

GOOD FRIDAY
April 2nd, 2021 • 7:15 p.m.

This day is the second portion of the Liturgy of the Three Days which extends from Maundy Thursday through Easter Evening. As the church gathers to remember the death of Jesus, we focus not only upon the agony of the cross but especially upon God's victory through the crucified. Even more, we "lift high the cross" as the sign of God's triumph over sin, death, and evil.

We begin our liturgy in silence. What was begun on Maundy Thursday continues this day as we journey with our Savior from the Last Supper, the stripping and humiliation, to the cross and tomb. Good Friday is the second day of the Triduum, the "Three Sacred Days" of Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Holy Saturday with its Vigil of Easter.

The Good Friday Liturgy is marked with austerity, silence and reflection. The chancel itself is bare from the Maundy Thursday stripping. Everything focuses on our adoration of the crucified Christ, reigning from the throne of the cross.

The opening portion of the liturgy includes no praise. It proceeds directly to the Prayer of the Day. It is a simplified version of the Sunday Liturgy of the Word. The chief acts are the reading of the Passion of St. John and the Bidding Prayer for the needs of our world.

A large cross, which vividly portrays the events of this day, is then brought into the church to become the focus of our adoration of the crucified Christ, central to our meditations in Word and in silence. The closing prayer emphasizes the triumph and redemption that comes through the cross.

All then depart in silence without the Benediction. Christ's death is not God's final word. We gather for the Feast of the Resurrection at 10:15 a.m. on Sunday morning.



St. Agatha Society

SERVICE OF THE WORD
***from* EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN WORSHIP**

* = For those who are able, please stand.

All gather in silence.

GATHERING POEM

What Abides: for Good Friday

You will know
this blessing
by how it
does not stay still,
by the way it
refuses to rest
in one place.

You will recognize it
by how it takes
first one form,
then another:

now running down
the face of the mother
who watches the breaking
of the child
she had borne,

now in the stance
of the woman
who followed him here
and will not leave him
bereft.

Now it twists in anguish
on the mouth of the friend
whom he loved;

now it bares itself
in the wound,
the cry,
the finishing and
final breath.

This blessing
is not in any one
of these alone.

It is what
binds them
together.

It is what dwells
in the space
between them,
though it be torn
and gaping.

It is what abides
in the tear.

MUSICAL MEDITATION

“Largo” from *Sonata*

Eccles

*PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray. Almighty God, we ask you to look with mercy on your family for whom our Lord Jesus Christ was willing to be betrayed and to be given over to the hands of sinners and to suffer death on the cross; who now lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. **Amen**

*HYMN

What Wondrous Love
(Sung by leader)

1 What wondrous love is this,
O my soul, O my soul!
What wondrous love is this, O my soul!
What wondrous love is this
that caused the Lord of bliss
to bear the dreadful curse
for my soul, for my soul,
to bear the dreadful curse for my soul?

2 When I was sinking down,
sinking down, sinking down,
when I was sinking down, sinking down,
when I was sinking down
beneath God's righteous frown,
Christ laid aside his crown
for my soul, for my soul,
Christ laid aside his crown for my soul.

3 To God and to the Lamb
I will sing, I will sing;
to God and to the Lamb I will sing;
to God and to the Lamb,
who is the great I AM,
while millions join the theme,
I will sing, I will sing,
while millions join the theme, I will sing.

4 And when from death I'm free,
I'll sing on, I'll sing on;
and when from death I'm free, I'll sing on;
and when from death I'm free,
I'll sing God's love for me,
and through eternity
I'll sing on, I'll sing on;
and through eternity I'll sing on.

Text: North American folk hymn, 19th cent., alt.



"This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, says the Lord: I will put my laws in their hearts, and I will write them on their minds,"

he also adds,

"I will remember their sins and their lawless deeds no more."

Where there is forgiveness of these, there is no longer any offering for sin.

Therefore, my friends, since we have confidence to enter the sanctuary by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain (that is, through his flesh), and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us approach with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast to the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who has promised is faithful. And let us consider how to provoke one another to love and good deeds, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

THE PASSION OF OUR LORD

ACCORDING TO ST. JOHN

John 19:1-37

Silence while the first pair of candles is extinguished.

John 19:1-7

Then Pilate took Jesus and had him flogged. And the soldiers wove a crown of thorns and put it on his head, and they dressed him in a purple robe. They kept coming up to him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" and striking him on the face. Pilate went out again and said to them, "Look, I am bringing him out to you to let you know that I find no case against him." So Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, "Here is the man!" When the chief priests and the police saw him, they shouted, "Crucify him! Crucify him!" Pilate said to them, "Take him yourselves and crucify him; I find no case against him." The Jews answered him, "We have a law, and according to that law he ought to die because he has claimed to be the Son of God."

