

## The Jesus We Need – Everything Is All Right

### The Fifth Sunday in Lent

**Greetings in the name of our Savior Jesus:** “Hope” and “Peace” are some of the words that I’ve heard used a lot by Christian preachers as we face this crisis of a pandemic. Today we are reminded of the confidence that is ours as we put our faith in Jesus. He conquered the grave and shows that his life really is ours. We can place our trust in him.

One great aspect of online services is the ability to comment and share these messages with friends online. Please take a moment today to invite family members or friends to view these messages.

**The theme as you worship:** “Everything is all right.” We’ve probably said it others or to ourselves at one time or another. But can we say that even in the face of death itself. God teaches us that we clearly can say that, even in the midst of crisis.

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#### INVOCATION & INVITATION TO WORSHIP

M: We worship...In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

M: The Psalmist says, “I love the Lord, for he heard my voice; he heard my cry for mercy. Because he turned his ear to me, I will call him as long as I live.” Knowing that he hears our cries for mercy, we call to him.

#### CONFESSION

M: Beloved in the Lord: let us draw near to him with a true heart and confess our sins to God our Father, asking him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to grant us forgiveness.

**C: Holy and merciful Father, I confess that I am by nature sinful and that I have disobeyed you in my thoughts, words and actions. I have done what is evil and failed to do what is good. For this I deserve your punishment both now and in eternity. But I am truly sorry for my sins, and trusting in my Savior Jesus Christ, I pray: Lord have mercy on me, a sinner.**

#### ABSOLUTION

M: God our heavenly Father has been merciful to us. He has sent his one and only son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sin. Therefore, 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

Heavenly Father, if there is anything sure and certain in this world, it is the fear of death. And if there is anything the Bible teaches clearly; it is that you defeated death for us. Help us find comfort in how Christ faced death and defeated death, and now invites us to look past death to eternal life. And let me be a beacon of true hope in the face of death to my friends and family in crisis. Amen.

## THE GOSPEL

John 11:17-27, 38-45

<sup>17</sup> On his arrival, Jesus found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four days. <sup>18</sup> Now Bethany was less than two miles from Jerusalem, <sup>19</sup> and many Jews had come to Martha and Mary to comfort them in the loss of their brother. <sup>20</sup> When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went out to meet him, but Mary stayed at home. <sup>21</sup> “Lord,” Martha said to Jesus, “if you had been here, my brother would not have died. <sup>22</sup> But I know that even now God will give you whatever you ask.” <sup>23</sup> Jesus said to her, “Your brother will rise again.” <sup>24</sup> Martha answered, “I know 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. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; <sup>26</sup> and whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe this?” <sup>27</sup> “Yes, Lord,” she replied, “I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, who is to come into the world.”

<sup>38</sup> Jesus, once more deeply moved, came to the tomb. It was a cave with a stone laid across the entrance. <sup>39</sup> “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.” <sup>40</sup> Then Jesus said, “Did I not tell you that if you believe, you will see the glory of God?” <sup>41</sup> So they took away the stone. Then Jesus looked up and said, “Father, I thank you that you have heard me. <sup>42</sup> 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.” <sup>43</sup> When he had said this, Jesus called in a loud voice, “Lazarus, come out!” <sup>44</sup> 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.” <sup>45</sup> Therefore many of the Jews who had come to visit Mary, and had seen what Jesus did, believed in him.<sup>1</sup>

## SONG

*There is a Redeemer*

♪ There is a Redeemer, Jesus, God’s own Son,  
Precious Lamb of God, Messiah, Holy One.

*Refrain*

♪ Thank, you, O my Father, for giving us your Son  
and leaving your Spirit till the work on earth is done.

♪ Jesus, my Redeemer, Name above all names,  
Precious Lamb of God, Messiah, Hope for sinners slain.

*Refrain*

♪ When I stand in glory, I will see his face;  
There I’ll serve my King forever In that holy place.

