

From the Pews, Jade Fountain

“They say, ‘Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost; we are cut off completely.’ – Ezekiel 37:11b

I have put off writing this *Harbinger* cover for a while now, not quite sure what to make of the scripture passages we were given. And then coronavirus came and turned our world upside down. So not quite true to form for me, I have waited until the night before this was due to put pen to paper. I looked at the scriptures anew, and the line above leapt off the page. I’m sure there are many right now who feel as I do – who feel like we are “completely cut off” and “our hope is lost.”

In my quiet time lately, I have found myself asking, “Where are you God?” “What is this all for?”

Perhaps the answer lies in our second passage – “...we also boast in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us, because God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.” (Romans 5:3-5)

If you find yourself like me in the coming weeks – feeling cut off and wondering where God is in all of this upheaval – join me in breathing in the breath of the Holy Spirit and remembering that God’s love is in our hearts, and hope in Him can never leave us disappointed.



Prayer of Preparation

“And if even illusion has so much power in people’s lives that it can keep life moving, how great a power there is in a hope that is based on certainty, and how invincible a life with such a hope is. ‘Christ our hope’—this Pauline formula is the strength of our lives.”

Dietrich Bonhoeffer, 20th century German theologian

Gathering and Preparing for God’s Word

Prelude

Welcome & Announcements

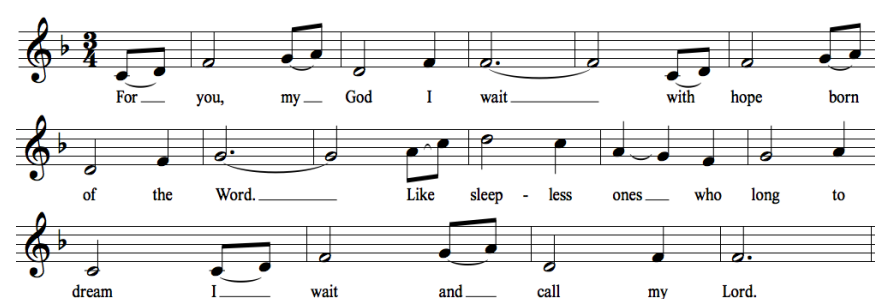
Organ Voluntary, “Our God, Our Help in Ages Past”

Young

Sentences of Scripture

Morning Prayers

Following petitions a refrain from Psalm 130 will be sung.



The Lord’s Prayer

**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 debts
as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.**

**For thine is the kingdom, and the power,
and the glory, forever. Amen.**

Hearing God’s Word

Prayer for Illumination

Old Testament Lesson, *Ezekiel 37:1-3, 11-14*

Moment for Children

New Testament Lesson, *Romans 5:1-5*

Homily, “Does Hope Disappoint Us?”

Solo, “How Can I Keep from Singing?”

arr. DeFord

Responding to God’s Word

Affirmation of Faith, *The Heidelberg Catechism (excerpts)*

Q. 1: What is your only comfort in life and in death?

Answer: That I am not my own,
but belong —
body and soul,
in life and in death —
to my faithful Savior, Jesus Christ.

Q. 28: How does the knowledge of
God’s creation and providence help us?

Answer: We can be patient when things go against us,
thankful when things go well,
and for the future we can have good confidence
in our faithful God and Father
that nothing in creation will separate us from his love.

Musical Response

Charge and Benediction