

**Weisenberg Lutheran Church
7645 Weisenberg Church Road
New Tripoli, PA 18066
Phone: 610-298-2437**

**CRUCIFIXION
GOOD FRIDAY
Worship Service 7:00 PM
March 29, 2024**

Welcome to worship at Weisenberg in the name of the crucified Jesus.

We are so glad to join you in worship this Holy Week.

The Great Three Days; Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Easter, are celebrated as one continuous act of worship.

We gather in the silence of Good Friday, where Jesus was tried and condemned, stripped of his clothes, and led to the site of his crucifixion, death, and burial.

Please stand as you are able for all parts labeled (). Worship leaders [Pastor (P:) and Assistant (A:)] speak the plain text. The congregation (C:) responds with the words in **bold**.*

RINGING OF THE BELL

WELCOME & PRAYER REQUESTS

SILENT PRAYER

***REFLECTIONS ON THE CROSS** *(repeated 3 times)*

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

C: Oh, come, let us worship him.

All who are gathered are invited to come forward and reverence the cross with prayer while readings from Hebrews & Psalm 22 are offered.

FIRST READING Hebrews 4:14-16; 5:7-9; 10:16-25

¹⁴Since we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast to our confession.¹⁵For

we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who in every respect has been tested as we are, yet without sin.¹⁶ Let us therefore approach the throne of grace with boldness, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

^{5:7}In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to the one who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission.⁸ Although he was a Son, he learned obedience through what he suffered;⁹ and having been made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him.

[After the Holy Spirit says,] ¹⁶“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,” ¹⁷he also adds, “I will remember their sins and their lawless deeds no more.”¹⁸ Where there is forgiveness of these, there is no longer any offering for sin.

¹⁹Therefore, my friends, since we have confidence to enter the sanctuary by the blood of Jesus,²⁰ by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain (that is, through his flesh),²¹ and since we have a great priest over the house of God,²² 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.²³ Let us hold fast to the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who has promised is faithful.²⁴ And let us consider how to provoke one another to love and good deeds,²⁵ 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.

PSALM 22

¹My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

Why are you so far from helping me, from the words of my groaning?

²O my God, I cry by day, but you do not answer;
and by night, but find no rest.

³Yet you are holy,
enthroned on the praises of Israel.

⁴In you our ancestors trusted;
they trusted, and you delivered them.

⁵To you they cried, and were saved;
in you they trusted, and were not put to shame.

⁶But I am a worm, and not human;
scorned by others, and despised by the people.

⁷All who see me mock at me;
they make mouths at me, they shake their heads;

⁸"Commit your cause to the LORD; let him deliver —
let him rescue the one in whom he delights!"

⁹Yet it was you who took me from the womb;
you kept me safe on my mother's breast.

¹⁰On you I was cast from my birth,
and since my mother bore me you have been my God.

¹¹Do not be far from me,
for trouble is near and there is no one to help.

¹²Many bulls encircle me,
strong bulls of Bashan surround me;

¹³they open wide their mouths at me,
like a ravening and roaring lion.

¹⁴I am poured out like water,
and all my bones are out of joint; my heart is like wax;
it is melted within my breast;

¹⁵my mouth is dried up like a potsherd,
and my tongue sticks to my jaws; you lay me in the dust of death.

¹⁶For dogs are all around me;
a company of evildoers encircles me.
My hands and feet have shriveled;

¹⁷I can count all my bones.
They stare and gloat over me;

¹⁸they divide my clothes among themselves,
and for my clothing they cast lots.

¹⁹But you, O LORD, do not be far away!
O my help, come quickly to my aid!

²⁰Deliver my soul from the sword,

my life from the power of the dog!

²¹Save me from the mouth of the lion!

From the horns of the wild oxen you have rescued me.

²²I will tell of your name to my brothers and sisters

in the midst of the congregation I will praise you:

²³You who fear the LORD, praise him!

All you offspring of Jacob, glorify him;

stand in awe of him, all you offspring of Israel!

²⁴For he did not despise or abhor

the affliction of the afflicted;

he did not hide his face from me,

but heard when I cried to him.

²⁵From you comes my praise in the great congregation;

my vows I will pay before those who fear him.