*Refrain*

<sup>1</sup> [The New International Version](#). (2011). (Jn 11:17-27, 38–45). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

## THE MESSAGE

II Kings 4:18-37

**Theme: Everything is All Right**

Ask anyone how they are doing in quarantine and you might get, "Everything is alright. Good. Things are alright." Ask them a second time how things are going in quarantine and you might start to get different answers, "disappointed" "scared" "nervous" "anxious" "uneasy." When someone asks us how we are doing, we often respond to the effect that "everything is all right" even when everything is not alright. So how is that you and I can say it and believe in our hearts, "Everything is all right?"

To find the answer we turn to 2 Kings 4. I remember calling her "The Shunamite" growing up. We are never told her name. But it is clear she is a believer. At the time there weren't many believers in Israel. Many had turned away from God. The Shunamite woman recognized God's prophet as a "Man of God." She was so strong a believer she wanted to help with the preaching of God's Word in her region, so she had convinced her husband they should put an addition on the house where the Elisha the prophet could stay at their house when he was in the area. The Lord had blessed her with a miracle child in her old age. Everything was all right in her life...then the dark clouds rolled in.

II Kings 4:18-25, <sup>18</sup> *The child grew, and one day he went out to his father, who was with the reapers. <sup>19</sup> He said to his father, "My head! My head!" His father told a servant, "Carry him to his mother."* <sup>20</sup> *After the servant had lifted him up and carried him to his mother, the boy sat on her lap until noon, and then he died. <sup>21</sup> She went up and laid him on the bed of the man of God, then shut the door and went out. <sup>22</sup> She called her husband and said, "Please send me one of the servants and a donkey so I can go to the man of God quickly and return."* <sup>23</sup> *"Why go to him today?" he asked. "It's not the New Moon or the Sabbath." "That's all right," she said. <sup>24</sup> She saddled the donkey and said to her servant, "Lead on; don't slow down for me unless I tell you."* <sup>25</sup> *So she set out and came to the man of God at Mount Carmel. <sup>2</sup>*

This woman is in the awful position of losing her child. What we learn from the story is how she dealt with the suffering. She runs first to the Lord. Technically she runs to the Elisha, the Man of God. Why? She knew that the Man of God represented God. She knew the words he had were from God, they were power, and they were life. She knew that the words of God could strengthen her in weakness and bring comfort in her distress. She runs to him.

*When he saw her in the distance, the man of God said to his servant Gehazi, "Look! There's the Shunammite! <sup>26</sup> Run to meet her and ask her, 'Are you all right? Is your husband all right? Is your child all right?'"* "Everything is all right," she said. <sup>27</sup> *When she reached the man of God at the mountain, she took hold of his feet. Gehazi came over to push her away, but the man of God said, "Leave her alone! She is in bitter distress, but the Lord has hidden it from me and has not told me why."* <sup>28</sup> *"Did I ask you for a son, my lord?" she said. "Didn't I tell you, 'Don't raise my hopes?'"* <sup>29</sup> *Elisha said to Gehazi, "Tuck your cloak into your belt, take my staff in your hand and run. Don't greet anyone you meet, and if anyone greets you, do not answer. Lay my staff on the boy's face."* <sup>30</sup> *But the child's mother said, "As surely as the Lord lives and as you live, I will not leave you." So he got up and followed her. <sup>3</sup>* You can hear how the Shunammite woman isn't going to give up on going to the Lord. What a picture of faith! What an example for us when storms strike, when the dark clouds roll in we cry out to God, we don't let go, we don't let go of him and the promises he gives us.

It is not just her conviction and her clinging to God's servant that is so amazing. It is where she goes first! Do we go to the Lord first in prayer first or as a last resort? We pray to him in times of a pandemic, to be sure, but what happens when the pandemic subsides? When a kid is struggling, when the job is lost, when the spouse is near life's end, then we run to the Lord. But where are the prayers of thanksgiving for the child or the spouse or the job when things are going

<sup>2</sup> [The New International Version](#). (2011). (2 Ki 4:18–25). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

<sup>3</sup> [The New International Version](#). (2011). (2 Ki 4:25–30). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

well? Do we run to the Lord first and fast in the good times and the dark times? On this dark day in the Shunamite's life, notice what allows her to say Everything is all right, "She runs to the Lord first and fast? Do we do the same?"

