

GOOD FRIDAY

First Lutheran Church, Lynn, MA
April 2, 2021



Last night we dispersed in silence—no sending song, no blessing or dismissal, only the rustle of jackets, the sound of feet, freshly washed and covered again, moving into the night.

Now, as if waiting our return, the silence receives us and invites us more deeply into the empty room, the unfolding story, the widening hour, the mystery of faith.

**The church gathers not to mourn this night
but to celebrate Christ's life-giving passion
and to find strength and hope in the tree of life.**

As he promised, Jesus draws all people and all things to himself and to the heart of God.
There we rest, like grains of wheat buried in the earth, awaiting the joyful harvest.

Welcome to worship!

Yes, *this is worship!* It is not the way any of us *want* it to be, but God is alive and present in this virtual gathering. God's work will still speak to us through the Holy Spirit, and we are still the Body of Christ, joined together in a fellowship of love, even if it is not in person.

Create a sacred space in your home.

Gather around your empty home altar. If you have a simple wooden cross in your home, have this ready. If you don't have a cross, you can make one from branches outside. It is traditional to not light candles until the new fire is kindled at the Easter Vigil. Welcome the presence of God into your dwelling. Set aside this time for worship as if you were in church. Put away the cell phone (unless you are watching on your cell phone!) Adopt a posture of prayer that works for you.

We gather in silence on this solemn night.

PRELUDE

Chorale Preludes on DA JESUS AN DEM KREUZE STUND
J. S. Bach

ENTRANCE

The minister enters and lays prostrate before the altar in worship of the crucified Christ.
***During this time you are invited to bow your head,
or take any posture of worship and adoration.***

PRAYER OF THE DAY

FIRST READING

Isaiah 52:13-53:12

See, my servant shall prosper; he shall be exalted and lifted up, and shall be very high. Just as there were many who were astonished at him — so marred was his appearance, beyond human semblance, and his form beyond that of mortals — so he shall startle many nations; kings shall shut their mouths because of him; for that which had not been told them they shall see, and that which they had not heard they shall contemplate.

Who has believed what we have heard? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed? For he grew up before him like a young plant, and like a root out of dry ground; he had no form or majesty that we should look at him, nothing in his appearance that we should desire him. He was despised and rejected by others; a man of suffering and acquainted with infirmity; and as one from whom others hide their faces he was despised, and we held him of no account.

Surely he has borne our infirmities and carried our diseases; yet we accounted him stricken, struck down by God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the punishment that made us whole, and by his bruises we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have all turned to our own way, and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

How do Christians understand all that it can mean that Jesus was executed? The three readings on Good Friday present different Biblical pictures of the religious meaning of the death of Christ. We layer these pictures on top of each other, so as to grasp the mystery with several different handles, to glimpse the jewel through several of its facets.

PSALM

Psalm 22

He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth. By a perversion of justice he was taken away. Who could have imagined his future? For he was cut off from the land of the living, stricken for the transgression of my people. They made his grave with the wicked and his tomb with the rich, although he had done no violence, and there was no deceit in his mouth.

The righteous one, my servant, shall make many righteous, and he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore I will allot him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he poured out himself to death, and was numbered with the transgressors; yet he bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.



My God, my God, why have you a - ban - doned me?

1. All who see me deride me; they curl their lips, they toss their heads:
"He trusted in the Lord, let him save him; let him release him, for in him he delights."
2. For dogs have surrounded me, a band of the wicked besets me.
They tear holes in my hands and my feet; I can count ev'ry one of my bones.
3. They divide my clothing among them, they cast lots for my robe.
But you, O Lord, do not stay afar off; my strength, make haste to help me!
4. I will tell of your name to my kin, and praise you in the midst of the assembly;
"You who fear the Lord, give him praise; all descendants of Jacob, give him glory;
revere him, all you descendants of Israel."



SECOND READING

Hebrews 10:16-25

In the death of Jesus, forgiveness of sins is accomplished and access to God is established. Hence, when we gather together for worship and when we love others, we experience anew the benefits of Jesus' death.

