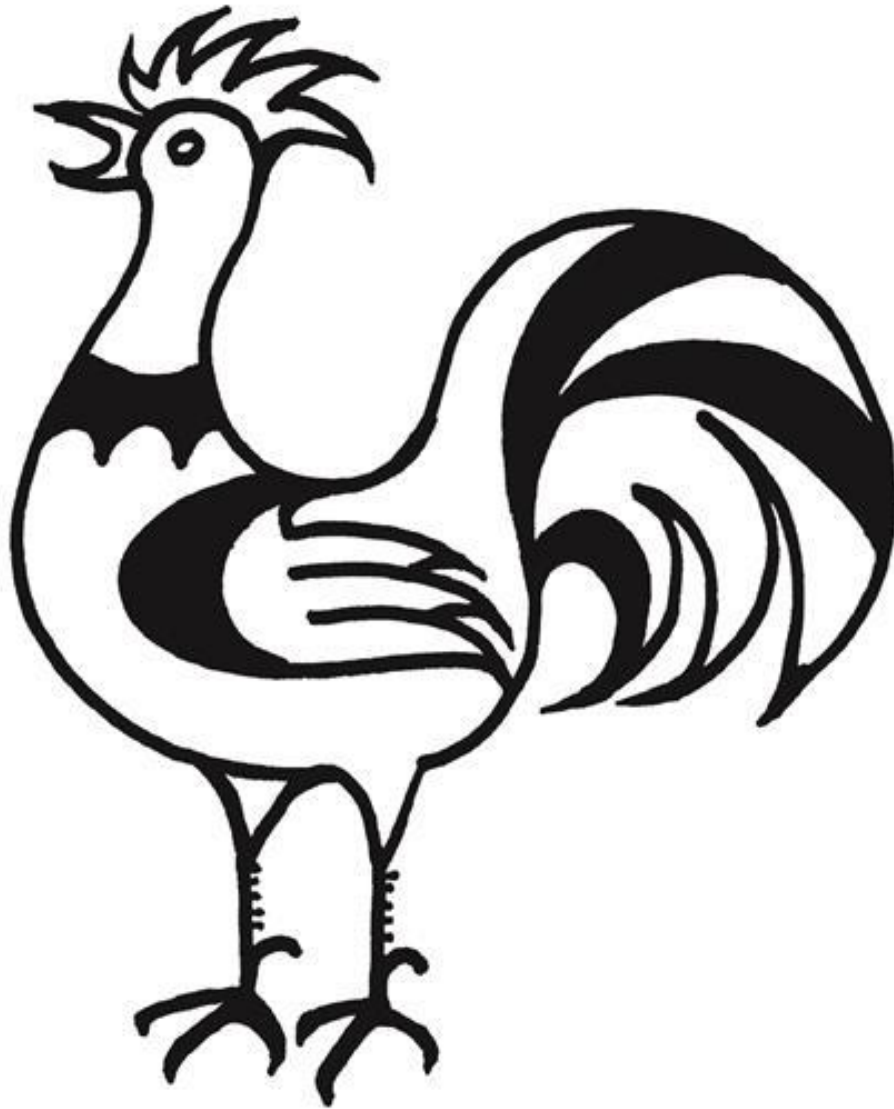


ST. ANDREW'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

Good Friday – Service of Shadows

Friday, April 18, 2025



**3900 Freemansburg Ave., Easton PA 18045
(610) 252-2258**

Good Friday

7:00pm Service of Shadows

IT'S GOOD THAT YOU ARE HERE

We are glad that you have joined us this evening. We pray that this evening's worship is helpful in preparing for the celebration of Easter.

This day commemorates our Lord's death on the cross. In earlier calendars, its austerity gave similar character and mood to every Friday in the year as well; so Friday became a time to recall the Lord's passion.

In the cross of Jesus, human, evil, treachery, betrayal, disloyalty, cowardice, violence, selfishness, sadism, and pain have all done their worst. They have played out their fullest powers. Still Jesus loves and forgives. Still Jesus clings to the promise of God's final vindication. The love that suffers to the end is the love that endures, that triumphs. That is the assurance of Easter.

P Let us pray. 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 forever.

C Amen.

HYMN

Where Charity and Love Prevail

Hymnal #359

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

P Let us pray.

C Gracious Father, time and again we turn to the shadows of sin, and away from the light of your love. Forgive us Lord. Help us to turn away from the paths of darkness, and cling forever to the cross on which our Savior suffered and died for our salvation. We are in no way worthy, Lord, but trusting in the loving promise of your Son; we pray that as we hear the story of his passion, we may be cleansed by the fire of repentance, and made new creatures through his blood. We pray in the name of our dear Lord, your Son, who died that we might live. Amen.

P Lord, remember us in your kingdom, and teach us to pray:

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.