²⁶The poor shall eat and be satisfied;

those who seek him shall praise the LORD.

May your hearts live forever!

²⁷All the ends of the earth shall remember

and turn to the LORD;

and all the families of the nations

shall worship before him.

²⁸For dominion belongs to the LORD,

and he rules over the nations.

²⁹To him, indeed, shall all who sleep in the earth bow down;

before him shall bow all who go down to the dust,

and I shall live for him.

³⁰Posterity will serve him;

future generations will be told about the LORD,

³¹and proclaim his deliverance to a people yet unborn,

saying that he has done it.

SPECIAL MUSIC *“Scars Upon His Heart” ~Watters, Jr.*

***PRAYER OF THE DAY**

A: Let us pray. Merciful God,

C: your Son was lifted up on the cross to draw all people to himself.

Grant that we who have been born out of his wounded side may at all times find mercy in him, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

***GOSPEL ACCLAMATION** (*HEBREWS 12:2*)

P: Look to Jesus,

C: who for the sake of the joy that was set before him endured the cross, disregarding its shame, and has taken his seat at the right hand of the throne of God.

***THE PASSION OF OUR LORD**

At the conclusion of each reading of the Passion, a hymn or verses of a hymn is sung, while a candle is snuffed, marking the approaching time of our Lord's death.

R: The Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ according to St. Mark, the 14th and 15th chapters.

C: Glory to You, O Lord.

^{14:53}They took Jesus to the high priest; and all the chief priests, the elders, and the scribes were assembled.⁵⁴Peter had followed him at a distance, right into the courtyard of the high priest; and he was sitting with the guards, warming himself at the fire.⁵⁵Now the chief priests and the whole council were looking for testimony against Jesus to put him to death; but they found none.⁵⁶For many gave false testimony against him, and their testimony did not agree.⁵⁷Some stood up and gave false testimony against him, saying,⁵⁸‘We heard him say, “I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and in three days I will build another, not made with hands.”’⁵⁹But even on this point their testimony did not agree.⁶⁰Then the high priest stood up before them and asked Jesus, ‘Have you no answer? What is it that they testify against you?’⁶¹But he was silent and did not answer. Again the high priest asked him, ‘Are you the Messiah, Son of the Blessed One?’⁶²Jesus said, ‘I am; and “you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of the Power”, and “coming with the clouds of heaven.”’

⁶³Then the high priest tore his clothes and said, ‘Why do we still need witnesses?’⁶⁴You have heard his blasphemy! What is your decision?’ All of

them condemned him as deserving death.⁶⁵ Some began to spit on him, to blindfold him, and to strike him, saying to him, 'Prophecy!' The guards also took him over and beat him.

***HYMN OF THE PASSION** *"Beneath the Cross of Jesus"* No. 338

1 Be - neath the cross of Je - sus I long to take my stand;
 2 Up - on the cross of Je - sus, my eye at times can see
 3 I take, O cross, your shad - ow for my a - bid - ing place;

the shad - ow of a might - y rock with - in a wea - ry land,
 the ver - y dy - ing form of one who suf - fered there for me.
 I ask no oth - er sun - shine than the sun - shine of his face;

a home with - in a wil - der - ness, a rest up - on the way,
 And from my con - trite heart, with tears, two won - ders I con - fess:
 con - tent to let the world go by, to know no gain nor loss,

from the burn - ing of the noon - tide heat and bur - dens of the day.
 the . . . won - der of his glo - rious love and my un - wor - thi - ness.
 my . . . sin - ful self my on - ly shame, my glo - ry all, the cross.

Please be seated.