Silence while the second pair of candles is extinguished.

John 19:8-12

Now when Pilate heard this, he was more afraid than ever. He entered his headquarters again and asked Jesus, "Where are you from?" But Jesus gave him no answer. Pilate therefore said to him, "Do you refuse to speak to me? Do you not know that I have power to release you, and power to crucify you?" Jesus answered him, "You would have no power over me unless it had been given you from above; therefore the one who handed me over to you is guilty of a greater sin." From then on Pilate tried to release him, but the Jews cried out, "If you release this man, you are no friend of the emperor. Everyone who claims to be a king sets himself against the emperor."

Silence while the third pair of candles is extinguished.

John 19:13-16a

When Pilate heard these words, he brought Jesus outside and sat on the judge's bench at a place called The Stone Pavement, or in Hebrew Gabbatha. Now it was the day of Preparation for the Passover; and it was about noon. He said to the Jews, "Here is your King!" They cried out, "Away with him! Away with him! Crucify him!" Pilate asked them, "Shall I crucify your King?" The chief priests answered, "We have no king but the emperor." Then he handed him over to them to be crucified.

Silence while the fourth pair of candles is extinguished.

HYMN

Were You There

Sung by leader

1 Were you there when they crucified my Lord?
Were you there when they crucified my Lord?
Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble,
tremble.
Were you there when they crucified my Lord?

John 19:16b-22

So they took Jesus; and carrying the cross by himself, he went out to what is called The Place of the Skull, which in Hebrew is called Golgotha. There they crucified him, and with him two others, one on either side, with Jesus between them. Pilate also had an inscription written and put on the cross. It read, "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews." Many of the Jews read this inscription, because the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city; and it was written in Hebrew, in Latin, and in Greek. Then the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate, "Do not write, 'The King of the Jews,' but, 'This man said, I am King of the Jews.' " Pilate answered, "What I have written I have written."

Silence while the fifth pair of candles is extinguished.

HYMN

Were You There

Sung by leader

2 Were you there when they nailed him to the tree?
Were you there when they nailed him to the tree?
Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble,
tremble.
Were you there when they nailed him to the tree?

John 19:23-25a

When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took his clothes and divided them into four parts, one for each soldier. They also took his tunic; now the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece from the top. So they said to one another, "Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it to see who will get it." This was to fulfill what the scripture says,

"They divided my clothes among themselves,
and for my clothing they cast lots."

And that is what the soldiers did.

Silence while the sixth pair of candles is extinguished.

John 19:25b-27

Meanwhile, standing near the cross of Jesus were his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing beside her, he said to his mother, "Woman, here is your son." Then he said to the disciple, "Here is your mother." And from that hour the disciple took her into his own home.

Silence while the seventh pair of candles is extinguished.

John 19:28-30

After this, when Jesus knew that all was now finished, he said (in order to fulfill the scripture), "I am thirsty." A jar full of sour wine was standing there. So they put a sponge full of the wine on a branch of hyssop and held it to his mouth. When Jesus had received the wine, he said, "It is finished." Then he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

Silence while the large Christ candle is removed.

MUSICAL MEDITATION

When I Am Laid in Earth

Purcell

John 19:31-37

Since it was the day of Preparation, the Jews did not want the bodies left on the cross during the sabbath, especially because that sabbath was a day of great solemnity. So they asked Pilate to have the legs of the crucified men broken and the bodies removed. Then the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first and of the other who had been crucified with him. But when they came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. Instead, one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once blood and water came out. (He who saw this has testified so that you also may believe. His testimony is true, and he knows that he tells the truth.) These things occurred so that the scripture might be fulfilled, "None of his bones shall be broken." And again another passage of scripture says, "They will look on the one whom they have pierced."

HYMN

Were You There

Sung by leader

3 Were you there when they pierced him in the side?
Were you there when they pierced him in the side?
Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble,
tremble.
Were you there when they pierced him in the side?

GOOD FRIDAY MEDITATION

HYMN

Were You There

Sung by leader

4 Were you there when the sun refused to shine?
Were you there when the sun refused to shine?
Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble,
tremble.
Were you there when the sun refused to shine?

5 Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?
Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?
Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble,
tremble.
Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?

