

Call to Worship

One: Thus says the Lord: "I will put my breath within you, and you shall live."

All: In gratitude, we praise the Giver of Life.

One: Jesus says: "I am the resurrection and the life."

All: In gratitude, we praise the Source of our Being.

One: We gather to worship the One who frees us from the grave and stirs dry bones to life.

All: Spirit, come and enliven our worship!

Anthem: #286. *Breathe on Me, Breath of God*

Edwin Hatch, 1878

Breathe on me, Breath of God; fill me with life anew,
that I may love what thou dost love, and do what thou wouldst do.

Breathe on me, Breath of God, until my heart is pure,
until with thee I will one will, to do and to endure.

Breathe on me, Breath of God, till I am wholly thine,
until this earthly part of me glows with thy fire divine.

Breathe on me, Breath of God, so shall I never die,
but live with thee the perfect life of thine eternity.

Prayer of Confession

Holy One, we have set our minds on wrong things— on selfish gain, not generous service; on pursuits that distract, not inspire; on tasks that diminish, rather than give, life. We long to set our minds on eternal things— on your way of mercy and compassion; on paths that lead to justice and peace; on living as people of hope. Spirit of God, dwell in us. Give us grace when we fall short, transform our hearts and renew our minds, and set us free to follow you faithfully.

Assurance of Pardon

One: Friends, believe and live the good news of the gospel.

All: In Jesus Christ we are forgiven. Thanks be to God!

Prayer for Illumination

First Scripture Reading: Ezekiel 37:1-14

1 The hand of the Lord came upon me, and he brought me out by the spirit of the Lord and set me down in the middle of a valley; it was full of bones.

2 He led me all around them; there were very many lying in the valley, and they were very dry.

3 He said to me, "Mortal, can these bones live?" I answered, "O Lord God, you know."

4 Then he said to me, "Prophecy to these bones, and say to them: O dry bones, hear the word of the Lord.

5 Thus says the Lord God to these bones: I will cause breath to enter you, and you shall live.

6 I will lay sinews on you, and will cause flesh to come upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and you shall live; and you shall know that I am the Lord."

7 So I prophesied as I had been commanded; and as I prophesied, suddenly there was a noise, a rattling, and the bones came together, bone to its bone.

8 I looked, and there were sinews on them, and flesh had come upon them, and skin had covered them; but there was no breath in them.

9 Then he said to me, “Prophesy to the breath, prophesy, mortal, and say to the breath: Thus says the Lord God: Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live.”

10 I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood on their feet, a vast multitude.

11 Then he said to me, “Mortal, these bones are the whole house of Israel. They say, ‘Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost; we are cut off completely.’

12 Therefore prophesy, and say to them, Thus says the Lord God: I am going to open your graves, and bring you up from your graves, O my people; and I will bring you back to the land of Israel.

13 And you shall know that I am the Lord, when I open your graves, and bring you up from your graves, O my people.

14 I will put my spirit within you, and you shall live, and I will place you on your own soil; then you shall know that I, the Lord, have spoken and will act, says the Lord.”

Second Scripture Reading: Romans 8:6-11

6 To set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace.

7 For this reason the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God’s law—indeed it cannot,

8 and those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

9 But you are not in the flesh; you are in the Spirit, since the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him.

10 But if Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness.

11 If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also through his Spirit that dwells in you.

Homily “God Gives Life”

Rev. Dr. Fairfax Fair

Pastoral Prayer and The Lord’s Prayer

Benediction