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GOOD FRIDAY WORSHIP

THE JOURNEY TO PEACE WITH GOD – CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS JESUS' PASSION THROUGH THE EYES OF THE CRIMINAL ON THE CROSS

April 15, 2022

Tenebrae, which is a Latin word meaning "shadows," has been observed in the church of Jesus Christ since the fourth century. On this Good Friday we marvel at the depth of suffering our Savior was willing to experience so that we might never have to experience the depth of suffering we truly deserve.

TOLLING BELLS ANNOUNCE THE DEATH OF CHRIST

CALL TO WORSHIP

Isaiah 53:4-6

Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows,
yet we considered him stricken by God, smitten by him, and afflicted.

But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities;
the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed.

All we, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way;
and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

Father, when your Son hung on the cross, he cried out to you in agony and grief. You gave him the strength to endure so that death might be destroyed and life restored. Look with mercy upon your family gathered here for whom our Lord Jesus Christ was betrayed, given into the hands of sinful men, and suffered death upon the cross. Strengthen our faith and forgive our betrayals as we meditate on the way of his passion; through him who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

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?

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?

JESUS' PASSION THROUGH THE EYES OF THE CRIMINAL ON THE CROSS

INTRODUCTION

Were you there when they crucified my Lord? Some might consider that a ridiculous question. No, certainly, we were not there. Jesus died some two thousand years ago. But the individuals who composed those words (most likely enslaved African-Americans) recognized that in a sense we were there. Our sins were the reason Jesus chose to walk that path to Calvary and to die that day. We have living inside each of us the same sin-disordered nature that was living inside all those who were there: the self-righteous religious leaders, the self-preserving Roman officials, the cruelty of those who beat and mocked him, the greed and cowardice of the disciples who betrayed and forsook him, and yes, even the potential, given the right circumstances, of shameful lawbreaking like the criminals who hung there next to him. Today we relive the last hours of our Savior's earthly life and consider more deeply their meaning and purpose as we imagine witnessing and experiencing the events of that day through the eyes of the criminal on the cross. He was there. May we find peace just as he did in the outstretched arms of our Savior.

We pray. O Lord of hope and God of our salvation, we shed tears of grief for the suffering of your beloved Son, Jesus, because the cause was our sin and the cost was his life. But remind us today and every day that neither our grief, nor our tears, nor our sacrifices can remove our guilt. Only the blood of Jesus can do that. Give us hearts of faith to trust in you only for our eternal salvation. Then change our impressions of grief to expressions of grateful testimony that we and others may come to better know the joys of salvation. In Jesus' name we pray.

Amen.

PART 1A – RATIONALIZATION

LUKE 23:26-31

As they led him away, they seized Simon from Cyrene, who was on his way in from the country, and put the cross on him and made him carry it behind Jesus. A large number of people followed him, including women who mourned and wailed for him. Jesus turned and said to them, “Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me; weep for yourselves and for your children. For the time will come when you will say, ‘Blessed are the barren women, the wombs that never bore and the breasts that never nursed!’ Then they will say to the mountains, “Fall on us!” and to the hills, “Cover us!” For if men do these things when the tree is green, what will happen when it is dry?”

PART 1B – THE END OF THE ROAD

LUKE 23:32-34

Two other men, both criminals, were also led out with him to be executed. When they came to the place called the Skull, there they crucified him, along with the criminals—one on his right, the other on his left. Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.” And they divided up his clothes by casting lots.

The first light is extinguished.

PART 2 – FORGIVE

JOHN 19:25-27

*25 Near the cross of Jesus stood his mother, his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene.
26 When Jesus saw his mother there, and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to her, "Woman, here is your son," 27 and to the disciple, "Here is your mother." From that time on, this disciple took her into his home.*

The second light is extinguished.