JESUS ON TRIAL

A The soldiers brought Jesus before the religious leaders of the people, men like Caiaphas the high priest, and his father-in-law Annas. These leaders resented Jesus. A long time ago they had decided that Jesus must be destroyed. Now all the leaders had to do was convict Jesus of a crime worthy of the death sentence.

P Jesus made it easy for them. He said, "I am the Son of God."

A As far as the Jewish leaders were concerned, this was blasphemy, that is, speaking evil of God. Because Jesus told the truth and said that he was the Son of God, they therefore condemned him to death. One problem, however, remained to be solved. Only the Roman government could actually carry out a death sentence. So the leaders took Jesus to the judgment hall of Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor.

Soon Jesus of Nazareth stood before Pilate. Although Pilate questioned Jesus carefully, he could not find any fault in him. He therefore tried to avoid passing judgment on Jesus.

Pilate sent Jesus to Herod, the King of Galilee, in which country Nazareth was located. Herod happened to be in Jerusalem for the Passover. But Herod had to agree with Pilate — there was no reason to condemn Jesus. Now Pilate tried a different plan. He thought that Jesus' enemies would be satisfied if they could see Jesus being ridiculed and tortured. Pilate ordered the soldiers to tie Jesus to a post and to whip him. But even that was not enough.

C **The soldiers mocked Jesus. They found a purple robe and put it on him. They took some sharp thorn branches and quickly made a crown which they forced on Jesus' head. They hit him and tormented him.**

A When the soldiers finally brought Jesus out onto the porch, Pilate felt sure the people would be satisfied. He pointed out to Jesus and said, "Behold the Man!"

C **But Jesus' enemies were not satisfied. They shouted in a chorus, "Away with Him! Crucify Him!"**

A **Pilate gave up trying to save Jesus. He ordered his centurion to take Jesus out and nail him to a cross on Calvary, along with two criminals scheduled to be executed that very morning. For Jesus, our Savior, the end is near.**

HYMN

O Sacred Head, Now Wounded

Hymnal #351

JESUS ON THE CROSS

A The crucifixion procession arrived at Calvary a little before nine o'clock on Friday morning. The two thieves were fastened to their crosses. Then the Roman soldiers fastened Jesus to his cross by driving sharp nails through his wrists and feet. Next they raised the cross, with Jesus on it, to an upright position. There Jesus hung, on the center cross, between two criminals. Underneath the cross were gathered crowds of people who shouted insults at Jesus, who himself had never done them a single wrong, and who showed them only love and peace.

THE FIRST WORD

P Jesus hung on the cross in agony. Jesus hung on the cross, bleeding, broken, struggling to breath, slowly dying. Before him he saw men and women. He saw Roman soldiers who had nailed him to his cross, and who had mocked him and gambled for his clothing. He saw temple officials who had condemned him. He saw his own disciples who had betrayed him. He saw his own friends who had disowned him. He saw a world of people taunting him, ignoring him, spitting in his face. He saw you and me.

Jesus saw all this. Although he suffered, bled, felt his life slipping away, he thought not of himself. He did not look at his own wounds, at his own plight, Through the agony, the pain, the isolation, the imminent death, he looked at the soldiers, the temple leaders, the disciples, the friends, and at you and at me. He looked at us in our sin, and even then, was moved to compassion.

Jesus spoke from the cross, full of love:

"Father, forgive them: for they do not know what they are doing."

Silence for Meditation

HYMN

Ah, Holy Jesus

Hymnal #349

THE SECOND WORD

A Jesus was not crucified alone. The irony of the agony was that he was killed between two criminals.

C **These two criminals knew who Jesus was. They knew he was no ordinary lawbreaker. They knew this prophet, this itinerant preacher, and they knew why he was dying. They knew he had done nothing wrong, that he was without sin.**

A One criminal turned. Full of pain, full of anger, full of bitterness, he spat: "Are you not the Messiah? Save yourself and us!" He taunted Jesus. He reviled and attacked him.

The other criminal turned. Full of pain, full of hurt, but full of faith, this criminal spoke to the other: "Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? And we indeed have been condemned justly, for we are getting what we deserve for our deeds, but this man has done nothing wrong." And he turned to Jesus, and said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." He begged Jesus not for an end to pain, an end to suffering. He begged Jesus not for avoidance of death. He begged Jesus for his presence. He begged that Jesus might remember him, might dwell with him, might make death not the last word.

P And Jesus spoke from the cross, full of compassion:

"Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise."

P Let us pray.

P O Holy Jesus, you have mercifully accepted the conversion of the criminal upon the cross and assured him of a place in heaven with you. We now thank you for remembering us also, and for

sending your Holy Spirit to bring us into your kingdom of grace, where we will have the forgiveness of sins and the blessed hope of life everlasting. Rule our hearts and lives by your holy Word, and when our life on this earth comes to an end, take us to be with you and the Father and the Spirit forever in paradise.