Do you know what the Lord promises to do? He will help. Like a child calling out in distress to his or her Father for help, God our Father says, "Call upon me in the day of trouble, and I will deliver you." That doesn't mean he will always help in the way we expect. Remember the Gospel reading? Did Jesus jump up to go and help the Lazarus the moment he heard about him being sick? Jesus dawdled. From Mary and Martha's perspective, Jesus was late. Lazarus was dead for four days when Jesus arrived. Why didn't Jesus come sooner? It wasn't what they expected in their call for help. But you remember how that turned out.

Elisha sends Gehazi ahead to lay the staff of Elisha on the boy's face. Nothing. With a sullen face Gehazi, Elisha's servant, reports back to Elisha, "The boy has not awakened" (:31).

<sup>32</sup> When Elisha reached the house, there was the boy lying dead on his couch. <sup>33</sup> He went in, shut the door on the two of them and prayed to the Lord. <sup>34</sup> Then he got on the bed and lay on the boy, mouth to mouth, eyes to eyes, hands to hands. As he stretched himself out on him, the boy's body grew warm. <sup>35</sup> Elisha turned away and walked back and forth in the room and then got on the bed and stretched out on him once more. The boy sneezed seven times and opened his eyes.<sup>4</sup> You can picture the scene, can't you? Elijah is flummoxed as to what to do, he begins to pace and pray at the same time. Sometimes the Lord makes us pace as he carries out his plans for us. See what happened? In his own time and his own way, God brought this child back to life. Everything was all right because God helps in his own time and his own way.

Everything is all right because God helps in his own time and his own way. What a reminder in the times that we live in. The cases of the virus increase. The number of deaths rises in our country. It seems that the pockets of hot spots where it spreading is increasing and getting closer to home. Maybe you say, "All is fine, everything is all right" but anxious or nervous, or depressed describes things you are dealing with on the inside.

What happens when events around us leave us with a feeling worried, scared? What happens when tragedy strikes close to home and the dark clouds roll in? What is our plan? Can we really say, "Everything is all right?" What is our plan? Do we rely on a multi-faceted approach to rescue us, to allow us to say "all is well." Do we rely on modern medicine? A Stimulus package and Some wisdom from county and government leaders and health officials? To be sure, all of these can be blessings from God, leaders should be respected, medicine and stimulus dollars can be used to God's glory. But does the execution of vaccines and stimulus bills make everything all right?

Like Elisha who thought it would be as easy as a staff on the face of the dead boy, we can wish that our biggest problems can go away with our plans. But God's plan is often different. God's plan was certainly different in the face of the greatest tragedy, the problem we are all trying to avoid - death itself. At just the right time, in his own way and on his own time, God sent his Son into this world. There were times when the people tried to stone Jesus to death, there were times when they tried to push him off a cliff. There were times they tried to make him their earthly king. There were times the disciples tried to talk him out of going to Jerusalem to die. In his own time and his own way, he went to the cross. He died the death that you and I deserved. He died for the times that you and I have failed to run to him first and fast. He died for the times we have questioned God's ways and God's timing. We run to him and cling to him, to him

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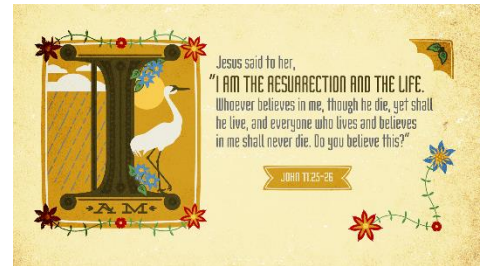
<sup>4</sup> [The New International Version](#). (2011). (2 Ki 4:32–35). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

who stands at the graveside and says, "I am the resurrection and the life, Whoever believes in me will live, even though he dies."

