**Call To Worship**

Come, all who seek comfort and hope, for the Lord is near.
**We come with our grief and our questions, longing for God’s presence.**
Jesus, the Resurrection and the Life, stands with us in our sorrow.
**He weeps with us, yet calls us to trust in His power.**Even in the face of death, Christ speaks words of life.
**We believe in His promise: those who trust in Him will never be lost.**Come, let us worship the One who holds life in His hands!
**We lift our voices in praise to the Lord of life!**

**Opening Prayer**

God of compassion and power, You see our sorrow and hear our cries.
Like Mary and Martha, we come with our burdens, wondering where You are in the midst of our struggles. Yet You remind us that You are the Resurrection and the Life. Even when we do not understand, help us to trust in Your love. Open our hearts to Your presence, so that we may find hope in Your promises and strength in Your grace. Amen.

**Please announce the Hymn of Praise**   #577 “God of Grace and God of Glory”

**Scripture Reading:**

John 11:1-7, 17-35 (CEB)

A certain man, Lazarus, was ill. He was from Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. (This was the Mary who anointed the Lord with fragrant oil and wiped his feet with her hair. Her brother Lazarus was ill.) So the sisters sent word to Jesus, saying, “Lord, the one whom you love is ill.” When he heard this, Jesus said, “This illness isn’t fatal. It’s for the glory of God so that God’s Son can be glorified through it.” Jesus loved Martha, her sister, and Lazarus. When he heard that Lazarus was ill, he stayed where he was. After two days, he said to his disciples, “Let’s return to Judea again.”

When Jesus arrived, he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four days. Bethany was a little less than two miles from Jerusalem. Many Jews had come to comfort Martha and Mary after their brother’s death. When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went to meet him, while Mary remained in the house.Martha said to Jesus, “Lord, if you had been here, my brother wouldn’t have died.Even now I know that whatever you ask God, God will give you.” Jesus told her, “Your brother will rise again.” Martha replied, “I know that he will rise in the resurrection on the last day.” Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me will live, even though they die. Everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?” She replied, “Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Christ, God’s Son, the one who is coming into the world.” After she said this, she went and spoke privately to her sister Mary, “The teacher is here and he’s calling for you.” When Mary heard this, she got up quickly and went to Jesus. He hadn’t entered the village but was still in the place where Martha had met him. When the Jews who were comforting Mary in the house saw her get up quickly and leave, they followed her. They assumed she was going to mourn at the tomb. When Mary arrived where Jesus was and saw him, she fell at his feet and said, “Lord, if you had been here, my brother wouldn’t have died.” When Jesus saw her crying and the Jews who had come with her crying also, he was deeply disturbed and troubled. He asked, “Where have you laid him?” They replied, “Lord, come and see.” Jesus began to cry.

The words of God for the people of God.  **Thanks be to God.**