*The Passion of our Lord continues with **Mark 14:66-72.***

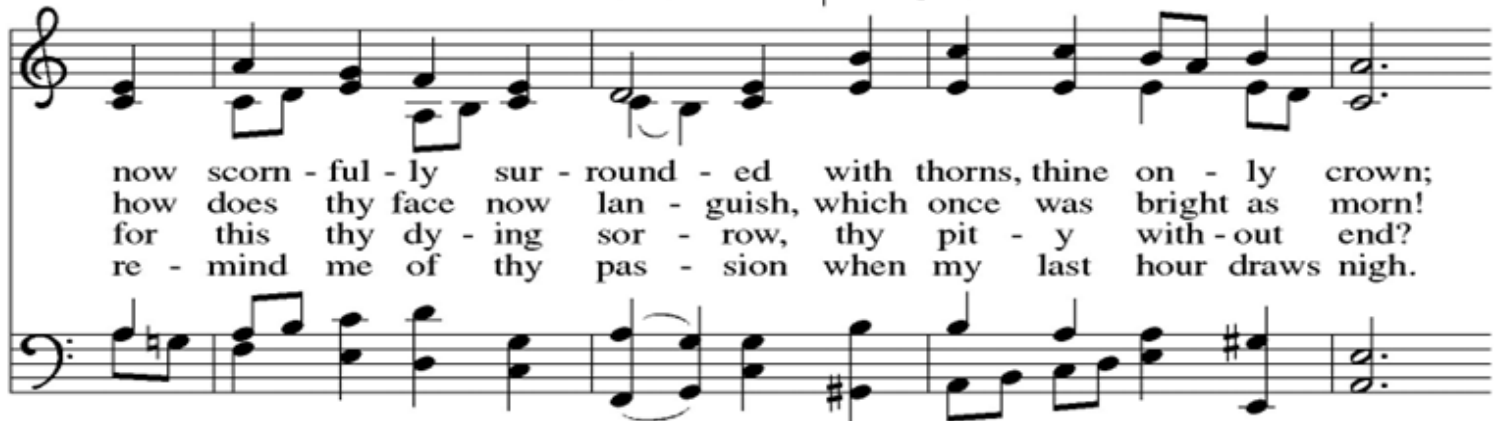
⁶⁶While Peter was below in the courtyard, one of the servant-girls of the high priest came by.⁶⁷When she saw Peter warming himself, she stared at him and said, 'You also were with Jesus, the man from Nazareth.'⁶⁸But he denied it, saying, 'I do not know or understand what you are talking about.' And he went out into the forecourt.the cock crowed.⁶⁹And the servant-girl, on seeing him, began again to say to the bystanders, 'This man is one of them.'⁷⁰But again he denied it. Then after a little while the bystanders again said to Peter, 'Certainly you are one of them; for you are a Galilean.'⁷¹But he began to curse, and he swore an oath, 'I do not know this man you are talking about.'⁷²At that moment the cock crowed for the second time. Then Peter remembered that Jesus had said to him, 'Before the cock crows twice, you will deny me three times.' And he broke down and wept.

*HYMN OF THE PASSION

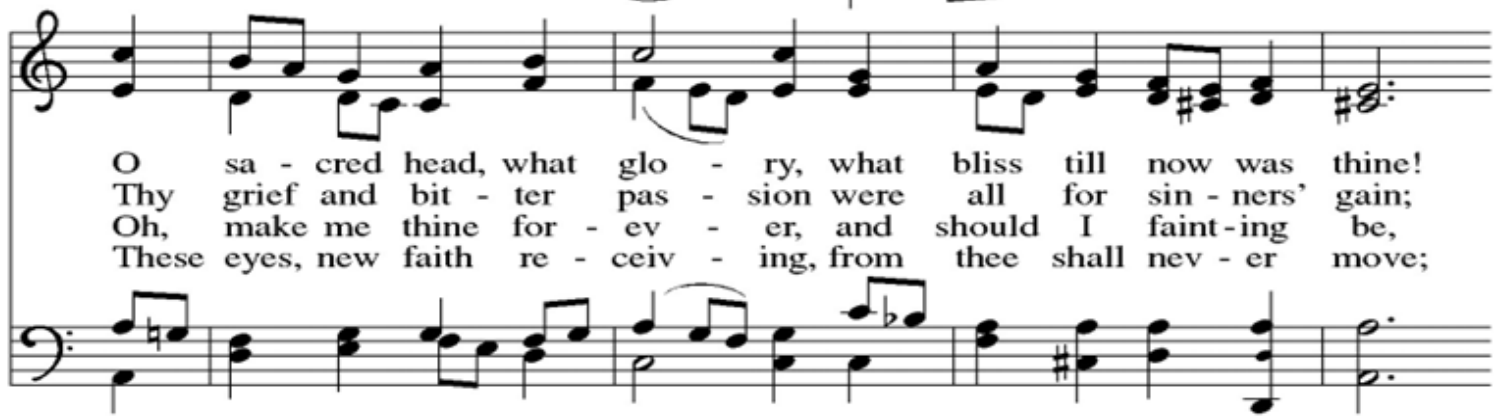
"O Sacred Head, Now Wounded" No. 351 Verses 1 & 2



