our sins anger God, each one of them: big and small, public and private, those that hurt others, those that don’t appear to hurt anyone, those we don’t even remember.

We believe that Jesus lived and died for the sins of the world. He resisted every temptation; he reached out in love, to anyone in need; he remained pure in every thought, not just to be a good person, not just to be a good example, but to be mankind’s perfect Savior and Substitute, to live the Law in our place, so that the Law will not condemn us. He submitted to shame; he suffered unjust punishment; he sacrificed Himself, not to prove a point, not just to show us how to obey, but to take mankind’s sentence for sin, as our perfect Savior and Substitute. He is our sure hope and salvation.

This is what the Bible says; therefore, this is what we believe. Amen.

OFFERING

Victory can receive offerings electronically through our secure website: victorylutheran.org/giving/

Although we might not be gathering together for public worship, we still have ongoing ministry expenses and bills that need to be paid. Your continued offerings are crucial for our gospel ministry to continue moving forward. Please consider using the online giving option, mailing a check, or dropping off your offering at the church!

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

BLESSING

M: Brothers and sisters, go in peace. Live in harmony with one another. Serve the Lord with gladness.

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look on you with favor and (+) give you peace.

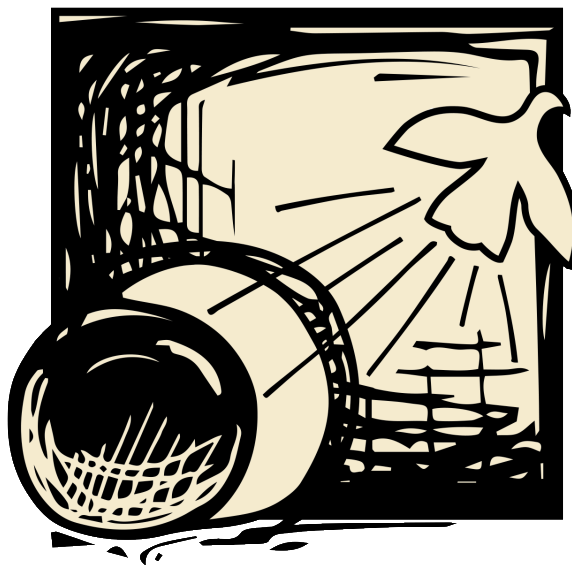
C: Amen.

CLOSING HYMN

I Am Content! My Jesus Lives Again

Christian Worship (Red) 158

(Hymn printed on page 12 of worship folder)



158 I Am Content! My Jesus Lives Again



1 I am con-tent! My Je - sus lives a - gain, In whom my
 2 I am con-tent! My Je - sus is my head; His mem - ber
 3 I am con-tent! My Je - sus is my light, My ra - diant
 4 I am con-tent! Lord, set me ev - er free And wake me



heart is pleased. He has ful - filled the law of God for
 I will be. He bowed his head when on the cross he
 sun of grace. His cheer - ing rays beam bless-ings forth for
 from the dead That I may rise for - ev - er - more to



me; God's wrath he has ap - peased. Since he in
 died With cries of ag - o - ny. Now death is
 all: Sweet com - fort, hope, and peace. This Eas - ter
 be With you, my liv - ing head. The chains that



death could per - ish nev - er, I al - so shall not
 brought in - to sub - jec - tion For me, too, by his
 sun has brought sal - va - tion And ev - er - last - ing
 hold my bod - y, sev - er; Then shall my soul re -



die for - ev - er. I am con-tent! I am con - tent!
 res - ur - rec-tion. I am con-tent! I am con - tent!
 ex - ul - ta-tion. I am con-tent! I am con - tent!
 joyce for - ev - er. I am con-tent! I am con - tent!

Text: Johann J. Möller, 1660–1733, abr.; tr. August Crull, 1845–1923, alt.
 Tune: ES IST GENUG (10 6 10 6 99 44) Johann R. Ahle, 1625–73, alt.