



“PLACES OF THE PASSION: PILATE’S JUDGMENT HALL”

Sunday, March 21, 2021 9:00AM

Worship Service

AS WE GATHER

In this service for Week 5 of Lent, the place of the Passion is Pilate’s Judgment Hall, where Pilate is positioned here to set Jesus free, but turns him over to be crucified instead. We are called to remember that the judgment that should have been placed on us was placed on him that we might be free. The meaning, history and spiritual inspiration associated with Pilate’s Judgment Hall help us to grow to understand more deeply the hard road our Lord took that the way to heaven might be open to us.

Sit

OPENING HYMN

“Christ, the Life of All the Living”

LSB 420 sts. 1-4

- 1 Christ, the life of all the living,
Christ, the death of death, our foe,
Who, Thyself for me once giving
To the darkest depths of woe:
Through Thy suff’rings, death, and merit
I eternal life inherit.
Thousand, thousand thanks shall be,
Dearest Jesus, unto Thee.
- 2 Thou, ah! Thou, hast taken on Thee
Bonds and stripes, a cruel rod;
Pain and scorn were heaped upon Thee,
O Thou sinless Son of God!
Thus didst Thou my soul deliver
From the bonds of sin forever.
Thousand, thousand thanks shall be,
Dearest Jesus, unto Thee.
- 3 Thou hast borne the smiting only
That my wounds might all be whole;
Thou hast suffered, sad and lonely,
Rest to give my weary soul;
Yea, the curse of God enduring,
Blessing unto me securing.
Thousand, thousand thanks shall be,
Dearest Jesus, unto Thee.
- 4 Heartless scoffers did surround Thee,
Treating Thee with shameful scorn
And with piercing thorns they crowned Thee.
All disgrace Thou, Lord, hast borne,
That as Thine Thou mightest own me
And with heav’nly glory crown me.
Thousand, thousand thanks shall be,
Dearest Jesus, unto Thee.

Stand

INVOCATION AND CALL TO WORSHIP

P The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C Amen.

P Let us ever walk with Jesus.

C To see the depths of his love.

P To behold the gift of his forgiveness.

C To gaze upon the heights of his grace.

P To marvel at the magnitude of his mercy.

C We walk with Jesus to Pilate's judgment hall.

P To hear about Jewish leaders, a prisoner named Barabbas and even Pilate's wife.

C It all boils down to three words—innocent, guilty and free.

P Faithful Lord, with me abide.

C I shall follow where you guide!

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

P Guilty. That's what Barabbas was as he stood before Pilate. Guilty. That's what you and I are as we stand before God this day. Therefore, let us confess our sins to God, seeking His forgiveness.

P Forgiving Father, though we don't like to admit it, we are sinners, much like Barabbas—

C A rebel and a wretch.

P Born dead in transgressions and sins.

C Lost and without hope.

P Doomed to perish.

C Blinded by the god of this age.

P My finest deeds are still soiled with sin.

C And all my righteous acts are like unclean rags. I am Barabbas! Lord, have mercy! Christ, have mercy! Lord, have mercy!

(Please silently reflect on the fact that though our sin is great, Christ's love is greater.)

P Hear the good news! Jesus walked to places of rejection, suffering, torment and death—for you. Jesus was determined to go to Gethsemane, Gabbatha and Golgotha—for you. That's why Jesus forgives you completely and loves you eternally. Faithful Lord, with me abide!

C I shall follow where you guide!

HYMN

“Christ, the Life of All the Living”

LSB 420 st. 5

5 Thou hast suffered men to bruise Thee,
That from pain I might be free;
Falsely did Thy foes accuse Thee:
Thence I gain security;
Comfortless Thy soul did languish
Me to comfort in my anguish.
Thousand, thousand thanks shall be,
Dearest Jesus, unto Thee.

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PRAYER OF THE DAY

P Lord God, heavenly Father, you set Israel free from the chains of Egyptian bondage and you set Barabbas free from Roman execution; so set us free from every prison that shackles and binds us; through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Sit

OLD TESTAMENT READING

Exodus 14:22–29

P The Old Testament Reading is from Exodus, chapter 14.

²²And the people of Israel went into the midst of the sea on dry ground, the waters being a wall to them on their right hand and on their left. ²³The Egyptians pursued and went in after them into the midst of the sea, all Pharaoh's horses, his chariots, and his horsemen. ²⁴And in the morning watch the LORD in the pillar of fire and of cloud looked down on the Egyptian forces and threw the Egyptian forces into a panic, ²⁵clogging their chariot wheels so that they drove heavily. And the Egyptians said, "Let us flee from before Israel, for the LORD fights for them against the Egyptians."

²⁶Then the LORD said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand over the sea, that the water may come back upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots, and upon their horsemen." ²⁷So Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and the sea returned to its normal course when the morning appeared. And as the Egyptians fled into it, the LORD threw the Egyptians into the midst of the sea. ²⁸The waters returned and covered the chariots and the horsemen; of all the host of Pharaoh that had followed them into the sea, not one of them remained. ²⁹But the people of Israel walked on dry ground through the sea, the waters being a wall to them on their right hand and on their left.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

EPISTLE READING

Romans 6:1–11

P The Epistle is from Romans, chapter 6.

