

A CELEBRATION OF THE LIFE OF
LORETTA LYNN SMITH-JOHNSON
APRIL 28, 1975 – MAY 16, 2021
2:00PM
AUGUST 1, 2021

THE WORD OF GOD

Opening Words

Priest:

I am Resurrection and I am Life, says the Lord.
Whoever has faith in me shall have
life, even though he die.
And everyone who has life,
and has committed himself to me in faith,
shall not die for ever.

As for me, I know that my Redeemer lives
and that at the last he will stand upon the earth.
After my awaking, he will raise me up;
and in my body I shall see God.
I myself shall see, and my eyes behold
him who is my friend and not a stranger.

For none of us has life in himself,
and none becomes his own master when he
dies. For if we have life, we are alive in the
Lord, and if we die, we die in the Lord. So,
then, whether we live or die,
we are the Lord's possession.

Happy from now on
are those who die in the Lord!
So it is, says the Spirit,
for they rest from their labors.

Priest: The Lord be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Priest: Let us pray.

O God of grace and glory, we remember before you this day our sister, Loretta. We thank you for giving her to us, her family and friends, to know and to love as a companion on our earthly pilgrimage. In your boundless compassion, console us who mourn. Give us faith to see in death the gate of eternal life, so that in quiet confidence we may continue our course on earth, until, by your call, we are reunited with those who have gone before; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

THE LESSONS

The First Reading Lamentations 3:22-26, 31-33

Reader: Heather Bernabe

A Reading from the book of Lamentations.

The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. “The Lord is my portion,” says my soul, “therefore I will hope in him.” The Lord is good to those who wait for him, to the soul that seeks him. It is good that one should wait quietly for the salvation of the Lord. For the Lord will not reject forever. Although he causes grief, he will have compassion according to the abundance of his steadfast love; for he does not willingly afflict or grieve anyone.

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm 23

Reader: Sheri Flay

- 1 The LORD is my shepherd;*
 I shall not be in want.
- 2 He makes me lie down in green pastures *
 and leads me beside still waters.
- 3 He revives my soul *
 and guides me along right pathways for his Name's sake.
- 4 Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of
 death, I shall fear no evil; *
 for you are with me;
 your rod and your staff, they comfort me.
- 5 You spread a table before me in the presence of
 those who trouble me; *
 you have anointed my head with
 oil, and my cup is running over.
- 6 Surely your goodness and mercy shall follow me all the
 days of my life, *
 and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.

The Second Reading 2 Corinthians 4:16-5:9

Reader: Victoria Bennett

A Reading from the Second Letter of Paul to the Corinthians.

So we do not lose heart. Even though our outer nature is wasting away, our inner nature is being renewed day by day. For this slight momentary affliction is preparing us for an eternal weight of glory beyond all measure, because we look not at what can be seen but at what cannot be seen; for what can be seen is temporary, but what cannot be seen is eternal. For we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this tent we groan, longing to be clothed with our heavenly dwelling— if indeed, when we have taken it off we will not be found naked. For while we are still in this tent, we groan under our burden, because we wish not to be

unclothed but to be further clothed, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life. He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who has given us the Spirit as a guarantee. So we are always confident; even though we know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord— for we walk by faith, not by sight. Yes, we do have confidence, and we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord. So whether we are at home or away, we make it our aim to please him.

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

A Reading from the Gospel John 11:21-27

Priest: The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John.

People: **Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

Martha said to Jesus, “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. But even now I know that God will give you whatever you ask of him.” Jesus said to her, “Your brother will rise again.” Martha said to him, “I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day.” Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?” She said to him, “Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one coming into the world.”

Priest: The Gospel of the Lord.

People: **Praise to you, Lord Christ.**

Remembrances

David Peak

Homily

The Rev. Christopher Montella
Rector, St. Stephen’s Episcopal Church

Apostles Creed

In the assurance of eternal life given at Baptism, let us proclaim our faith and say,

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.

**He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
and born of the Virgin Mary.**

**He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.**

He descended to the dead.

On the third day he rose again.

**He ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.**

He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,**

**the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

The Prayers

Reader: Caroline Morgan

For our sister, Loretta, let us pray to our Lord Jesus Christ who said, "I am Resurrection and I am Life."

Intercessor: Lord, you consoled Martha and Mary in their distress; draw near to us who mourn for Loretta, and dry the tears of those who weep.

People: Hear us, Lord.

Intercessor: You wept at the grave of Lazarus, your friend; comfort us in our sorrow.

People: Hear us, Lord.

Intercessor: You raised the dead to life; give to our sister eternal life.

People: Hear us, Lord.

Intercessor: You promised paradise to the thief who repented; bring our sister to the joys of heaven.

People: Hear us, Lord.

Intercessor: Our sister was washed in Baptism and anointed with the Holy Spirit; give her fellowship with all your saints.

People: Hear us, Lord.

Intercessor: She was nourished with your Body and Blood; grant her a place at the table in your heavenly kingdom.

People: Hear us, Lord.

Intercessor: Comfort us in our sorrows at the death of our sister; let our faith be our consolation, and eternal life our hope.

People: Hear us, Lord.

Silence may be kept.

Priest:

Father of all, we pray to you for Loretta and for all those whom we love but see no longer. Grant to them eternal rest. Let light perpetual shine upon them. May her soul and the souls of all the departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. **Amen.**

Welcome

The Committal

Everyone the Father gives to me will come to me;
I will never turn away anyone who believes in me.

He who raised Jesus Christ from the dead
will also give new life to our mortal bodies
through his indwelling Spirit.

My heart, therefore, is glad, and my spirit rejoices;
my body also shall rest in hope.

You will show me the path of life;
in your presence there is fullness of joy,
and in your right hand are pleasures for evermore.

In sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life through our Lord Jesus Christ, we commend to Almighty God our sister Loretta, and we commit her body to the ground; earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust. The Lord bless her and keep her, the Lord make his face to shine upon her and be gracious to her, the Lord lift up his countenance upon her and give her peace. **Amen.**

Priest: The Lord be with you.
People: **And also with you.**
Priest: Let us pray.

**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,
for ever and ever. Amen.**

Priest: Rest eternal grant to her, O Lord;
People: **And let light perpetual shine upon her.**

May her soul, and the souls of all the departed,
through the mercy of God, rest in peace. **Amen.**

The Dismissal

Priest: Alleluia. Christ is risen.
People: **The Lord is risen indeed. Alleluia.**
Priest: Let us go forth in the name of Christ.
People: **Thanks be to God.**