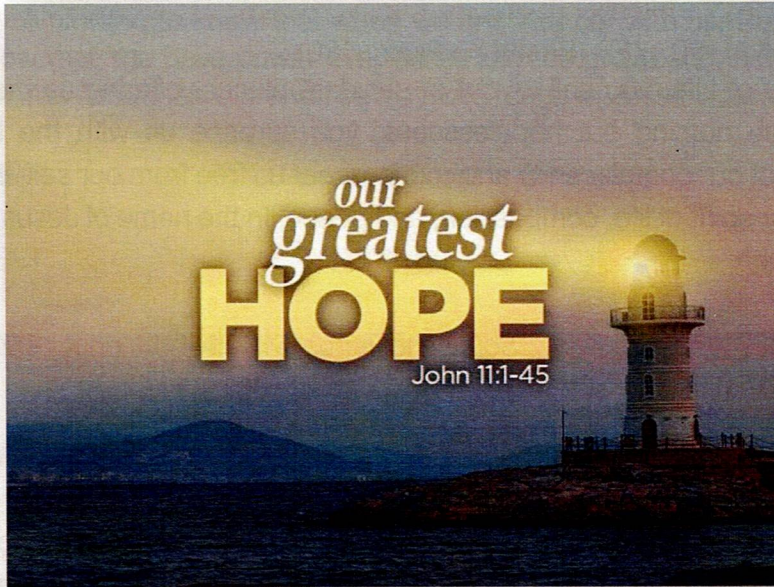




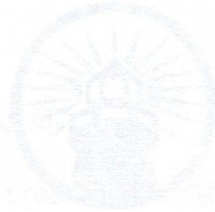
*“A Lighthouse Guiding  
People to Christ”*



Letting Go: Our Greatest Hope

March 17, 2024  
Fifth Sunday of Lent

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PRELUDE / COUNTDOWN  
 WELCOME / ANNOUNCEMENTS  
 WELCOMING OF GUESTS  
 PASSING THE PEACE

Pastor  
 Pastor

CONGREGAATIONAL PRAYER (Based on Psalm 130) Liturgist  
 Holy God, Creator of Life, you call us out of our dark places, offering us the grace of new life. When we see nothing but hopelessness, you surprise us with the breath of your spirit. Call us out of our complacency and routines, set us free from our self-imposed bonds, and fill us with your spirit of life, compassion, and peace, In the name of Jesus, your anointed one, we pray. Amen.

\*HYMN OF PRAISE *Softly and Tenderly* (v. 1-4) UMH #348

\*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH: Lenten Creed Liturgist  
 I believe in God the Creator, who made me and all things, who set me on my path in this world.

I believe in God the Savior, who is one with the Creator, who rescued me and all creation from the depredations of our violations against God and creation. This man, Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ, walked a path through this world, taking on human form having been born of a woman through the power of the Holy Spirit. He lived and worked in this world among people just like me. He walked God's path to death on a cross and rose from the dead to open our pathway to eternal life.

I believe in God the Holy Spirit, my counselor and guide, who is one with the Creator and the Christ, who through the body and blood of Jesus brings me into communion with all people, past, present and future; who calls me to walk a sacred way of life through this world, caring for creation and the people I meet on the way, loving them, helping them, welcoming them without prejudice, being God's hands and feet in the world.