We stand to welcome Jesus, the living Word, in the holy gospel.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

This quotation from Hebrews 12:2-3 that speaks of joy and triumph prepares us for the victorious narration of Jesus' crucifixion as told in John's gospel.

After the Holy Spirit says "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," the Spirit 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.

Leader



Je - sus Christ, sal - va - tion of the world.

Assembly



Je - sus Christ, sal - va - tion of the world.

Verse: Look to Jesus, who for the sake of the joy that was set before him endured the cross, disregarding its shame.

Repeat refrain

And has taken his seat at the right hand of the throne of God.

Repeat refrain



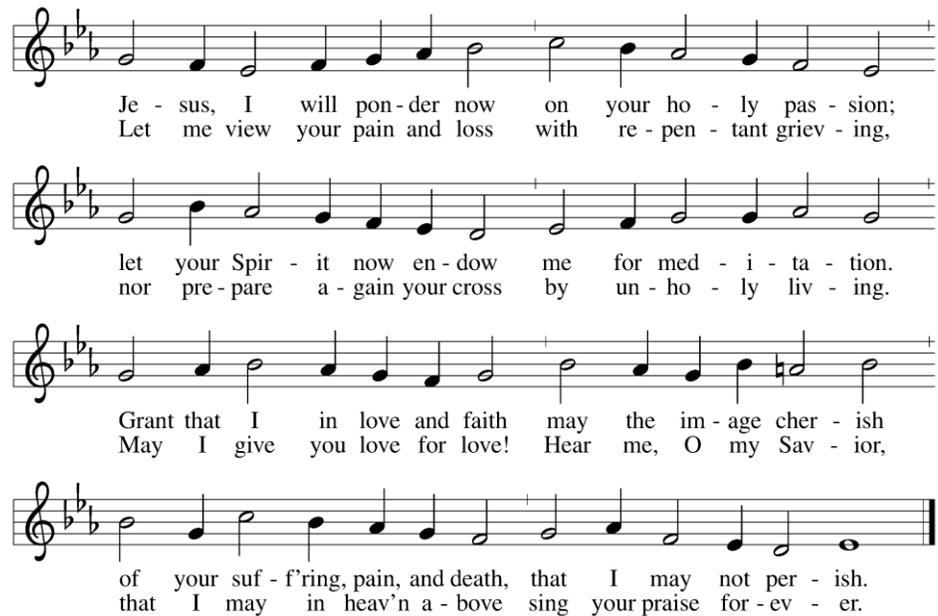
**THE PASSION OF
OUR LORD JESUS
CHRIST
ACCORDING TO
JOHN**

Three readers tell the story of Jesus' passion and death from the gospel of John, in which Jesus is portrayed not as a victim but as a king who reigns from the cross.

After each section of the passion story, we remain seated and sing together in response.

Part 1: Jesus Betrayed and Arrested

John 18:1-27



Je - sus, I will pon - der now on your ho - ly pas - sion;
Let me view your pain and loss with re - pen - tant griev - ing,
let your Spir - it now en - dow me for med - i - ta - tion.
nor pre - pare a - gain your cross by un - ho - ly liv - ing.
Grant that I in love and faith may the im - age cher - ish
May I give you love for love! Hear me, O my Sav - ior,
of your suf - f'ring, pain, and death, that I may not per - ish.
that I may in heav'n a - bove sing your praise for - ev - er.

Part 2: Jesus Accused and Sentenced

John 18:28-19:16a

Ah, holy Jesus, how have you offended,
that mortal judgment has on you descended?
By foes derided, by your own rejected,
O most afflicted!

Who was the guilty? Who brought this upon you?
Alas, my treason, Jesus has undone you.
'Twas I, Lord Jesus, I it was denied you.
I crucified you.

Lo, the Good Shepherd for the sheep is offered;
the slave has sinned, and the Son has suffered.
For our atonement, while we nothing heeded,
God interceded.

