

ST.OLAF LUTHERAN CHURCH

GOOD FRIDAY

April 2, 2021

Prelude

Introduction

Grace and peace to you as we gather on this most Holy of days. We will be joining together for a Tenebrae. The word "Tenebrae" comes from the Latin meaning "darkness." The Tenebrae is an ancient Christian Good Friday service that makes use of gradually diminishing light through the extinguishing of candles to symbolize the events of that week from the triumphant Palm Sunday entry through Jesus' burial. This increasing darkness symbolizes the approaching darkness of Jesus' death and of hopelessness in the world without God. The service concludes in darkness, with a final candle, the Christ candle, carried out of the sanctuary, symbolizing the death of Jesus. The worshipers then leave in silence to ponder the impact of Christ's death and await the coming Resurrection.

If you are a part of our congregation watching from home, I'd invite you to find 7 candles and line them up on your coffee table or kitchen table. Please light all 7 candles. As we go through the readings please extinguish the candle when you're given those instructions. If you don't have access to candles—that's okay too. Please find 7 light switches and/or lamps and turn them on at this time. As we go one by one through the extinguishing please turn off one light.

Due to the solemn nature of this worship service we ask that you begin worship in silence. Please refrain from conversation or excessive noise. Use this time to gather your thoughts, pray, and turn your hearts towards Christ's sacrifice for you.

***Procession of the Cross**

***Call to Worship**

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

P: We gather here to worship God.

C: We gather to remember how Jesus suffered and died for us and to thank God for His love and mercy.

P: Scripture said the servant would be exalted and lifted high.

C: We never thought that he would be lifted high onto a cross.

P: Scripture also said that upon him is the punishment that made us whole.

C: But how can we become whole when the anointed one is being brought so low?

P: It is getting darker. The night is upon us.

C: We are here with our Savior. Let us accompany him this night into the darkness.

***Confession and Forgiveness**

P: Why are we here tonight? We come to remind ourselves how much God loves us— even to the point of giving the Son. Let us come humbly before our Savior confessing our sins and getting out of our own way.

(please observe a time of silence for confession & reflection)

P: Let us pray...

C: Oh Lord, on this darkest of nights we sit with your disciples who abandoned you. We denied you three times, sat in the darkness afraid to show our faces much less do your will. We are frozen from living much less doing your righteousness and justice. As we

listen to your story told again we hear once more how costly it was to you for us to be able to say “in the name of Jesus Christ you are forgiven.” Help us in our unbelief – our inaction. Amen.

P: Hear anew what it means. Hear anew how much our Lord loves all of us. Hear with deeper understanding what it cost this man so that I can declare to you that in Jesus Christ you are forgiven. Now go forth and live.

C: Amen

***Prayer of the Day**

P: Let us pray together,

C: **Almighty God, look with loving mercy on your family, for whom our Lord Jesus Christ was willing to be betrayed, 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.**

The Seven Last Words

The 1st Word:

Pastor Emily

“Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.” (Luke 23:34)

Christ’s first words from the Cross, in the earliest throes of His agony, are to ask God to forgive the very people who placed Him there. How many of us are lonely because of estrangement from someone once close to us whom we have refused to forgive or who has been unforgiving of us? Can we make a gesture to reach out to that person while our arms remain free to move? Even if we should be rebuffed, can we do as Christ did and pray that God will forgive that person — and us, too?

Extinguish the 1st candle

P: Father, forgive us...

C: **forgive us when we don’t know what we’re doing, and please be even more merciful when we do. Amen**

HYMN: *How Deep The Father's Love*

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.

The 2nd Word:

Viv Nore

“Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise.” (Luke 23:43)

The completely innocent Christ was given two criminals as His companions as He hung from the Cross. One of them railed at Him, demanding that He save them all if He truly was the Christ. The other rebuked the first for not fearing God present in Christ, who suffered the same punishment as theirs even though He was innocent.

Extinguish the 2nd candle

P: Almighty God, help us see...