\*GLORIA PATRI See screen

*\*Please stand as you are able*



OLD TESTAMENT READING: (Psalm 130 NKJV insert) Liturgist

CHILDREN'S SERMON Pastor

CHILDREN'S PRAYER

Dear Jesus, it is comforting to know that when we cry, You cry with us. But it is even more comforting to know that You have power over death and the grave and that one day we will be in heaven with You--and then there will be no more tears. In Jesus' name, Amen

SERMON ANTHEM *The Church of Christ in Every Age* Choir

MISSION MOMENT

GOSPEL READING (John 11:1-45 NKJV insert) Liturgist

PRESENTATION OF PRAYERS AND PRAISE Pastor

*Prayer cards are located in the bulletin. If you have a prayer need or praise that you would like to share with the congregation, please fill out the card and pass it toward the center isle of the congregation as we are singing the Hymn of Preparation. The pastor will collect the cards during the song and pray over the cards at the chancel rail.*

PASTORAL PRAYER Pastor

\*HYMN OF PREPARATION *Where He Leads Me I Will Follow* (v. 1-4) UMH #338

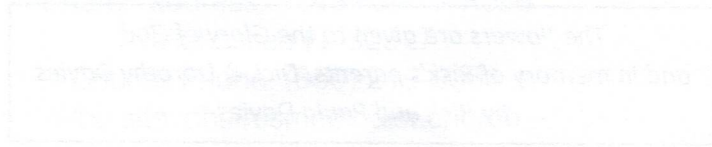
PASTORAL PRAYER Pastor

SERMON Pastor

Title: Letting Go

Theme: Our Greatest Hope

Main Idea: The story of Lazarus teaches us that God seldom meets our expectations but instead fulfills our greatest hopes.



RECEIVING OF TITHES AND SACRIFICES (Celebrating Our Gifts)

OFFERTORY PRAYER

Generous God, you tenderly care for each person you have created. You miraculously restore people to health and shine light into the lives of those who are discouraged. Guide us so that we will not regard others according to outward appearances but seek to find your love in their hearts. We dedicate our offerings and ourselves to contribute to the work of your kingdom on earth until Christ returns in glory. Amen.

PASSING THE PLATE

\*DOXOLOGY *Praise God, From Whom All Blessings* See screen

\*HYMN OF CELEBRATION *I Want to Be Ready* UMH#722

\*COMMISSION / BLESSING (Inspired by John 11: 1-45) Pastor

*Pastor: Come out! Jesus commands,*

Congregation: And calls us from the tombs of our existence into the brightness of a new day.

*Pastor: Come out! Jesus cries,*

Congregation: And unbinds us from the chains of our past.

*Pastor: Come out! Jesus calls,*

Congregation: And entices us into a world filled with grace and possibility.

*Pastor: So: Go out!*

Congregation: Into a world that needs our life, our breath, our spirit!

*Pastor: Go out!*

Congregation: Into a world that needs the Spirit of God, carried on our lips and in our loving arms.

*Pastor: Go out!*

Congregation: Into the world to live as God's resurrected people!

*Pastor: Go out: and go on the breath of God's holy wind!*

\*BENEDICTION RESPONSE *Love and Fellowship* See screen

POSTLUDE

*The flowers are given to the Glory of God  
and in memory of Rick's parents, Dick & Dorothy Davies  
by Rick and Paula Davies*



OLD TESTAMENT READING Psalm 130 (NKJV) Liturgist

A Song of Ascents. Out of the depths I have cried to You, O LORD; <sup>2</sup> Lord, hear my voice! Let Your ears be attentive To the voice of my supplications. <sup>3</sup> If You, LORD, should mark iniquities, O Lord, who could stand? <sup>4</sup> But *there is* forgiveness with You, That You may be feared. <sup>5</sup> I wait for the LORD, my soul waits, And in His word I do hope. <sup>6</sup> My soul *waits* for the Lord More than those who watch for the morning -- Yes, *more than* those who watch for the morning. <sup>7</sup> O Israel, hope in the LORD; For with the LORD *there is* mercy, And with Him *is* abundant redemption. <sup>8</sup> And He shall redeem Israel From all his iniquities.

