

APRIL 2, 2021

WELCOME

HYMN: "Stricken, Smitten, and Afflicted"
LSB #451)

Stricken, smitten, and afflicted,
See him dying on the tree!
'Tis the Christ, by man rejected;
Yes, my soul, 'tis He, 'tis He!
'Tis the long expected Prophet,
David's Son, yet David's Lord;
Proofs I see sufficient of it:
'Tis the true and faithful Word.

Ye who think of sin but lightly
Nor suppose the evil great
Here may view its nature rightly,
Here its guilt may estimate.
Mark the sacrifice appointed,
See who bears the awful load;
'Tis the Word, the Lord's anointed,
Son of Man and Son of God.
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INVOCATION

OLD TESTAMENT READING: Isaiah 52:13-53:12

¹³See, my servant will act wisely; he will be raised and lifted up and highly exalted. ¹⁴Just as there were many who were appalled at him — his appearance was so disfigured beyond that of any man and his form marred beyond human likeness— ¹⁵so will he sprinkle many nations, and kings will shut their mouths because of him. For what they were not told, they will see, and what they have not heard, they will understand...¹Who has believed our message and to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed? ²He grew up before him like a tender shoot, and like a root out of dry ground. He had no beauty or majesty to attract us to him, nothing in his appearance that we should desire him. ³He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows, and familiar with suffering. Like one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not. ⁴Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we considered him stricken by God, smitten by him, and afflicted. ⁵But 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. ⁶We all, 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. ⁷He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; he was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth. ⁸By oppression and judgment he was taken away. And who can speak of his descendants? For he was cut off from the land of the living; for the transgression of my people he was stricken. ⁹He was assigned a grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death, though he had done no violence, nor was any deceit in his mouth. ¹⁰Yet it was the LORD's will to crush him and cause him to suffer, and though the LORD makes his life a guilt offering, he will see his offspring and prolong his days, and the will of the LORD will prosper in his hand. ¹¹After the suffering of his soul, he will see the light of life and be satisfied; by his knowledge my righteous servant will justify many, and he



will bear their iniquities. ¹² Therefore I will give him a portion among the great, and he will divide the spoils with the strong, because he poured out his life unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors. For he bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.

EPISTLE READING: Hebrews 4:14-5:9

¹⁴ Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has gone through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. ¹⁵ For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet was without sin. ¹⁶ Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need...¹ Every high priest is selected from among men and is appointed to represent them in matters related to God, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins. ² He is able to deal gently with those who are ignorant and are going astray, since he himself is subject to weakness. ³ This is why he has to offer sacrifices for his own sins, as well as for the sins of the people. ⁴ No one takes this honor upon himself; he must be called by God, just as Aaron was. ⁵ So Christ also did not take upon himself the glory of becoming a high priest. But God said to him, “You are my Son; today I have become your Father.” ⁶ And he says in another place, “You are a priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek.” ⁷ During the days of Jesus’ life on earth, he offered up prayers and petitions with loud cries and tears to the one who could save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission. ⁸ Although he was a son, he learned obedience from what he suffered ⁹ and, once made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him.

HYMN: “Upon the Cross Extended” (LSB #453)

**Upon the cross extended
See, world, your Lord suspended.
Your Savior yields His breath.
The Prince of Life from heaven
Himself has freely given To shame and blows and bitter death.**

**Your soul in griefs unbounded,
Your head with thorns surrounded,
You died to ransom me.
The cross for me enduring,
The crown for me securing,
You healed my wounds and set me free.**

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SERMON: Luke 23:44,45a “In the Midst of Darkness”

OFFERING

++WORDS FROM THE CROSS++

THE FIRST WORD: John 19:14-16a; Luke 23:32-34

¹⁴ It was the day of Preparation of Passover Week, about the sixth hour. “Here is your king,” Pilate said to the Jews. ¹⁵ But they shouted, “Take him away! Take him away! Crucify him!” “Shall I crucify your king?” Pilate asked. “We have no king but Caesar,” the chief priests answered. ¹⁶ Finally Pilate handed him over to them to be crucified...³² Two other men, both criminals, were also led out with him to be executed. ³³ 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. ³⁴ Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.” And they divided up his clothes by casting lots.

HYMN: “Chief of Sinners Though I Be” (LSB #611)

Chief of sinners though I be,
Jesus shed His blood for me,
Died that I might live on high,
Lives that I might never die.
As the branch is to the vine,
I am His, and He is mine.

Oh, the height of Jesus' love,
Higher than the heav'ns above,
Deeper than the depths of sea,
Lasting as eternity!
Love that found me wondrous thought!
Found me when I sought Him not.