PART 3 – REGRET

**How deep the Father's love for us,
How vast beyond all measure,
That He should give His only Son
To make a wretch His treasure.
How great the pain of searing loss –
The Father turns His face away,
As wounds which mar the Chosen One
Bring many sons to glory.**

**Behold the man upon a cross,
My sin upon His shoulders;
Ashamed, I hear my mocking voice
Call out among the scoffers.
It was my sin that held Him there
Until it was accomplished;
His dying breath has brought me life –
I know that it is finished.**

**I will not boast in anything,
No gifts, no power, no wisdom;
But I will boast in Jesus Christ,
His death and resurrection.
Why should I gain from His reward?
I cannot give an answer;
But this I know with all my heart –
His wounds have paid my ransom.**

MATTHEW 27:47-79

From the sixth hour until the ninth hour darkness came over all the land. About the ninth hour Jesus cried out in a loud voice, “Eloi, Eloi lama sabachthani?” —which means, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” When some of those standing there heard this, they said, “He’s calling Elijah.” Immediately one of them ran and got a sponge. He filled it with wine vinegar, put it on a stick, and offered it to Jesus to drink. The rest said, “Now leave him alone. Let’s see if Elijah comes to save him.”

The third light is extinguished.

PART 4 – FORSAKEN

ANTHEM

God, My God

By Mike and Adam Westendorf

This song is inspired by Lamentations 3 and Genesis 3. Lamentation 3, written over 500 years before Christ was born shares numerous intimate details connected to our Lord’s crucifixion. You are invited to join in the responsive reading of the Lamentations verses with the worship leader.

I am the man who has seen affliction by the rod of the Lord’s wrath.

He has driven me away and made me walk in darkness rather than light;

Indeed, he has turned his hand against me again and again, all day long.

He has walled me in so I cannot escape; he has weighed me down with chains.

Even when I call out or cry for help, he shuts out my prayer.

He has made my skin and my flesh grow old and has broken my bones.

He has besieged me and surrounded me with bitterness and hardship.

He has made me dwell in darkness like those long dead.

He pierced my heart with arrows from his quiver. I became the laughingstock of all my people

They mock me in song all day long. He has filled me with bitter herbs and given me gall to drink.

I remember my affliction and my wandering, the bitterness and the gall.

I well remember them, and my soul is downcast within me.

Yet this I call to mind and therefore I have hope:

Because of the LORD’s great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail.

They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.

I say to myself, “The LORD is my portion; therefore I will wait for him.”

LUTHER ENCOURAGES FINDING FREEDOM IN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE CONFESSION

What is confession?

Confession has two parts: first, that we confess our sins; second, that we receive absolution, or forgiveness, from the confessor, as from God himself, and that we in no way doubt, but firmly believe, that by it our sins are forgiven before God in heaven.

What sins should we confess?

Before God we should plead guilty of all sins, even those of which we are unaware, as we do in the Lord's Prayer. But before the confessor we should confess only those sins which we know and feel in our hearts.

Which are these?

I should examine myself according to the Ten Commandments and ask how well I have carried out my responsibilities as a husband or wife or single person, as a parent or child, an employer or employee, a teacher or student. Have I loved God with all my heart, gladly heard his Word, and patiently endured affliction? Have I been disobedient, proud, or unforgiving? Have I been selfish, lazy, envious, or quarrelsome? Have I lied or deceived, taken something not mine, or given anyone a bad name? Have I abused my body or permitted indecent thoughts to linger in my mind? Have I failed to do what is right and good?

HYMN 397

Just As I Am

Just as I am, without one plea
But that thy blood was shed for me
And that thou bidd'st me come to thee,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

Just as I am and waiting not
To rid my soul of one dark blot,
To thee, whose blood can cleanse each spot,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

Just as I am, poor, wretched, blind;
Sight, riches, healing of the mind,
Yea, all I need, in thee to find,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

LUKE 23:39-43

39 One of the criminals who hung there hurled insults at him: "Aren't you the Messiah? Save yourself and us!"
40 But the other criminal rebuked him. "Don't you fear God," he said, "since you are under the same sentence?
41 We are punished justly, for we are getting what our deeds deserve. But this man has done nothing wrong."
42 Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." 43 Jesus answered him, "Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise."