1 O sa - cred head, now wound - ed, with grief and shame weighed down,
2 How pale thou art with an - guish, with sore a - buse and scorn;
3 What lan - guage shall I bor - row to thank thee, dear - est friend,
4 Lord, be my con - so - la - tion; shield me when I must die;



now scorn - ful - ly sur - round - ed with thorns, thine on - ly crown;
how does thy face now lan - guish, which once was bright as morn!
for this thy dy - ing sor - row, thy pit - y with - out end?
re - mind me of thy pas - sion when my last hour draws nigh.



O sa - cred head, what glo - ry, what bliss till now was thine!
Thy grief and bit - ter pas - sion were all for sin - ners' gain;
Oh, make me thine for - ev - er, and should I faint - ing be,
These eyes, new faith re - ceiv - ing, from thee shall nev - er move;



Yet, though de - spised and gor - y, I joy to call thee mine.
mine, mine was the trans - gres - sion, but thine the dead - ly pain.
Lord, let me nev - er, nev - er out - live my love to thee.
for all who die be - liev - ing die safe - ly in thy love.

Text: Paul Gerhardt, 1607–1676, based on Arnulf of Louvain, d. 1250; tr. composite

Music: HERZLICH TUT MICH VERLANGEN, German melody, c. 1500; adapt. Hans Leo Hassler, 1564–1612;

arr. Johann Sebastian Bach, 1685–1750

*The Passion of our Lord continues with **Mark 15:1-15.***

^{15:1}As soon as it was morning, the chief priests held a consultation with the elders and scribes and the whole council. They bound Jesus, led him away, and handed him over to Pilate. ²Pilate asked him, 'Are you the King of the Jews?' He answered him, 'You say so.'³Then the chief priests accused him of many things.⁴Pilate asked him again, 'Have you no answer? See how many charges they bring against you.'⁵But Jesus made no further reply, so that Pilate was amazed.

⁶Now at the festival he used to release a prisoner for them, anyone for whom they asked.⁷Now a man called Barabbas was in prison with the rebels who had committed murder during the insurrection.⁸So the crowd came and began to ask Pilate to do for them according to his custom.⁹Then he answered them, 'Do you want me to release for you the King of the Jews?'¹⁰For he realized that it was out of jealousy that the chief priests had handed him over.¹¹But the chief priests stirred up the crowd to have him release Barabbas for them instead.¹²Pilate spoke to them again, 'Then what do you wish me to do to the man you call King of the Jews?'¹³They shouted back, 'Crucify him!'¹⁴Pilate asked them, 'Why, what evil has he done?' But they shouted all the more, 'Crucify him!'¹⁵So Pilate, wishing to satisfy the crowd, released Barabbas for them; and after flogging Jesus, he handed him over to be crucified.

***HYMN OF THE PASSION** (see previous page)

"O Sacred Head, Now Wounded" No. 351 Verses 3 & 4

*The Passion of our Lord continues with **Mark 15:16-24.***

¹⁶Then the soldiers led him into the courtyard of the palace (that is, the governor's headquarters); and they called together the whole cohort.¹⁷And they clothed him in a purple cloak; and after twisting some thorns into a crown, they put it on him.¹⁸And they began saluting him, 'Hail, King of the Jews!'¹⁹They struck his head with a reed, spat upon him, and knelt down in homage to him.²⁰After mocking him, they stripped him of the purple cloak and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him out to crucify him.

²¹They compelled a passer-by, who was coming in from the country, to carry his cross; it was Simon of Cyrene, the father of Alexander and Rufus.²²Then they brought Jesus the place called Golgotha (which means the place of a skull).²³And they offered him wine mixed with myrrh; but he did not take it.²⁴And they crucified him, and divided his clothes among them, casting lots to decide what each should take.