Only Jesus can impart
Balm to heal the wounded heart,
Peace that flows from sin forgiv'n,
Joy that lifts the soul to heav'n,
Faith and hope to walk with God
In the way that Enoch trod.

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PRAYER: (Spoken together)

Lord Jesus Christ, You are the Prince of Peace. When You were mocked, You did not respond with harsh words. When You were tormented, You did not react in anger. When You were nailed to the cross, You prayed for forgiveness for those who caused You to suffer. Give to us the virtues of gentleness, patience, and a forgiving spirit, that we may repay evil with good. Teach us also to love our enemies, and as children of the heavenly Father, to live in peace with all people. Amen.

(The first candle is extinguished.)

THE SECOND WORD: Luke 23:35-43

³⁵ The people stood watching, and the rulers even sneered at him. They said, “He saved others; let him save himself if he is the Christ of God, the Chosen One.” ³⁶ The soldiers also came up and mocked him. They offered him wine vinegar ³⁷ and said, “If you are the king of the Jews, save yourself.” ³⁸ There was a written notice above him, which read: THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS. ³⁹ One of the criminals who hung there hurled insults at him: “Aren't you the Christ? 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, “I tell you the truth, today you will be with me in paradise.”

HYMN: "I'm But a Stranger Here" (LSB #748)

I'm but a stranger here,
Heav'n is my home;
Earth is a desert drear,
Heav'n is my home.
Danger and sorrow stand
Round me on ev'ry hand;
Heav'n is my fatherland,
Heav'n is my home.

Therefore I murmur not,
Heav'n is my home;
What e'er my earthly lot,
Heav'n is my home;
And I shall surely stand
There at my Lord's right hand;
Heav'n is my father land,
Heav'n is my home.

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PRAYER: (Spoken together)

Lord Jesus Christ, in Your infinite mercy You heard the pleas of the dying thief on the cross next to You. We pray that You would open our hearts in mercy to welcome those who turn to You, and rejoice in their salvation. When our last hour comes, hold us firm in our faith, and bring us also to live with You in Paradise. Amen.

(The second candle is extinguished.)

THE THIRD WORD: 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 his mother, "Dear 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.

HYMN: "Be Still, My Soul" (LSB #752)

Be still, my soul; the Lord is on your side;
Bear patiently the cross of grief or pain;
Leave to your God to order and provide;
In ev'ry change He faithful will remain.
Be still, my soul; your best your heav'nly Friend
Through thorny ways leads to a joyful end.

**Be still, my soul; your God will undertake
To guide the future as He has the past.
Your hope, your confidence let nothing shake;
All now mysterious shall be bright at last.
Be still, my soul; the waves and winds still know
His voice who ruled them while He dwelt below.**

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PRAYER: *(Spoken together)*

Lord Jesus Christ, while You suffered the agony of the cross, Your thoughts turned to the welfare of others. Your concern was for Your mother in her sorrow. We pray that You would regard with pity all parents who mourn the death of their children, and all parents who sorrow because their children have gotten into trouble or forsaken their faith. By the power of Your healing Spirit, we pray that parents and children may know peace, and that relationships may be restored. Amen.

(The third candle is extinguished.)

THE FOURTH WORD: Matthew 27:45-47

⁴⁵ From the sixth hour until the ninth hour darkness came over all the land. ⁴⁶ 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?” ⁴⁷ When some of those standing there heard this, they said, “He’s calling Elijah.”

HYMN: “O God Forsake Me Not”

**O God, forsake me not!
Your gracious presence lend me;
Lord, lead Your helpless child;
Your Holy Spirit send me
That I my course may run.
O be my light, my lot,
My staff, my rock, my shield-
O God, forsake me not!**

**O God, forsake me not!
Lord, I am Yours forever.
O keep me strong in faith
That I may leave You never.
Grant me a blessed end
When my good fight is fought;
Help me in life and death-
O God, forsake me not!**

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PRAYER: (*Spoken together*)

Lord God, Father of all people and Creator of all that exists, You hold all people in Your power. We pray that You would not forsake the world which Your Son died to redeem. Even though we still see the influence of sin and evil all around us, assure us of Your continued presence in our midst. Help us to know Your love in our lives, so we can show Your presence to others. Amen.

(The fourth candle is extinguished.)

THE FIFTH WORD: Matthew 10:38-42; John 19:28-29

³⁸...anyone who does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me. ³⁹Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. ⁴⁰“He who receives you receives me, and he who receives me receives the one who sent me. ⁴¹Anyone who receives a prophet because he is a prophet will receive a prophet’s reward, and anyone who receives a righteous man because he is a righteous man will receive a righteous man’s reward. ⁴²And if anyone gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones because he is my disciple, I tell you the truth, he will certainly not lose his reward.”...²⁸ Later, knowing that all was now completed, and so that the Scripture would be fulfilled, Jesus said, “I am thirsty.” ²⁹A jar of wine vinegar was there, so they soaked a sponge in it, put the sponge on a stalk of the hyssop plant, and lifted it to Jesus’ lips.