Text: African American spiritual

*INTERCESSORY PRAYERS

- A Let us pray for the one holy catholic and apostolic Church of Christ throughout the world: for its unity in witness and service, for all bishops and other ministers and the people whom they serve, for all Christians in these communities, that God will confirm the Church in faith, increase it in love, and preserve it in peace.
- P Faithful and compassionate God, your Spirit guides the Church and makes it holy; hear the prayers we offer, that in the particular ministries to which you have called us, we may serve you faithfully, through Jesus Christ our Savior. **Amen.**
- A Let us pray for all nations and peoples of the earth, and for those in authority among them: and for the governments of our towns, state and nation, for all who serve the common good, that by God's help they may seek justice and truth, that all might live in peace and harmony.
- P Faithful and compassionate God, kindle, we pray, in every heart the true love of peace, and guide with your wisdom those in authority, that justice, peace, and freedom may increase, until the earth is filled with the knowledge of your love; through Jesus Christ our Savior. **Amen.**
- A Let us pray for all who suffer: for the hungry and the homeless, the deprived and the oppressed, for the sick, the wounded, and the disabled and challenged, for those in loneliness and in fear, for those in confusion, doubt, and despair, for the sorrowful and bereaved, for prisoners, and all at the point of death, that God's love will comfort and sustain them, and that we may be stirred up to minister to them.
- P Faithful and compassionate God, the comfort of all who sorrow, the strength of all who suffer, hear the cry of all who call on you in any trouble, grant them the joy of receiving your help in their need, and give us, we pray, the strength to serve them, through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

A Let us pray for all who do not believe the gospel of Christ: for those who have never heard the message of salvation, for those who have lost their faith, for those who are indifferent to Christ, for those who actively oppose Christ by word or deed, and persecute Christ's disciples, for those who in the name of Christ have persecuted others, that God will open their hearts to the truth, and lead them to faith and obedience.

P Faithful and compassionate God, you create and love all the peoples of the earth; may your good news be so lived and proclaimed, that all are brought home to your presence, through Jesus Christ our Savior. **Amen.**

A Let us commit ourselves to God, and pray for the grace of a holy life, that with all who have died in the peace of Christ, and with those whose faith is known to God alone, we may enter the fullness of life in the joy of Christ's resurrection.

P God, our refuge and strength, accept the fervent prayers of your people, and bring to fulfillment your plan for all creation, through Jesus Christ your Firstborn, who is alive with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

*LORD'S PRAYER

Spoken softly by the congregation.

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

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;

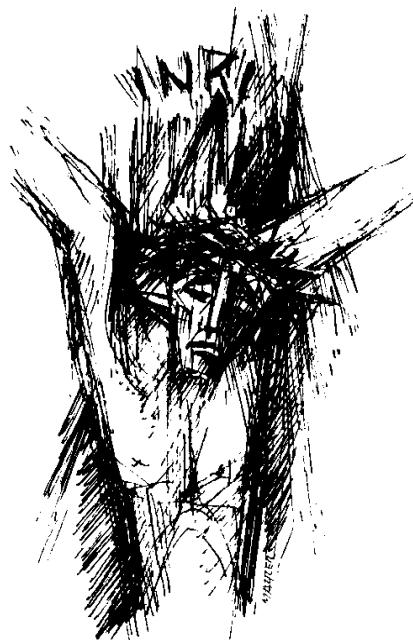
and forgive us our trespasses,

**as we forgive those
who trespass against us;**

**and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.**

For thine is the kingdom,

**and the power, and the glory,
forever and ever. Amen**



*PRESENTATION OF THE CROSS

Behold the life-giving cross, on which was hung the Savior of the whole world.
Oh, come, let us worship him.

Behold the life-giving cross, on which was hung the Savior of the whole world.
Oh, come, let us worship him.

Behold the life-giving cross, on which was hung the Savior of the whole world.
Oh, come, let us worship him.

A brief time of silence is observed. Then the following is prayed responsively by the presiding minister and assisting minister.

A We glory in your cross, O Lord,
and we praise your holy resurrection,
for by your cross joy has come into the world.

P May God be merciful and bless us;
may the light of God's face shine upon us.
Let your way be known upon earth,
your saving health among all nations.

A We glory in your cross, O Lord,
and we praise your holy resurrection,
for by your cross joy has come into the world.

P Let the peoples praise you, O God;
let all the peoples praise you.
May God give us blessing,
and may all the ends of the earth stand in awe.

A We glory in your cross, O Lord,
and we praise your holy resurrection,
for by your cross joy has come into the world.

After a brief silence, the presiding minister continues.

A We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.

P By your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

VOCAL SOLO

“Christ, We Do All Adore Thee”
from *The Seven Last Words of Christ*

DuBois

All depart in silence. Worshipers may reverence the cross before leaving.