HYMN OF THE PASSION "Were You There" No. 353 Verse 1

1 Were you there when they cru - ci - fied my Lord? Were you there?
 2 Were you there when they nailed him to the tree?
 3 Were you there when they pierced him in the side?
 4 Were you there when the sun re - fused to shine?
 5 Were you there when they laid him in the tomb? Were you there?

Were you there when they cru - ci - fied my Lord? Were you there?
 Were you there when they nailed him to the tree?
 Were you there when they pierced him in the side?
 Were you there when the sun re - fused to shine?
 Were you there when they laid him in the tomb? Were you there?

Refrain

Oh, some-times it caus-es me to trem-ble, trem-ble, trem-ble.

Were you there when they cru - ci - fied my Lord? Were you there?
 Were you there when they nailed him to the tree?
 Were you there when they pierced him in the side?
 Were you there when the sun re - fused to shine?
 Were you there when they laid him in the tomb? Were you there?

Text: African American spiritual
 Music: WERE YOU THERE, African American spiritual
 Arr. © 1999 Augsburg Fortress.

*The Passion of our Lord continues with **Mark 15:25-32.***

²⁵It was nine o'clock in the morning when they crucified him.²⁶The inscription of the charge against him read, 'The King of the Jews.'²⁷And with him they crucified two bandits, one on his right and one on his left.²⁹Those who passed by derided, shaking their heads and saying, 'Aha! You who would destroy the temple and build it in three days,³⁰ save yourself, and come down from the cross!'³¹In the same way the chief priests, along with the scribes, were also mocking him among themselves and saying, 'He saved others; he cannot save himself.'³²Let the Messiah, King of Israel, come down from the cross now, so that we may see and believe.' Those who were crucified with him also taunted him.

HYMN OF THE PASSION "*Were You There*" No. 353 Verse 2
(see previous page)

Please stand. The Passion of our Lord continues with **Mark 15:33-41.*

³³When it was noon, darkness came over the whole land three in the afternoon.³⁴At three o'clock Jesus cried out with a loud voice, 'Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?' which means, 'My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?'³⁵When some of the bystanders heard it, they said, 'Listen, he is calling for Elijah.'³⁶And someone ran, filled a sponge with sour wine, put it on a stick, and gave it to him to drink, saying, 'Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to take him down.'³⁷Then Jesus gave a loud cry and breathed his last.³⁸And the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom.³⁹Now when the centurion, who stood facing him, saw that in this way he died, he said, 'Truly this man was God's Son!'

⁴⁰There were also women looking on from a distance; among them were Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the younger and of Joses, and Salome.⁴¹These used to follow him and provided for him when he was in Galilee; and there were many other women who had come up with him to Jerusalem.

HYMN OF THE PASSION "*Were You There*" No. 353 Verse 3-5
(see previous page)

**The Passion of our Lord concludes with Mark 15:42-47*

⁴²When evening had come, and since it was the day of Preparation, that is, the day before the sabbath,⁴³ Joseph of Arimathea, a respected member of the council, who was also himself waiting expectantly for the kingdom of God, went boldly to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus.

⁴⁴Then Pilate wondered if he were already dead; and summoning the centurion, he asked him whether he had been dead for some time.⁴⁵When he learned from the centurion that he was dead, he granted the body to Joseph.⁴⁶Then Joseph took a linen cloth, and taking down the body, he laid it in the linen cloth, and laid it in a tomb that had been hewn out of the rock. He then rolled a stone against the door of the tomb.⁴⁷Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joseph saw where the body was laid.

P: This is the Passion of our Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

HYMN OF THE PASSION *"They Crucified My Lord"* No. 350

1 They cru - ci - fied my Lord, and he nev - er said a mum - ba - lin' word;
2 They nailed him to a tree, and he nev - er said a mum - ba - lin' word;
3 They pierced him in the side, and he nev - er said a mum - ba - lin' word;
4 The blood came stream - in' down, and he nev - er said a mum - ba - lin' word;
5 He hung his head and died, and he nev - er said a mum - ba - lin' word;

they cru - ci - fied my Lord, and he nev - er said a mum - ba - lin' word;
they nailed him to a tree, and he nev - er said a mum - ba - lin' word;
they pierced him in the side, and he nev - er said a mum - ba - lin' word;
the blood came stream - in' down, and he nev - er said a mum - ba - lin' word;
he hung his head and died, and he nev - er said a mum - ba - lin' word;

not a word, not a word, not a word.

mumbalin' = complaining

HOMILY

HYMN OF THE DAY “Lamb of God” No. 336

*BIDDING PRAYER

Silence for prayer follows each bid.