HYMN: “Speak, O Lord, Your Servant Listens” (LSB #589)

Speak, O Lord, Your servant listens,
Let Your Word to me come near;
Newborn life and spirit give me,
Let each promise still my fear.
Death’s dread pow’r, its inward strife,
Wars against Your Word of life;
Fill me, Lord, with love’s strong fervor
That I cling to You forever!

Lord, Your words are waters living
When my thirsting spirit pleads.
Lord, Your words are bread life-giving;
On Your words my spirit feeds.
Lord, Your words will be my light
Through death’s cold and dreary night;
Yes, they are my sword prevailing
And my cup of joy unfailing!

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PRAYER: (*Spoken together*)

Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, You endured not only spiritual anguish but also physical pain on the cross in our place. We thirst for the healing that only You can provide. When we find ourselves suffering, give us peace and patience to endure the pain that comes our way. Bring to our minds all that You endured for us, and give us the strength to bear our burdens by the grace of Your holy example. Amen.

(The fifth candle is extinguished.)

THE SIXTH WORD: Hebrews 9:11-12,15,27-28; John 19:30a

¹¹ When Christ came as high priest of the good things that are already here, he went through the greater and more perfect tabernacle that is not man-made, that is to say, not a part of this creation. ¹² He did not enter by means of the blood of goats and calves; but he entered the Most Holy Place once for all by his own blood, having obtained eternal redemption...¹⁵ For this reason Christ is the mediator of a new covenant, that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance—now that he has died as a ransom to set them free from the sins committed under the first covenant...²⁷ Just as man is destined to die once, and after that to face judgment, ²⁸ so Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many people; and he will appear a second time, not to bear sin, but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for him...³⁰ When he had received the drink, Jesus said, “It is finished.” With that, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

HYMN: “Go to Dark Gethsemane” (LSB #436)

**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.**

**Cal’vry’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.**
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PRAYER: (Spoken together)

Lord Jesus Christ, You are the author and finisher of our faith. You did not stop short of finishing the task given to You by Your Father. We pray that You would complete in us also everything that You intend for us, so that as children of the heavenly Father, we may live for His glory. Amen.

(The sixth candle is extinguished.)

THE SEVENTH WORD: Luke 23:44-46; Matthew 27:54

⁴⁴ It was now about the sixth hour, and darkness came over the whole land until the ninth hour, ⁴⁵ for the sun stopped shining. And the curtain of the temple was torn in two. 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...⁵⁴ When the centurion and those with him who were guarding Jesus saw the earthquake and all that had happened, they were terrified, and exclaimed, “Surely he was the Son of God!”

HYMN: “O Dearest Jesus, What Law Hast Thou Broken” (LSB #439)

**O dearest Jesus, what law hast Thou broken
That such sharp sentence should on Thee be spoken?
Of what great crime hast Thou to make confession,
What dark transgression?**

**They crown Thy head with thorns, they smite, they scourge Thee;
With cruel mocking to the cross they urge Thee;
They give Thee gall to drink, they still decry Thee;
They crucify Thee.**

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PRAYER: *(Spoken together)*

Lord Jesus Christ, as You gave Your life on the cross in our place, You commended Your spirit into the loving hands of our heavenly Father. Give us the grace to trust in You for all things. When our last hour comes, grant us peace, that we may close our eyes with confidence, knowing that we also will dwell forever in the hands of our heavenly Father. Amen.

(The Christ candle is extinguished signifying Jesus' death on the cross, and the church lights are turned off just as it became dark when Jesus died.)

(A loud noise is heard representing the closing of the tomb. We leave in silence awaiting to celebrate Christ's resurrection on Easter morning.)

GOOD FRIDAY

APRIL 2, 2021

Luke 23:44,45a

"In the Midst of Darkness"

44 It was now about the sixth hour, and darkness came over the whole land until the ninth hour, 45 for the sun stopped shining.

1. Why was it fitting that Jesus die in darkness?
2. Where does the darkness of sin reveal itself?
3. How do we know it wasn't an eclipse that kept the sun from shining?
4. How could life continue even if the sun stopped shining?
5. What did the darkness at Jesus' death foretell?
6. How does the darkness at Jesus' death also give us comfort?
7. What is the Holy Spirit doing now in the midst of our darkness?
8. Why is there no need for fear in the midst of all the darkness?