For me, kind Jesus, was you incarnation,
your mortal sorrow, and your life's oblation.
Your death of anguish and your bitter Passion,
For my salvation.

The congregation is invited to join in singing the last stanza:

**Therefore, kind Jesus, since I cannot pay you,
I do adore you, and will ever pray you;
think on your pity and your love unswerving,
not my deserving.**

Part 3: Jesus Crucified and Buried

John 19:16-42



1 When I sur - vey the won - drous cross on which the
2 For - bid it, Lord, that I should boast save in the
3 See, from his head, his hands, his feet, sor - row and
4 Were the whole realm of na - ture mine, that were a



prince of glo - ry died, my rich - est gain I
death of Christ, my God; all the vain things that
love flow min - gled down. Did e'er such love and
trib - ute far too small; love so a - maz - ing,



count but loss and pour con - tempt on all my pride.
charm me most, I sac - ri - fice them to his blood.
sor - row meet, or thorns com - pose so rich a crown?
so di - vine, de - mands my soul, my life, my all!

SERMON



HYMN OF THE DAY

My Song Is Love Unknown

1. My song is love un - known, My
2. In life, no house, no home My
3. Here might I stay and sing, No

Sav - ior's love for me, Love to the love - less
Lord on earth might have; In death, no friend - ly
sto - ry so di - vine; Nev - er was love, dear

shown That they might love - ly be. O
tomb But what a stran - ger gave. What
King, Nev - er was grief like thine. This

who am I That for my sake My
may I say? Heav'n was his home; But
is my friend, In whose sweet praise I

Lord shall take Frail flesh, and die?
mine the tomb Where - in he lay.
all my days Could glad - ly spend.

BIDDING PRAYER

Since the third century, Christians have gathered on Good Friday at the foot of the cross and there prayed a form of these great intercessions.

The bidding prayer opens us up to ever-widening circles of concern. We ask God to look with mercy on every person and thing in the cosmos.

The assisting minister calls out the "bids, and after a time of silence, the presiding minister speaks the prayers.

Each prayer concludes:

...we ask this through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

We seal all of our prayers in the words Jesus taught us:

Finally, let us pray for all those things for which our Lord would have us ask, saying:

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,

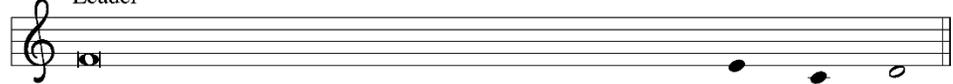
and the power, and the glory,

forever and ever. Amen.

VENERATION OF
THE CROSS

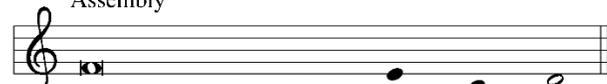
As the wooden cross is processed in to the church, you may place your cross on your home altar. The cross symbolizes God's great love for you, shown in the sacrifice of Jesus. In giving honor to the cross, we are really giving glory to him.

Leader



Behold the life-giving cross, on which was hung the Savior of the world.

Assembly



Oh, come, let us wor - ship him.

Spend some time in silent prayer before the cross. You may also wish to place something next to it—words you have written, a picture you have drawn, something that symbolizes you laying down life's burdens at Jesus' feet.

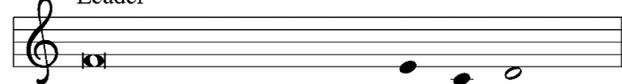
Ave Verum
W. A. Mozart

*Ave verum corpus natum ex Maria Virgine:
Vere passum immolatum in cruce pro homine.
Cujus latus perforatum unda fluxit et sanguine.
Esto nobis praegustatum in mortis examine.*

Hail, true Body, born
of the Virgin Mary,
who having truly suffered, was sacrificed
on the cross for humanity,
whose pierced side
flowed with water and blood:
May it be for us a foretaste [of the Heavenly banquet]
in the trial of death.