A: Let us pray, brothers and sisters, for the holy church throughout the world

P: Almighty and eternal God, you have shown your glory to all nations in Jesus Christ. By your Holy Spirit guide the church and gather it throughout the world. Help it to persevere in faith, proclaim your name, and bring the good news of salvation in Christ to all people. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

C: Amen.

A: Let us pray for *Elizabeth and Christopher* our bishop, for Brandon, our pastor, and all servants of the church, and for all of God’s people.

P: Almighty and eternal God, your Spirit guides the church and makes it holy. Strengthen and uphold our bishops, pastors, other ministers, and lay leaders. Keep them in health and safety for the good of the church, and help each of us in our various vocations to do faithfully the work to which you have called us. We ask this through Christ or Lord.

C: Amen.

A: Let us pray for those preparing for baptism.

P: Almighty and eternal God, you continue to bless the church. Increase the faith and understanding of those preparing for baptism. Give them new birth as your children, and keep them in the faith and communion of your holy church. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

C: Amen.

A: Let us pray for our sisters and brothers who share our faith in Jesus Christ.

P: Almighty and eternal God, you give your church unity. Look with favor on all who follow Jesus your Son. Make all the baptized one in the fullness of faith, and keep us united in the fellowship of love. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

C: Amen.

A: Let us pray for the Jewish people, the first to hear the word of God.

P: Almighty and eternal God, long ago you gave your promise to Abraham and your teaching to Moses. Hear our prayers that the people you called and elected as your own may receive the fulfillment of the covenant's promises. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

C: Amen.

A: Let us pray for those who do not share our faith in Jesus Christ.

P: Almighty and eternal God, gather into your embrace all those who call out to you under different names. Bring an end to inter-religious strife, and make us more faithful witnesses of the love made known to us in your Son. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

C: Amen.

A: Let us pray for those who do not believe in God.

P: Almighty and eternal God, you created humanity so that all may long to know you and find peace in you. Grant that all may recognize the signs of your love and grace in the world and in the lives of Christians, and gladly acknowledge you as the one true God. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

C: Amen.

A: Let us pray for God's creation.

P: Almighty and eternal God, you are the creator of a magnificent universe. Hold all the worlds in the arms of your care and bring all things to fulfillment in you. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

C: Amen.

A: Let us pray for those in need.

P: Almighty and eternal God, you give strength to the weary and new courage to those who have lost heart. Heal the sick, comfort the dying, give safety to travelers, free those unjustly deprived of liberty, and deliver your world from falsehood, hunger, and disease. Hear the prayers of all who call on you in any trouble, that they may have the joy of receiving your help in their need. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

C: Amen.

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

C: 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.

ANTHEM *“Lenten Meditation” ~ Kern (ASCAP)*

SOLEMN REPROACHES

The Solemn Reproaches date back to the ninth century, and offer a somber reflection on the scope of God’s work in Jesus Christ on Good Friday.

Each reproach begins with an expansion on Micah 6:3: “O my people, [O my church,] what have I done to you? How have I offended you? Answer me!” The petitions continue with a biblical claim of God’s steadfast goodness towards His people, ending with God’s mournful indictment of our actions: “but you have prepared a cross for your Savior.”

The assembly responds to each reproach with a petition for mercy which has been echoed throughout the church for thousands of years.

P: O my people, O my church, what have I done to you? How have I offended you? Answer me. I led you out of slavery into freedom, and delivered you through the waters of rebirth, but you have prepared a cross for your Savior.

C: Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal, have mercy on us.

P: O my people, O my church, what more could I have done for you? Answer me. Forty years I led you through the desert, feeding you with manna on the way; I saved you from the time of trial and gave you my body, the bread of heaven, but you have prepared a cross for your Savior.

C: Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal, have mercy on us.