C: **help us to see that the paradise we seek can be found in the open arms of your Son. Amen**

HYMN: *Jesus Remember Me* (Congregation 3x) ELW #616

Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom Jesus,
remember me when you come into your kingdom.

The 3rd word:

Nancy Hamilton

“Woman, behold, your son. . . Behold, your mother.” (John 19:26–27)

Now imagine Christ's loneliness as He looks down at His totally loving, devoted mother, beside John, His “beloved disciple.” He knows how they share His tortures and will soon have to cope with His loss in their earthly existence, but He is anything but paralyzed by His distress. He wants those whom He loves to continue

to love and care for each other in the most intimate of ways, as that between a mother and her child, a child and his mother. Jesus grants Mary to be mother to John.

Centuries after that day, St. Thérèse of Lisieux would ponder the strength of the Mother Mary in enduring so many sorrows. So, is there a lonely person in your life, perhaps someone bereaved of a parent, or a child, for whom you might step forward and offer love and support, as John and Mother Mary offered each other love and support?

Extinguish the 3rd candle

P: Holy God, may we be as mothers and sons to each other...

C: **living out Jesus' call from the cross to take care of each other as a family bonded together by Your love. Amen**

HYMN

In Christ Alone

(Vs 1 & 2)

In Christ alone my hope is found. He is my light, my strength, my song
This cornerstone, this solid ground; Firm through the fiercest drought and storm
What heights of love, what depths of peace
When fears are stilled, when strivings cease
My comforter, my all in all. Here, in the love of Christ, I stand

In Christ alone, who took on flesh; Fullness of God in helpless babe
This gift of love and righteousness scorned by the ones he came to save
'Til on that cross, as Jesus died; The wrath of God was satisfied
For every sin, on him, was laid Here, in the death of Christ, I live

The 4th word:

Dave Sauer

“My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” – Mark 15:33-36

Christ here echoes Psalm 22:1, which expresses the desolation He felt in His human nature. Here is Christ suffering. Here is another example of how we can join our suffering with Christ's. In our loneliest hours, do we feel that we are forsaken not only by man, but by God? If so, can we still call out to God in prayer, expecting that He will hear us?

Extinguish the 4th candle

P: Merciful God, thank you for conquering death.

C: **Help us to cry out “my God” even when we feel forsaken. Remind us that you never leave our side, even in the darkest of times.**
Amen

HYMN

Good, Good Father

Oh and I've seen many searching for answers far and wide
But I know we're all searching for answers only you provide
'Cause you know just what we need before we say a word
You're a good good Father. It's who You are, it's who You are, it's who You are
And I'm loved by you it's who I am, it's who I am, it's who I am

The 5th word:

Howard Hartman

“I am thirsty.” – John 19:28

Here is another reminder that Christ joined us in our humanity. The eternal Word who was in the beginning, who was with God, and who was God (see John 1:1) has agreed to take on the weakness, the cravings, and the gnawing of the human flesh of His creatures, for our own sake, and yet we let Him suffer.

Do we take much time to think of the lonely people in our lives for whom Christ died and of how they might thirst for attention? And we needn't get too metaphorical, for sometimes the lonely are isolated and may experience physical thirst and hunger that we might help relieve. The Church has always recognized that we are not disembodied souls, but ensouled bodies and both elements of our unity are good and deserving of care. This is why the Church has long encouraged both spiritual and corporal (fleshly, bodily) works of mercy.

In fact, sometimes we spend so much time in the virtual, electronic world that we forget that we all have bodies with needs we can help each other fulfill. When a text or an e-mail replaces a phone call, we have cut ourselves off from the recipient's voice.

When a call replaces face-to-face contact, we have cut ourselves off not only from that person's face, but from his or her body language, all those subtle ways that God has given us to communicate with one another by virtue of having bodies. When we connect only over distant airwaves, we can certainly suggest that a thirsty friend get a drink, but we are in no position to hand him one.

Extinguish the 5th candle

P: Giving God, who poured out his blood so that we might never be thirsty.