SERVING IN THE LITURGY

PRESIDING MINISTER

Dennis Lauritsen, pastor

ASSISTING MINISTER

Charles Matthies

MUSIC MINISTER

David Richards

SERVICE LEADER

Jane Lauritsen

CELLIST

Isabelle Boike

VIOLINIST

Kristine Boike

LECTORS

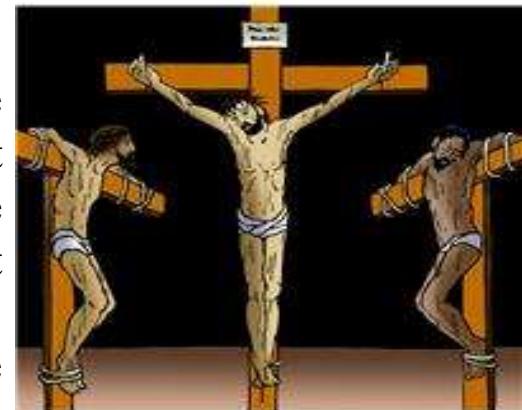
John Broussard and Tom Michaels

USHER

John Kostelny

FIND STRENGTH AND HOPE IN THE CROSS

It is difficult as we kneel before the cross to hear the voice of the gospel. We might imagine that it waits for us at Eastertide, that tonight the law says its peace and come Sunday the gospel will finally win the day, but that is not so. The gospel spells freedom for those held captive to sin. The resurrection only matters for those who know they are dead.



We, who are both saints and sinners, kneel before the cross today or tonight and hear it speaking to us as both verdict and promise. It is true: each of us is guilty of our participation in the world's suffering. We, each bearing the image and likeness of God in our very skin, do not respect that image in one another, much less the world we inhabit, God's good garden.

We do not respect God's creations—one another, or the world we live in. We put one another on the crosses at which Jesus now joins us. We must admit this or there is no need for the salvation Christ brings. We must admit we are in bondage to these patterns of human violence and environmental degradation before we can be liberated from them.

This is the promise of Good Friday: we will be liberated from these crosses—the ones we hang on and the ones on which we hang one another. These crosses, at once symbols of the divisions between us and a symbol of the end to all divisions, promise that God will not abandon us in our suffering. God comes to us just like this, just as we are, but God does not leave us this way. This is the cross—evidence of our sin, and sign of God's love.

A Worship Note on the Passion Narrative of the Gospel of John

When listening to the reading of John's Gospel on Good Friday, it is essential to remember that the passion narratives of each canonical gospel do not offer eyewitness accounts of the events of Holy Week but were written through four theological "lenses" which need to be regarded as presentations of these events, the earliest of which was written at least three decades after the historical occurrences. The final composition of John's Gospel, which we hear on Good Friday, may be dated as late as 90-100 CE, some sixty years after Jesus' crucifixion.

The apparent hostility toward "the Jews" (which could be translated more accurately as "the Judeans" or "Jewish leaders"), reflected in the writings of the gospels, especially the Gospel of John, stemmed from virulent tensions *within* Judaism at the time leading up to and following the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple by the Romans between 66-70 CE. Some scholars believe that the Gospel of John is reflective of an intra-Jewish debate which involved various strains of first century Judaism, specifically Pharisaic and Christian Judaism. When we listen to John's account, we are overhearing one side of a painful, fierce *family debate* within Israel about the significance of Jesus. In some instances, we are hearing a minority movement within Israel ("Christian Judaism") arguing with an emerging religious majority ("Pharisaic Judaism") over who is truly faithful to the Torah.

It is an interpretive perversion for contemporary Christians, in our majority position, with so much persecution of the Jewish people in our past, to align ourselves with New Testament critics of "the Jews" as if the writings of the New Testament, written almost entirely by Jewish authors, were taking a superior attitude toward Jesus' own people. Jesus' trial, suffering and death, as portrayed in the gospel accounts, resulted from the collusion of both Jewish and Roman authorities. For Christians to blame all Jewish people throughout history for the actions of a few of Israel's leaders at the time of Jesus is, to say the least, a tragic misreading of history. Crucifixion was a vicious form of Roman execution; and many Jewish people suffered the same fate as Jesus at the hands of the Roman occupiers.

When the Gospel of John refers to "the Jews" this did not include the majority of the Jewish people; in fact, it involved only a very few who, in the eyes of the gospel writer, were representative of a rival faction *within* Judaism. For the church to turn on and to persecute Jesus' own people is a terrible act of apostasy and sin against the very people who taught the world to look for the Messiah and gave us the Scriptures to show us the way. As Christians, we would do well to remember that we are, in Paul's words, "a branch" grafted into the "olive tree" of Judaism. We remain cousins who share a common history, tradition and faith.—djl