The fourth light is extinguished.

PART 5 – ACCEPTED

"Father forgive them." "Woman, here is your son." "My God, why have you forsaken me?" Is there a forgiveness that will cover the sins of those who do not deserve that forgiveness? Could there be a love out there greater than any you and I have ever imagined—a love that would chose to be forsaken by God so that we would not have to die forsaken and alone? Could it be that in the presence of this love, we do not have to be afraid of the truth? We don't have to lie or hide anymore? In the presence of this love, could we let go of the burden of fear, bare our souls, and know that we are not rejected? Could it be that Jesus will not turn his head in revulsion? Instead, he will look on us with love, wrap those outstretched, nail-pierced arms around us, and assure us that we have never been and will never be alone? You heard him, didn't you? "Today you will be with me in paradise."

A MOMENT OF PERSONAL CONFESSION

Brothers and sisters in Christ, through his death Jesus paid the price for all sin. There is no reason to hide. In fact, hiding only prolongs our agony and fuels the shame Satan uses to enslave us. We can freely confess because God has made it clear that in Christ we are already forgiven and unconditionally loved. Let us, therefore, open our hearts to God, confessing both the sins we are aware of and those we are not.

Father, I have sinned against you in my thoughts, words, and actions. I understand that there is nothing I can do to satisfactorily pay sin's price. Since you made that payment for me through your suffering and death, I confess my sin trusting you will forgive and embrace me. Father, I am especially sorry for _____. (A minute of silence to confess the personal sins that trouble us). Father, in your mercy you sacrificed your only Son to purge away my guilt. For his sake, be merciful to me, your child, and in the joy of your Holy Spirit let me serve you all my days.

God, our heavenly Father, has forgiven all your sins. I, therefore, willingly and gladly obey his command to assure that all your sins are forgiven in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

**Just as I am, thou wilt receive,
Wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve;
Because thy promise I believe,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.**

JOHN 19:28

28 Later, knowing that everything had now been finished, and so that Scripture would be fulfilled, Jesus said, "I am thirsty."

The fifth light is extinguished.

PART 6 – EMBRACED

ROMANS 8

As the criminal on the cross came to realize, no matter what comes our way in life or in death, nothing can separate us from God's love.

What, then, shall we say in response to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?
He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?

Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. Who then is the one who condemns?

No one. Christ Jesus who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us.

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword?

No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.

For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers,

neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

HYMN 112

There Is A Fountain Filled with Blood

**There is a fountain filled with blood
Immanuel was slain
And sinners who are washed therein
Lose ev'ry guilty stain,
Lose ev'ry guilty stain.**

*SOLO The dying thief rejoiced to see
That fountain in his day;
And there have I, as vile as he,
Washed all my sins away,
Washed all my sins away.*

**Dear dying Lamb, your precious blood
Shall never lose its pow'r
Till all the ransomed Church of God
Be saved and sin no more,
Be saved and sin no more.**

JOHN 19:30

30 When he had received the drink, Jesus said, "It is finished."

The sixth light is extinguished.

PART 7 – TETELESTIA

LUKE 23:46

46 Jesus called out with a loud voice, "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit." When he had said this, he breathed his last.

THE TEMPLE CURTAIN IS TORN – THE WAY TO GOD IS OPEN

The seventh light is extinguished.

THE REMOVAL OF THE CHRIST CANDLE

**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?**

STREPITUS

A Latin word meaning "loud noise," symbolizing the earthquake that occurred when Jesus died and the closing of the Savior's tomb.

LORD'S PRAYER *(whispered)*

We pray.

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.

Now all is silent. The hellish crew, death and the grave have had their day. Yet, they shall not have the last word. The Temple they sought to destroy will rise up again on the third day. In confident hope and expectation, the church awaits the glory of the Easter morn.

