

## **Lenten Devotional February 18, 2021**

### **Scripture**

Psalm 102

*1 Hear my prayer, O LORD; let my cry come to you. 2 Do not hide your face from me in the day of my distress. Incline your ear to me; answer me speedily in the day when I call. 3 For my days pass away like smoke, and my bones burn like a furnace. 4 My heart is stricken and withered like grass; I am too wasted to eat my bread. 5 Because of my loud groaning my bones cling to my skin. 6 I am like an owl of the wilderness, like a little owl of the waste places. 7 I lie awake; I am like a lonely bird on the housetop. 8 All day long my enemies taunt me; those who deride me use my name for a curse. 9 For I eat ashes like bread, and mingle tears with my drink, 10 because of your indignation and anger; for you have lifted me up and thrown me aside. 11 My days are like an evening shadow; I wither away like grass. 12 But you, O LORD, are enthroned forever; your name endures to all generations. 13 You will rise up and have compassion on Zion, for it is time to favor it; the appointed time has come. 14 For your servants hold its stones dear, and have pity on its dust. 15 The nations will fear the name of the LORD, and all the kings of the earth your glory. 16 For the LORD will build up Zion; he will appear in his glory. 17 He will regard the prayer of the destitute, and will not despise their prayer. 18 Let this be recorded for a generation to come, so that a people yet unborn may praise the LORD: 19 that he looked down from his holy height, from heaven the LORD looked at the earth, 20 to hear the groans of the prisoners, to set free those who were doomed to die; 21 so that the name of the LORD may be declared in Zion, and his praise in Jerusalem, 22 when peoples gather together, and kingdoms, to worship the LORD. 23 He has broken my strength in midcourse; he has shortened my days. 24 "O my God," I say, "do not take me away at the mid-point of my life, you whose years endure throughout all generations." 25 Long ago you laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands. 26 They will perish, but you endure; they will all wear out like a garment. You change them like clothing, and they pass away; 27 but you are the same, and your years have no end. 28 The children of your servants shall live secure; their offspring shall be established in your presence.*

### **Devotional**

#### **The Rev. Rebecca Dix '15/'16**

"For my days pass away like smoke, and my bones burn like a furnace . . . I wither away like grass" (vv. 3, 11b). When time does its job well, what tends to be left behind are our bones.

We place a lot of trust in bones. They house and protect many vital organs. They provide structure, support, and enable mobility. If a house is solid and trustworthy to weather tempests and time, we say it has "good bones." And in a number of cultures and civilizations, bones were depended on for tools, crafts, agriculture, and medicine. Bones have played a vital role in our current existence and also in learning about where we have been as a human species.

Yet as formidable and important as they seem, even bones are not permanent. Bones ache and break. They burn. One day they hold us upright, the next they pull us down. Back to the earth. Back to the dust. Back to the beginning.

Even our bones will perish and pass away. So during this Lenten season, place your trust in something that has weathered all time. Place your trust in the One who laid the foundation of the earth.

### **Prayer**

God who hears the groans from our weary hearts and who knows the worn aches of our bones, whose name endures to all generations, hear our prayers. Walk with us as our days lengthen like evening shadows, and fix our sight on you alone. In Christ's name we pray. Amen.