P: O my people, O my church, what more could I have done for you? Answer me. I led you on your way in a pillar of cloud and fire, but you led me to the judgment hall of Pilate; I guided you by the light of the Holy Spirit, but you have prepared a cross for your Savior.

C: Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal, have mercy on us.

P: O my people, O my church, what more could I have done for you?

Answer me. I planted you as my fairest vineyard, but you brought forth bitter fruit; I made you branches of the vine and never left your side, but you have prepared a cross for your Savior.

C: Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal, have mercy on us.

P: O my people, O my church, what more could I have done for you?

Answer me. I poured out saving water from the rock, but you gave me vinegar to drink; I poured out my life and gave you the new covenant in my blood, but you have prepared a cross for your Savior.

C: Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal, have mercy on us.

P: O my people, O my church, what more could I have done for you?

Answer me. I gave you a royal scepter, but you gave me a crown of thorns; I gave you the kingdom and crowned you with eternal life, but you have prepared a cross for your Savior.

C: Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal, have mercy on us.

P: O my people, O my church, what more could I have done for you?

Answer me. I struck down your enemies, but you struck my head with a reed; I gave you my peace, but you draw the sword in my name, and you have prepared a cross for your Savior.

C: Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal, have mercy on us.

P: O my people, O my church, what more could I have done for you?

Answer me. I opened the waters to lead you to the promised land, but you opened my side with a spear; I washed your feet as a sign of my love, but you have prepared a cross for your Savior.

C: Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal, have mercy on us.

P: O my people, O my church, what more could I have done for you?

Answer me. I lifted you up to the heights, but you lifted me high on a cross; I raised you from death and prepared for you the tree of life, but you have prepared a cross for your Savior.

C: Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal, have mercy on us.

P: O my people, O my church, what more could I have done for you?

Answer me. I grafted you into my people Israel, but you made them scapegoats for your own guilt, and you have prepared a cross for your Savior.

C: Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal, have mercy on us.

P: O my people, O my church, what more could I have done for you?

Answer me. I came to you in the least of your brothers and sisters, but I was hungry and you gave me no food, thirsty and you gave me no drink, a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not clothe me, sick and in prison and you did not visit me, and you have prepared a cross for your Savior.

C: Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal, have mercy on us.

After a brief silence, the presiding minister continues.

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

C: By your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

THE CLOSING OF THE BOOK

The Closing of the Book is an ancient Christian tradition which marks the death of Christ, the Word of God made flesh. As the Paschal Candle which represents the Light and Life of Christ is recessed from the sanctuary in darkness, the Fourth Servant Song of Isaiah, often called the Song of the Suffering Servant, is read. At the conclusion of the reading, the Paschal Candle is extinguished.

After this, the Bible is closed violently so as to make a loud noise, symbolizing the rending of the Temple veil, the earthquake which followed Jesus' death, and the tomb of Christ being sealed with a large boulder. The Word of God has been shut up in the grave, like a lamb led to the slaughter, silent to the suffering He endured.

ISAIAH 52:13—53:12

A reading from Isaiah.

¹³See, my servant shall prosper; he shall be exalted and lifted up, and shall be very high. ¹⁴Just as there were many who were astonished at him—so marred was his appearance, beyond human semblance, and his form beyond that of mortals— ¹⁵so 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. ^{53:1}Who has believed what we have heard? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed? ²For 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. ³He 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. ⁴Surely he has borne our infirmities and carried our diseases; yet we accounted him stricken, struck down by God, and afflicted. ⁵But 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.

⁶All 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. ⁷He 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. ⁸By 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. ⁹They 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. ¹⁰Yet it was the will of the LORD to crush him with pain. When you make his life an offering for sin, he shall see his offspring, and shall prolong his days; through him the will of the LORD shall prosper.

¹¹Out of his anguish he shall see light; he shall find satisfaction through his knowledge. The righteous one, my servant, shall make many righteous, and he shall bear their iniquities. ¹²Therefore 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.

All depart in silence. There is no benediction this evening.

Our worship this evening comes to an end, with Jesus dead and buried in a borrowed grave. The Great Three Days of Holy Week; Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, The Vigil of Easter and Easter Sunday, are treated as one continuous act of Christian worship.

Our worship continues Sunday morning as we contemplate and celebrate with Mary and the disciples the mystery of Jesus' resurrection.

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