We cling to the promises of him who teaches us to run to him first and fast. We cling to the promises of a God who in his own way and his own time made the statement of a grieving mom come true, "Everything is all right."

Maybe we struggled with saying "Everything is all right" in the present. Maybe we are overwhelmed by the moment of tragedy striking in the world at this time. Remember Jesus' famous words to Martha during first recorded visit, "Martha, you are worried and upset about so many things, but your sister has chosen the one thing needful." Mary was listening at Jesus' feet. But in the gospel reading for today, it is Martha who makes the beautiful statement of faith anyone can make. When Jesus asks Martha, "Do you believe your brother will rise?" She says, "I believe you are the Christ." Martha's faith shines brightly. In that statement she indicates that when your faith is in Jesus, the Christ, the Messiah, all is well." Her brother would rise and all would be made well with what is wrong someday.

Brothers and sisters, that is all in our confession that Jesus is our Savior. We fall at his feet, we run to him fast and first because we know he can help. We go to him knowing that he can help, does help in his own time and his own way. With Jesus, you can say it and believe, everything really is alright. Everything. Amen.



## OFFERING

*"On the first day of the week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money" –II Corinthians 16:2. Out of thanks to God, we set aside a regular offering to the Lord.*

***Peace Lutheran offers a secure Give by Text option. To donate via text, send the dollar amount you wish to give, including a dollar sign, to 888-314-2975. Example: \$40. You will receive a secure registration link.***

## CLOSING SONG

*When Peace Like a River*

♪ **When peace like a river attendeth my way,  
When sorrows like sea billows roll—  
Whatever my lot, thou hast taught me to say,  
It is well, it is well with my soul.**

**Refrain  
It is well (It is well) with my soul (with my soul).  
It is well, it is well with my soul.**

**2 My sin—oh, the bliss of this glorious thought—  
My sin, not in part, but the whole,  
Is nailed to the cross, and I bear it no more:  
Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, O my soul! Refrain**

**3 And, Lord, haste the day when my faith shall be sight,  
The clouds be rolled back as a scroll;  
The trump shall resound, and the Lord shall descend;  
Even so, it is well with my soul. Refrain**

## THE PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

Lord God, heavenly Father, whose Spirit gives us life, we glorify Your holy name. Because You have heard our prayers for the sake of Your living Son, we will call on You as long as we live. When we are brought low, You raise us up. You keep our eyes from tears and our feet from stumbling. We will walk in Your ways as long as we live.

Having become Your children through Christ, lead us by Your Spirit and help us to put to death the deeds of the flesh. Graciously enable us to live as Your children and heirs, without fear. In this hour of trial, help us to remember that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us.

When our hearts are hung with sorrow from losing a loved one, comfort us with the assurance of a reunion in heaven. Grant that we may be among those who will be raised to everlasting life through faith in Jesus Christ. As You raised Lazarus from the dead, so remove from us the fear of death. Increase our trust in You and remind us that temporal death is but the door to glorious life that will have no end. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

## THE LORD'S PRAYER

**C: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.**

## BLESSING

**M:** 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 SONG

*What Wondrous Love is This*

♪ And when from death I'm free, I'll sing on, I'll sing on;  
And when from death I'm free, I'll sing on.  
And when from death I'm free, I'll sing his love for me,  
And through eternity I'll sing on, I'll sing on,  
And through eternity I'll sing on.

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## OTHER READINGS FOR STUDY<sup>5</sup>

### Read Ezekiel 37:1-14

1. What tool was used in restoring life to the dead bones and is still used to revive spiritually dead souls?

### Read John 11:17-27, 38-45 (with children)

1. Look at John 11:15&39. Someone says, "I don't like crises. But I like the opportunities they supply." The death of Lazarus was certainly a crisis, but Jesus saw an opportunity (11:15). What did the disciples learn again?
2. What does Jesus mean by saying that he is life?
3. How would Mary and Martha see the glory of God in the raising of Lazarus?

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<sup>5</sup> [www.wels.net/worship/help/](http://www.wels.net/worship/help/)