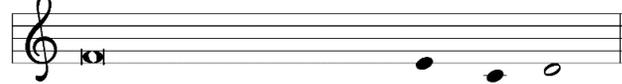
*The minister concludes
the veneration of the
cross with this
acclamation of
triumph.*

Leader



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

Assembly



By your holy cross you re-deemed the world.

HYMN OF TRIUMPH

The Good Friday liturgy ends with an opportunity for the entire assembly to proclaim their confidence in Christ's triumph on the cross.

There In God's Garden



1 There in God's gar - den stands the Tree of Wis - dom,
2 Its name is Je - sus, name that says, "Our Sav - ior!"
3 Thorns not its own are tan - gled in its fo - liage;
4 See how its branch - es reach to us in wel - come;



whose leaves hold forth the heal - ing of the na - tions:
There on its branch - es see the scars of suf - f'ring;
our greed has starved it, our de - spite has choked it.
hear what the Voice says, "Come to me, ye wea - ry!



Tree of all knowl - edge, Tree of all com -
see there the ten - drils of our hu - man
Yet, look! it lives! its grief has not de -
Give me your sick - ness, give me all your



pas - sion, Tree of all beau - ty.
self - hood feed on its life - blood.
stroyed it nor fire con - sumed it.
sor - row, I will give bless - ing."

5 This is my ending
this my resurrection;
into your hands, Lord,
I commit my spirit.
This have I searched for;
now I can possess it.
This ground is holy.

6 All heav'n is singing,
"Thanks to Christ whose passion
offers in mercy
healing, strength, and pardon.
Peoples and nations,
take it, take it freely!"
Amen! My Master!

***You are invited to remain in prayer for as long as you desire.
There is no dismissal. The congregation departs in silence.
The liturgy continues tomorrow at the Easter Vigil.***

Tomorrow Night: The Easter Vigil

Saturday, April 3 | 6:30pm

On the eve of Easter, nearest the first full moon after the spring equinox, we gather outside, kindling a new fire. Since our primal beginnings, humans have gathered around fire for warmth, heat, and each other's company. Filled with the hope of spring and longing for renewal, we celebrate the new creation brought to the world through the death and resurrection of Christ.



LIGHT

The Easter Vigil begins **outside**. Just as Mary Magdalene and the other women gathered at Jesus' tomb, expecting to find death, we gather as the three long days come to an end, and are also met by a surprise. Instead of darkness, we find light. A **new fire** is lit. A **new Easter candle** is blessed and inscribed with the new year, and its light is dispersed throughout the congregation. A voice rings out, "**Rejoice all you heavenly powers! Sing choirs of angels!**" They are the first notes of a song of victory that the church will gleefully sing in the face of death over the course of the night.

STORY

In Luther Hall, radiating with candlelight, we gather around to tell the story of our God from the beginning until this day: the **Creation** of the world, the rebirth of the world after the **flood**, the parting of the **Red Sea**, the prophecy of **God breathing life into dry bones**, and the **three young men in the fiery furnace**. The stories are told by living voices, young and old. Ancient songs of praise are sung side by side with music from our own day. Each story brings us closer and closer to the greatest one of all: **Jesus' resurrection from the dead**, where our lives are written into God's story forever.

WATER

After remembering God's saving help in ages past, we gather around the place where God saves us today: **the waters of baptism**. We baptize children and adults who have been preparing for this night through the season of Lent. We praise God for the gift of new life and **renew** the promise God made to each of us in our own baptisms. We sing the **litany of the saints**, blessing God for our ancestors in faith going as far back as we can remember and as recent as the past year.

MUSIC NOTES

The prelude for today was written by J.S. Bach (1685 – 1750) and is based on the melody of the hymn *Da Jesus an Dem Kreuze Stund* (As Jesus Hung on the Cross), the text of which is a meditation on the seven last words of Christ. Bach's setting of this hymn melody is a fine example of a relatively simple approach (especially when compared to some of his other settings) that yields a result that is both deeply profound and moving.

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***We are a Reconciling in Christ congregation,
welcoming and serving all people.***