

LENT 2026

# 5TH SUNDAY MARCH 22

God of the living and the grieving,  
We come to you carrying what is heavy—names we still speak in the present tense,  
losses that linger, sorrows that do not resolve on command.  
In Bethany, there was weeping.  
Mary and Martha aching.  
A community gathered in grief.  
A tomb sealed shut.  
And Jesus—you did not rush past it.  
You wept.  
You stood in the heartbreak of the world and did not turn away.  
God, teach us this holy courage: to stay present to grief—  
our own and others’—without needing to fix it too quickly.  
Because this is the dirty work of hope.  
It is showing up with casseroles and quiet presence.  
It is sitting in silence when words fail.  
It is tending to one another’s wounds with gentleness and time.  
It is believing that care itself is a form of resurrection work.  
You called Lazarus out of the tomb—but you also called the community  
to roll away the stone and to unbind what death had wrapped around him.  
You made healing a shared act.  
God, in a world aching with loss—personal grief, collective grief,  
visible and invisible—call us to be people who repair through love.  
When we feel powerless in the face of suffering,  
show us the small ways we can care.  
When we are tempted to withdraw, draw us closer to one another.  
When grief feels isolating, remind us we are not alone.  
Give us hands willing to serve, hearts willing to break open,  
and spirits willing to trust that even here—especially here—you are at work.  
And when we hear your voice still calling, “Come out,”  
help us be the ones who help loosen what binds, who make space for life to  
emerge again.  
In the name of Christ, who wept and who calls us into life, Amen.

## Journal Prompt – Grief and Repair

In John 11:1–45, Jesus weeps with those who mourn, and then invites the community to participate in restoring life: “Take away the stone... Unbind him.”

Reflect gently and honestly:

- What grief are you carrying right now—personal or collective?
- Where have you experienced the care of others as a source of healing?
- Who in your life or community might be in need of care, presence, or companionship?
- What is one small, tangible way you could participate in “repairing the world”?

Write without rushing to resolution. Grief is not something to fix—it is something to be held. And sometimes, the smallest acts of care are where hope quietly begins again.