C: **Help us to see the needs of others and meet them, as Christ has done for us. Amen**

HYMN

Go to Dark Gethsemane

ELW 347

(vs 1 & 2)

1. Go to dark Gethsemane, all who feel the tempter's pow'r; your redeemer's conflict see. Watch with him one bitter hour; turn not from his griefs away; learn from Jesus Christ to pray.
2. Follow to the judgement hall, view the Lord of life arraigned; oh, the wormwood and the gall! Oh, the pangs his soul sustained! Shun not suff'ring, shame, or loss; learn from him to bear the cross.

The 6th word:

Emily Wikner

"It is finished." – John 19:29-30

What a relief Christ must have felt when His task, the most gruesome yet important task ever assigned on earth, was complete! He expressed it in these simple words: "It is finished." Our own life task is clearly not finished.

What, then, will we do to establish new emotional and social connections and

strengthen the ones we already have in our time left on earth before, God willing, we pass through the gates of heaven Christ opened for us by completing His mission on the wood of the Cross?

Extinguish the 6th candle

P: God of all life

C: **use Your power and majesty to bring to completion the work you have called us to do, just as you followed Jesus to the cross...and beyond. Amen**

HYMN

Go to Dark Gethsemane

**ELW 347
(vs 3 & 4)**

3. Calv'ry's mournful mountain climb; there adoring at his feet, mark that miracle of time, God's own sacrifice complete. "It is finished!" hear him cry; learn from Jesus Christ to die.
4. Early hasten to the tomb where they laid his breathless clay; all is solitude and gloom. Who has taken him away? Christ is ris'n! He meets our eyes. Savior teach us so to rise.

The 7th Word:

Pastor Emily

"Father, into Your hands I commend my spirit." – Luke 23:44-46

These are the very last words Jesus breathed on earth before His spirit returned to His Father. Will our focus be on God in our last moment? It is, after all, "in Him that we live and move and have our being" (Acts 17:28). Are we willing to commit our spirits to God *now*? Such commitment to God, who is no mere abstract power or force, let alone an uncaring ruler, but is our Father, who has given His Son for our salvation, and who gives us His Holy Spirit to dwell in the temples of our bodies, cannot help but provide relief to our deepest feelings of loneliness, and motivation to reach out with His love to the lonely around us.

Let's ask ourselves how we might unite our sufferings with Christ's and, despite what may befall us, resolve to trust in Him and commit our spirits to the Father's loving hands.

Extinguish the 7th candle

P: Loving God, thank you for opening your arms to receive us.

C: We commend ourselves to you this day, as we accept the gift of life given by your son, Jesus Christ. Amen

Silent Meditation

***HYMN**

Were You There

ELW 353

(vs 1 & 2)

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?
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?

***LITANY OF SOLEMN REPROACHES OF THE CROSS**

The Solemn Reproaches are a Good Friday tradition dating back to the Middle Ages.

P: Behold, the cross that held the Savior of the world.

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

P: Behold, the cross that held the Savior of the world.

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

P: Behold, the cross that held the Savior of the world.

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

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: 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: 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 with 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: I planted you as my fairest vine, but you have brought forth bitter fruit; I made you the 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.

***HYMN**

Were You There

ELW 353

(vs 3, 4 & 5)

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?

4. Were you there when 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?

***Darkness in the Sanctuary**

***Tolling of the Bell** *(The bell will toll 33 times to signify Jesus' 33 years of life. Also, at this time the Christ candle is being removed in remembrance that the Light of Christ is being extinguished in his death. It will return after the benediction as the promise of Resurrection)*

***Benediction**

P: Depart now in peace - and may the Spirit of Christ, go with you,
may his faith and trust abide within you, and may the knowledge
of his love support you both now and forevermore,

C: **Amen**

Presider: Pastor Emily

Readers: Viv Nore

Nancy Hamilton

Dave Sauer

Howard Hartman

Emily Wikner

Music: Matt Dress

Sound: Marc Matthes

Mark Oester

Bob Younie

Cross Bearers: Craig Hamilton

Mark Oester

Doug Seltz