

ADVENT EVENING PRAYER 2021: **DECEMBER 9**

**ADVENT II** + *Destination: Joy* + *Bump in the Road*

**SCRIPTURE READING**

Ezekiel 37:1-14

The hand of the Lord came upon me, and he brought me out by the spirit of the Lord and set me down in the middle of a valley; it was full of bones. He led me all around them; there were very many lying in the valley, and they were very dry. He said to me, "Mortal, can these bones live?" I answered, "O Lord God, you know." Then he said to me, "Prophecy to these bones, and say to them: O dry bones, hear the word of the Lord. Thus says the Lord God to these bones: I will cause breath to enter you, and you shall live. I will lay sinews on you, and will cause flesh to come upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and you shall live; and you shall know that I am the Lord."

So I prophesied as I had been commanded; and as I prophesied, suddenly there was a noise, a rattling, and the bones came together, bone to its bone. I looked, and there were sinews on them, and flesh had come upon them, and skin had covered them; but there was no breath in them. Then he said to me, "Prophecy to the breath, prophesy, mortal, and say to the breath: Thus says the Lord God: Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live." I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood on their feet, a vast multitude.

Then he said to me, "Mortal, these bones are the whole house of Israel. They say, 'Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost; we are cut off completely.' Therefore prophesy, and say to them, Thus says the Lord God: I am going to open your graves, and bring you up from your graves, O my people; and I will bring you back to the land of Israel. And you shall know that I am the Lord, when I open your graves, and bring you up from your graves, O my people. I will put my spirit within you, and you shall live, and I will place you on your own soil; then you shall know that I, the Lord, have spoken and will act."

## **SOLO** *Be Born in Me*

### **During SOLO: REFLECTION and INSTRUCTION**

1. *Think about something that feels like a dead-end to you. What had you hoped for, but have given up on?*
2. *What life could come out of this “dead-end”?*
3. *Where do you need God to resurrect joy? How do you need God to resurrect joy?*

### **After SOLO: PRAYER STATION and CANDLE-LIGHTING**

*On the paper, write down something that looks like a dead end to you - a disappointment; something you have given up on that you hoped would be different.*

*On the table are shreds of paper “soil”. Bury the bone so that God can dig it out, breathe Spirit, and fill it up with new life. The mist/wind represents the breath of God, reminding us that even in places of death and dead ends God’s spirit is moving.*

### **PRAYER**

Gathering our many prayers into one, let us pray.

**Settle our hearts, O God,  
to prepare a pathway for your Christ.  
By his coming speak peace to your people  
and turn out hearts toward you,  
that your steadfast love and faithfulness  
may bring joy to all the earth.  
Amen.**

The light shines in the darkness.

**And the darkness has not overcome it.**

*Continue worship with The Annunciation on page 8 of the songbook.*

*Prayer adapted from Holden Prayer Around the Cross: Handbook to the Liturgy, In Silence We Wait. Prayer for Advent, p.66.*