The Christ Candle is restored representing the resurrection hope that is ours and will be celebrated on Easter morning.

Be at rest once more, O my soul, for the LORD has been good to you. For you, O LORD, have delivered my soul from death, my eyes from tears, my feet from stumbling, that I may walk before the LORD in the land of the living (Psalm 116:7-9). My friends, go in peace.

You are asked to leave in silence anticipating the joys of Easter while contemplating the solemnity of Good Friday. You may remain in the sanctuary for meditation or prayer as long as you like. The omission of the benediction today indicates that our worship is not complete until joined with the celebration of Easter. Festival services are Saturday night at 5:00 pm, Sunday at 6:30, 7:45, 9:00 (The Bridge), 9:15, 10:30 (The Bridge), and 10:45 am.

Welcome to St. Paul's!

St. Paul's is a family of believers in Jesus Christ who love each other and our community. Stop by the Welcome Center in the church entry for information about any of our ministries. An attendant will be there to answer your questions.

For Little Children: There is a "wobble room," where parents can go to quiet their children during the worship service. You can hear the service there. This room is to your right as you leave the center doors of the sanctuary.

Restrooms: Restrooms are to the left as you leave the sanctuary. There are also handicapped/family restrooms in the west wing of the church (to the right as you leave the sanctuary).

Special Needs: Large-print worship folders and hearing assistance are available. Please ask an usher for assistance.

Easter Traditional Services, April 16 – 17

Saturday at 5:00 pm

Sunday at 6:30, 7:45, 9:15, and 10:45 am

Easter Bridge Services, April 17

9:00 and 10:30 am (no Bridge Communion)

Christian Education

School Registration for 2022-2023

Our 3K – 8th grade Lutheran School is accepting registrations for the next school year. Call our Principal Seth Fitzsimmons at 414-422-0320, ext. 118 for a school tour or indicate interest on the Connection Card. We participate in both the Milwaukee and the Wisconsin Parental Choice programs and we offer generous financial aid. Don't let financial concerns keep you from exploring this opportunity to help your child grow in their faith, academics, and Christian character. We're worth a visit!

Sunday Morning Children's Ministry

Kids Club is our vibrant ministry for youth on Sundays for 3K through grade 6. All age levels meet in our school classrooms from 9:15 until 10:15 am. Kids Club resumes on Sunday, April 24. New participants are always welcome. Register any Sunday morning in the Trinity Café, directly across the parking lot from the church.

ST. PAUL'S MINISTERIAL STAFF *Office (414) 422-0320*

Pastor Jeffrey Bonack	Ext. 119	jbbonack@stpaulmuskego.org	Worship and Counseling
Mr. Randy Fink	Ext. 120	rfink@stpmuskego.org	Church Administrator
Mr. Seth Fitzsimmons	Ext. 118	sfitzsimmons@stpmuskego.org	School Administrator/Principal
Pastor David Kuehl	Ext. 121	dkuehl@stpaulmuskego.org	Member Care
Dr. Joel Nelson	Ext. 145	jnelson@stpmuskego.org	Youth and Adult Discipleship
Pastor Peter Panitzke	Ext. 122	ppanitzke@stpaulmuskego.org	Ministerial Team Leader
Mr. Paul Schuessler	Ext. 117	pschuessler@stpmuskego.org	Family Minister
Mrs. Heidi Schuh	Ext. 115	hschuh@stpmuskego.org	Asst. Director of Worship Operations
Pastor Nate Strobel	Ext. 293	nstrobel@stpmuskego.org	Resident Missionary
Mrs. Sally Wallner	Ext. 294	swallner@stpaulmuskego.org	Community Outreach Coordinator
Mr. Mike Westendorf	Ext. 295	mwestendorf@stpmuskego.org	Director of Worship Operations



Our vision is that by every possible means we bring every person in our area of influence closer to Christ through regular worship, small groups, and serving together.