C **Amen.**

HYMN

Jesus Remember Me (Taizé)

Hymnal #616

{This is a taizé hymn. Its simple tone is intended to be repeated as you contemplate the words.}

Silence for Meditation

THE THIRD WORD

A Before Jesus stood his mother. Mary, the woman who first learned of Jesus from an angel's song. Mary, who sang her own magnificent song of praise. Mary, whose very soul proclaimed the greatness of the Lord. Mary, who announced that God's mercy reaches from age to age. Mary now watched her son, bleeding, beaten, broken, dying.

Before Jesus also stood the beloved disciple John. The disciple who sat next to him at his last supper. One of the inner circle Jesus trusted most. A disciple who followed him from town to town, miracle to miracle, healing to healing. A disciple who would be lost and frightened when Jesus was gone. A disciple whom Jesus knew would become a crucial leader in the early church. The disciple John, whom Jesus loved.

Jesus looked at them both, through eyes of compassion. He saw two people suffering. He saw two people who felt alone, and empty. He saw two people who desperately needed companionship and love. He looked at them as he looks at us, seeing our loneliness, our despair, our anxiety and fear. He called his mother and the disciple to care for one another. He called us to care for one another as well.

And Jesus spoke from the cross, full of love:

"Woman, here is your son. Here is your mother."

SPECIAL MUSIC

Silence for Meditation

THE FOURTH WORD

- A When Jesus had hung on the cross for several hours, a wall of darkness covered the face of the land. As the light of the world suffered and bled, the light of the sun failed. All of creation mourned for him, for God's own son, tortured and dying. The darkness lasted for three hours. The day was turned to night.
- P Jesus recalled the words of Psalm 22. Verses from the psalm swirled in his head, as he saw them enacted in vivid clarity all around him on Golgotha.
*"All who see me mock at me; they make mouths at me, they shake their heads."
"My mouth is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue sticks to my jaws."
"They divide my clothes among themselves, and for my clothing they cast lots."*
- A He looked out from the cross in the dim light. He saw all the prophecy fulfilled. He saw the Psalmist's words becoming dark reality in the premature dusk. And he knew this Psalm was his own. And he spoke to his Father. He spoke in the only words he could find, the words the Psalmist wrote centuries ago.
- P And Jesus spoke from the cross, full of sorrow:
"My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

SPECIAL MUSIC

Silence for Meditation

THE FIFTH WORD

- A The cross was not a joke. Christ was experiencing all of the crucifixion — God was truly suffering in agony on Golgotha. He felt the pressure of the nails. The warm raw numbness of the flowing blood. The wheezing breaths, the gnawing dehydration. The dizzying lack of blood. Jesus desperately wanted relief. He was fully human, fully helpless, fully broken, and he wanted it to end.
- P And Jesus cried from the cross:
"I am thirsty."
- P Let us pray.
- P O Lord and Savior, you have endured the cross for our sake and through great suffering of body and soul accomplished all things for our salvation. Help us now to recognize in the words "I thirst" the depth of your love for us and for all humankind, and your fervent desire to have all humankind love you. Make our hearts constantly thirsty for your love. Lead us to do those things which will cause humankind to come to you, there to drink the water of life which satisfies forever.
- C **Amen.**

SPECIAL MUSIC

Silence for Meditation

THE LAST WORDS

- A Jesus was thirsty for drink.
A sponge soaked in sour wine was raised to his lips.
Jesus was very thirsty.
His physical thirst was not quenched through the sour wine.
The trauma of crucifixion cannot be fixed by sour wine. But Jesus thirsted after more than drink.
He thirsted after more than physical needs.
Christ thirsted beyond himself, and this thirst was quenched indeed.
Jesus craved his Father's kingdom.
Jesus craved his Father's will.
Jesus hungered for righteousness, for justice, for salvation.
He thirsted for all people everywhere to be made right, to be set free from sin. He thirsted for us.
- P And Jesus spoke from the cross:
"It is finished."
"Father, into your hands I commend my spirit."
- A Having said this, he breathed his last.

SPECIAL MUSIC

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

Please exit in silence.

THIS EVENING'S WORSHIP LEADERS

PASTOR: the Rev. Thomas Neel
Organist: Mark Jonkman
Worship Assistant: David Abel
Audio-Video Production: John Costanzo

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ELW 351 O Sacred Head Now Wounded In the Public Domain / Text: Paul Gerhardt, 1607–1676, based on Arnulf of Louvain, d. 1250; tr. composite Music: German melody, c. 1500; adapt. Hans Leo Hassler, 1564–1612; arr. Johann Sebastian Bach, 1685–1750 Tune: Herzlich tut mich verlangen (isometric), Passion Chorale

ELW 349 Ah, Holy Jesus In the Public Domain / Text: Johann Heermann, 1585–1647; tr. Robert Bridges, 1844–1930, alt.

Music: Johann Crüger, 1598–1662 Tune: Herzliebster Jesu

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