GOSPEL READING John 11:145 (NKJV) Liturgist

Now a certain *man* was sick, Lazarus of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha. <sup>2</sup> It was *that* Mary who anointed the Lord with fragrant oil and wiped His feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick. <sup>3</sup> Therefore the sisters sent to Him, saying, "Lord, behold, he whom You love is sick." <sup>4</sup> When Jesus heard *that*, He said, "This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified through it." <sup>5</sup> Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. <sup>6</sup> So, when He heard that he was sick, He stayed two more days in the place where He was. <sup>7</sup> Then after this He said to *the* disciples, "Let us go to Judea again." <sup>8</sup> *The* disciples said to Him, "Rabbi, lately the Jews sought to stone You, and are You going there again?" <sup>9</sup> Jesus answered, "Are there not twelve hours in the day? If anyone walks in the day, he does not stumble, because he sees the light of this world. <sup>10</sup> "But if one walks in the night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him." <sup>11</sup> These things He said, and after that He said to them, "Our friend Lazarus sleeps, but I go that I may wake him up." <sup>12</sup> Then His disciples said, "Lord, if he sleeps he will get well." <sup>13</sup> However, Jesus spoke of his death, but they thought that He was speaking about taking rest in sleep. <sup>14</sup> Then Jesus said to them plainly, "Lazarus is dead. <sup>15</sup> "And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, that you may believe. Nevertheless, let us go to him." <sup>16</sup> Then Thomas, who is called the Twin, said to his fellow disciples, "Let us also go, that we may die with Him." <sup>17</sup> So when Jesus came, He found that he had already been in the tomb four days. <sup>18</sup> Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, about two miles away. <sup>19</sup> And many of the Jews had joined the women around Martha and Mary, to comfort them concerning their brother. <sup>20</sup> Then Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming,

went and met Him, but Mary was sitting in the house. <sup>21</sup> Then Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died." <sup>22</sup> "But even now I know that whatever You ask of God, God will give You." <sup>23</sup> Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again." <sup>24</sup> Martha said to Him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day." <sup>25</sup> Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. <sup>26</sup> "And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?" <sup>27</sup> She said to Him, "Yes, Lord, I believe that You are the Christ, the Son of God, who is to come into the world." <sup>28</sup> And when she had said these things, she went her way and secretly called Mary her sister, saying, "The Teacher has come and is calling for you." <sup>29</sup> As soon as she heard *that*, she arose quickly and came to Him. <sup>30</sup> Now Jesus had not yet come into the town, but was in the place where Martha met Him. <sup>31</sup> Then the Jews who were with her in the house, and comforting her, when they saw that Mary rose up quickly and went out, followed her, saying, "She is going to the tomb to weep there." <sup>32</sup> Then, when Mary came where Jesus was, and saw Him, she fell down at His feet, saying to Him, "Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died." <sup>33</sup> Therefore, when Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her weeping, He groaned in the spirit and was troubled. <sup>34</sup> And He said, "Where have you laid him?" They said to Him, "Lord, come and see." <sup>35</sup> Jesus wept. <sup>36</sup> Then the Jews said, "See how He loved him!" <sup>37</sup> And some of them said, "Could not this Man, who opened the eyes of the blind, also have kept this man from dying?" <sup>38</sup> Then Jesus, again groaning in Himself, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone lay against it. <sup>39</sup> Jesus said, "Take away the stone." Martha, the sister of him who was dead, said to Him, "Lord, by this time there is a stench, for he has been *dead* four days." <sup>40</sup> Jesus said to her, "Did I not say to you that if you would believe you would see the glory of God?" <sup>41</sup> Then they took away the stone *from the place* where the dead man was lying. And Jesus lifted up *His* eyes and said, "Father, I thank You that You have heard Me. <sup>42</sup> "And I know that You always hear Me, but because of the people who are standing by I said *this*, that they may believe that You sent Me." <sup>43</sup> Now when He had said these things, He cried with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come forth!" <sup>44</sup> And he who had died came out bound hand and foot with graveclothes, and his face was wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Loose him, and let him go." <sup>45</sup> Then many of the Jews who had come to Mary, and had seen the things Jesus did, believed in Him.