

St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church
Wilton, WI
Midweek Lenten Service
March 16, 2022
**Inviting People to
Journey with Christ's Family
in Spreading God's Love and Mercy**

**(Indicates that the people should stand as they are able.)*

Announcements

Gathering

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.^

Prelude....A time for silent reflection

INVITATION TO WORSHIP

How do we grieve in the wake of unthinkable injustice and loss?
Rizpah shows us an honest, unapologetic grief and persistent strength
in honoring the innocent lives of those taken from her.

We gather in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the
Holy Spirit.

Amen.

CALL TO WORSHIP

When we come to this space, we bring all of ourselves.

We bring joy and hope,
dreams and prayers,
grief and doubt,
memories and heartache.

God meets us here.

God hears our prayers and sees our scars.

With open hearts and authenticity,
Let us worship good and gracious God.

Prayer of Confession

God of creation,

Humanity is capable of such evil.

**Stories in scripture alongside stories on the news
remind us of that truth all the time.**

**For the moments when we choose violence over peace,
exclusion over inclusion,
and fear over hope—forgive us.**

**When we choose pride over what is right,
and comfort over justice—**

Show us mercy.

And when we numb our pain instead of leaning into empathy—

Unravel us, for we long to be changed.

Gratefully we pray,

Amen.

Word

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.^

2 Samuel 3:7; 21:1-14

⁷Now Saul had a concubine whose name was Rizpah daughter of Aiah. And Ishbaal said to Abner, "Why have you gone in to my father's concubine?"

¹Now there was a famine in the days of David for three years, year after year; and David inquired of the LORD. The LORD said, "There is bloodguilt on Saul and on his house, because he put the Gibeonites to death." ²So the king called the Gibeonites and spoke to them. (Now the Gibeonites were not of the people of Israel, but of the remnant of the Amorites; although the people of Israel had sworn to spare them, Saul had tried to wipe them out in his zeal for the people of Israel and Judah.) ³David said to the Gibeonites, "What shall I do for you? How

Sending

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.^

Blessing

May all that binds your heart be unraveled in the days to come.
May the fear and pain and suffering be released to the Holy One.
May God go with you as you put down your brokenness.
And may God fill you with all hope and joyfulness.
For Christ will gather you once again.
This is the blessing for the unraveled one.
Amen.

Sending Hymn “Jesus Calls Us; O’er the Tumult” **ELW #696**

DISMISSAL

L: Go forth into the world to serve God with gladness;
 be of good courage;
 hold fast to that which is good;
 render to no one evil for evil;
 strengthen the fainthearted; support the weak;
 help the afflicted; honor all people;
 love and serve God, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit.

C: Thanks be to God.

*The Sunday Assembly, Lorraine S. Brugh, Gordon W. Lathrop, Augsburg Fortress, 2008

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Watch, O Lord; A prayer by St. Augustine, Adapted by Marty Haugen

shall I make expiation, that you may bless the heritage of the LORD?" ⁴The Gibeonites said to him, "It is not a matter of silver or gold between us and Saul or his house; neither is it for us to put anyone to death in Israel." He said, "What do you say that I should do for you?" ⁵They said to the king, "The man who consumed us and planned to destroy us, so that we should have no place in all the territory of Israel — ⁶let seven of his sons be handed over to us, and we will impale them before the LORD at Gibeon on the mountain of the LORD." The king said, "I will hand them over." ⁷But the king spared Mephibosheth, the son of Saul's son Jonathan, because of the oath of the LORD that was between them, between David and Jonathan son of Saul. ⁸The king took the two sons of Rizpah daughter of Aiah, whom she bore to Saul, Armoni and Mephibosheth; and the five sons of Merab daughter of Saul, whom she bore to Adriel son of Barzillai the Meholathite; ⁹he gave them into the hands of the Gibeonites, and they impaled them on the mountain before the LORD. The seven of them perished together. They were put to death in the first days of harvest, at the beginning of barley harvest.

¹⁰Then Rizpah the daughter of Aiah took sackcloth, and spread it on a rock for herself, from the beginning of harvest until rain fell on them from the heavens; she did not allow the birds of the air to come on the bodies by day, or the wild animals by night. ¹¹When David was told what Rizpah daughter of Aiah, the concubine of Saul, had done, ¹²David went and took the bones of Saul and the bones of his son Jonathan from the people of Jabesh-gilead, who had stolen them from the public square of Beth-shan, where the Philistines had hung them up, on the day the Philistines killed Saul on Gilboa. ¹³He brought up from there the bones of Saul and the bones of his son Jonathan; and they gathered the bones of those who had been impaled. ¹⁴They buried the bones of Saul and of his son Jonathan in the land of Benjamin in Zela, in the tomb of his father Kish; they did all that the king commanded. After that, God heeded supplications for the land.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Prayer of Illumination

God of unending surprises, this life is a tapestry of moments woven together, and we long to be weavers of love. Today we gather and pray that you would unravel our bias. Unravel our assumptions. Unravel whatever it is that keeps us from you. And as you do, clear space in our hearts for your Word. We are listening. We are praying.

Amen.

Sermon “Rizpah Mourns Her Sons” Bishop Felix Malpica

Hymn “Healer of Our Every Ill” **ELW #612**

Affirmation of Faith

**I believe in God, the Great Sower—
Who weaves us together in community,
Collecting our loose ends and turning them into belonging.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit—
Who hems us in before and behind,
Catching us when we fall and writing us into God’s holy narrative.**

**And I believe in Jesus Christ—
Who loved and claimed the people society had thrown out,
refusing to disregard anyone as scrap.**

**I believe God has woven part of God’s self into the fiber
of our being, Making us inherently worthy of love and
belonging.**

**I believe the fabric of my life is weak,
That I am prone to error and need God’s handiwork
to remind me of love.**

**I believe in the Church, and that like a quilt of different
fabrics, She is designed to be as diverse and beautiful as
God’s creation.**

**And I believe that when life unravels,
God is there to stitch my wounds together,
To hold me in the palm of God’s hand, to tell me of love,
And to invite me into a new journey.
Amen.**

Prayers of Intercession

Tend your ailing ones: **in your love, Lord;**
Rest your weary ones: **in your love, Lord;**
Bless your dying ones: **in your love, O Lord for all.**
Watch, O Lord, with all those awake this night.
Watch, O Lord, with all those who weep;
Give your angels and saints charge over all who sleep.

Sooth your suffering ones: **in your love, Lord;**
Heal afflicted ones: **in your love, Lord;**
Shield your joyous ones: **in your love, O Lord for all.**
Watch, O Lord, with all those awake this night.
Watch, O Lord, with all those who weep;
Give your angels and saints charge over all who sleep.

Hold your grieving: **in your love, Lord;**
Raise your fallen Ones: **in your love, Lord;**
Mend your broken ones: **in your love, O Lord for all.**
Watch, O Lord, with all those awake this night.
Watch, O Lord, with all those who weep;
Give your angels and saints charge over all who sleep.

Guard your little ones: **in your love, Lord;**
Guide your searching ones: **in your love, Lord;**
Grant us all your peace: **in your love, O Lord for all.**
Watch, O Lord, with all those awake this night.
Watch, O Lord, with all those who weep;
Give your angels and saints charge over all who sleep.

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us:

**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.**