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# WORSHIP AT HOME

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## Prelude

## Lighting the Candles

You are the Light of the World. Let your light shine in such a way that you see in your neighbor what which you see in your self. This is how to love neighbor as self!

## Special Music

You are the Salt of the Earth. Sing the song of Life that offers the cure for sin, which preserves Life, and adds Love flavoring to the bitterness of shame, guilt, and blame.

## Prayer of Confession: Who am I Following?

Lord, I believe Jesus Christ is the Son of God. I believe Jesus forgives sins, conquers death, offers eternal life, and promises me a mansion in heaven. Lord, I believe, but who am I following? Who leads my thoughts and shows me the way to fulfill the desires of my heart?

Who would you have me follow? Does following the Teachers of the Law fulfill the Law? Does following the Pharisees moral practices fulfill the Law of Moses? Is there a distinction between respecting world, national, or civil authorities and following Jesus to bring His Kingdom from heaven to earth? Lord, lead me

not into temptation of following the World, but deliver me to see who I follow.

## Prayer of Repentance: Denying Myself Everyone but Jesus.

Father, your son tells us to leave our sacrificial offerings at the Altar. How many times have people we thought we could trust led us like sheep to the be slaughtered on the altars of justice, retribution, and restitution? Lord, in your mercy, lead us to deny our shame, guilt and reasons for blame. Teach us to pray for those who persecute us and offer ourselves patient love when confronted by our enemies.



## Prayer of Reconciliation: Taking up my Cross.

Lord we know how to bear shame and guilt. Our lives are littered with people we have sacrificed on the altar of blame. Lord of Mercy, in your grace, show us the way to do unto our neighbors what we would have them do unto us, especially when our neighbors seek to sacrifice us.

The Lord's Prayer

## Hearing the Word: Matthew 16

**When our dust settles to earth the wind will remain Life Giving and Life Receiving.**

**24** Then Jesus said to his disciples, "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. **25** For whoever wants to save their life<sup>[f]</sup> will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will find it. **26** What good will it be for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul? Or what can anyone give in exchange for their soul? **27** For the Son of Man is going to come in his Father's glory with his angels, and then he will reward each person according to what they have done.

### Special Music

ROBERT

## Message: Rest for the Journey

Wednesday marks the beginning of Lent. We don't really need to gather in the sanctuary, make the sign of Jesus' cross with ashes, either on our foreheads or hands, to acknowledge human suffering. Look inside your heart and mind! The suffering and death we see and hear in our world has made its home in us. The divisions, conspiracies, right wings, left wings and wrongs wings...evil make their home in our hearts and minds. Have we considered that Jesus came to save our souls from our broken hearts and troubled minds?

Where is Jesus' blessed comfort for those who mourn? When will the meek rise and lead warring, greedy, self-righteous people to inherit the earth? Have we forgotten that God made us of dust and breathed into us Life? When will we listen, hear, heed, and follow the Word who is "Eternal Life." Like the band Kansas sings, "All we are is dust in the wind." When our dust settles to earth the Wind will remain Life Giving and Life Receiving.

Ash Wednesday begins a 40 day journey, excluding Sundays. The intent of the journey is to save our souls from our hearts and minds. By "save" I mean the journey delivers us from fear of sin and death to heal us. Stopping our journey when we experience being delivered from sin would be like Jesus remaining forever in the Garden of Gethsemane. Jesus didn't stop. The Holy Spirit delivered Him to the cross. The death he died was to sin. Sin was buried in the tomb — he is the meek who inherits the earth. He rises to New Life. He reveals exactly what Kansas sings, "all we are is dust in the wind".

Jesus, however, shows us that the Wind who stirs up a dust storm is Life, Eternal. He is the Word that became a body of dust in the wind. The wind, breath, spirit is life giving and life receiving. Lent prepare us for the revelation of Eternal Life as revealed through Jesus' suffering, death, and resurrection. For the Life of us, the Cross blinds the world from seeing that Jesus meets suffering with mercy. Mercy is the death of Sin; The narrow door that opens to Life in Grace. He rises to eternal life. On the first day of the week, Sunday, he rises as Life, Eternal.

I hear Jesus give The Roadmap of Life to his Disciples. "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life will find it." Matthew 16: 24 -25

Each Sunday I hope to offer rest for the Journey of Life! I see Rest Stops in Matthew 5, 6, and 7. Let us practice being dust in the wind that inherits the earth and rises to Life.

**Rest Stop 1: Who are you following?** Matthew 5: 20, For I tell you that unless your **righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law**, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven.

**Rest Stop 2: Deny your self!** Matthew 5: 23, "Therefore, if you are offering your **gift at the altar** and there remember that your brother or sister has something against

you, **24** leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and **be reconciled** to them; then come and offer your gift.

**Rest Stop 3: Take up your Cross!** Matthew 6: 1 “Be careful not to practice your righteousness in front of others to be seen by them. If you do, you will have no reward from your Father in heaven.

**Rest Stop 4: Follow Jesus** Matthew 7: 12 “In everything do to others as you would have them do to you; for this is the Law and the Prophets.

## Tithes and Offerings

## Postlude