¹What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? ²By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it? ³Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? ⁴We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.

⁵For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. ⁶We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin. ⁷For one who has died has been set free from sin. ⁸Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. ⁹We know that Christ being raised from the dead will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. ¹⁰For the death he died he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives he lives to God. ¹¹So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Stand

GOSPEL READING

Matthew 27:11–23

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the twenty-seventh chapter.

C Glory to You, O Lord.

¹¹Now Jesus stood before the governor, and the governor asked him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" Jesus said, "You have said so." ¹²But when he was accused by the chief priests and elders, he gave no answer. ¹³Then

Pilate said to him, “Do you not hear how many things they testify against you?” ¹⁴But he gave him no answer, not even to a single charge, so that the governor was greatly amazed.

¹⁵Now at the feast the governor was accustomed to release for the crowd any one prisoner whom they wanted. ¹⁶And they had then a notorious prisoner called Barabbas. ¹⁷So when they had gathered, Pilate said to them, “Whom do you want me to release for you: Barabbas, or Jesus who is called Christ?” ¹⁸For he knew that it was out of envy that they had delivered him up. ¹⁹Besides, while he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent word to him, “Have nothing to do with that righteous man, for I have suffered much because of him today in a dream.” ²⁰Now the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowd to ask for Barabbas and destroy Jesus. ²¹The governor again said to them, “Which of the two do you want me to release for you?” And they said, “Barabbas.” ²²Pilate said to them, “Then what shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ?” They all said, “Let him be crucified!” ²³And he said, “Why, what evil has he done?” But they shouted all the more, “Let him be crucified!”

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to You, O Christ.

Sit

HYMN of the DAY

“My Song is Love Unknown”

LSB 430 sts. 1, 4 & 5

- 1 My song is love unknown,
My Savior’s love to me,
Love to the loveless shown
That they might lovely be.
Oh, who am I
That for my sake
My Lord should take
Frail flesh and die?
- 4 Why, what hath my Lord done?
What makes this rage and spite?
He made the lame to run,
He gave the blind their sight.
Sweet injuries!
Yet they at these
Themselves displease
And ’gainst Him rise.
- 5 They rise and needs will have
My dear Lord made away;
A murderer they save,
The Prince of Life they slay.
Yet cheerful He
To suffering goes
That He His foes
From thence might free.

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SERMON

Places of the Passion: Pilate’s Judgment Hall

Stand

NICENE CREED

C I believe in one God,
the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth

and of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ,
the only-begotten Son of God,
begotten of His Father before all worlds,
God of God, Light of Light,
very God of very God,
begotten, not made,
being of one substance with the Father,
by whom all things were made;
who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven
and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary
and was made man;
and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate.
He suffered and was buried.
And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures
and ascended into heaven
and sits at the right hand of the Father.
And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead,
whose kingdom will have no end.

And I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the Lord and giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified,
who spoke by the prophets.
And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church,
I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins,
and I look for the resurrection of the dead
and the life ✝ of the world to come. Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

- P** Onward in Christ's footsteps treading, pilgrims here, our home above, full of faith and hope and love. Let us do the Father's bidding. And so we pray. Dear Lord Jesus, you've freed us from the delusion of trying to earn and maintain a relationship with you; from the anxiety of wondering what you think about us; from the chains of condemnation and from fear of death. That's why we rejoice to say, "If the Son sets you free."
- C** **You will be free, indeed!**
- P** Dear Lord Jesus, only your mercy and grace can help us see, receive and trust our Gospel freedoms. Send us your Word and Spirit so that we live by the truth, "If the Son sets you free."
- C** **You will be free, indeed!**
- P** Dear Lord Jesus, free us from being arrogant, aggravated and annoyed with people. Turn our angry reactions into slower and kinder responses. Help us use fewer words and listen more. Send us your Word and Spirit so that we share this truth with the world, "If the Son sets you free."
- C** **You will be free, indeed!**
- P** Dear Lord Jesus, unshackle the chains of our lingering doubts and insecurities. Empower us to throw off the grave-clothes of shame and feelings of failure. Heal our wounds and free us from bitterness. Send us your Word and Spirit so that we reflect this truth, "If the Son sets you free."
- C** **You will be free, indeed!**
- P** Dear Lord Jesus, free us for larger hearts toward the lost, more mercy for doubters and lavish love for all people. May our spouses feel cherished and appreciated, our children secure and our loved ones treasured and valued.

C Jesus, let me faithful be, life eternal grant to me. Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

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.

INVITATION TO THE MEAL

- P** Jesus Christ, who in love gave His life for us, invites us to share in the meal He has given to His disciples with His words, "Do this in remembrance of Me."
- C** We remember His love for us in His death and we remember and celebrate His rising from the grave for our salvation.
- P** Jesus says, "Whoever acknowledges Me before men, I will also acknowledge before My Father in heaven."
- C** We publicly acknowledge You, Jesus, as our Savior from sin and we come before You now in oneness of faith and spirit to receive Your grace in this meal.
- P** Let us then approach the Table of the Lord with confidence so that we may receive mercy, grace and strength to live as His people.

THE WORDS OF OUR LORD

- P** Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: "Take, eat; this is My ✠ body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me."

In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: "Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My ✠ blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

AGNUS DEI

- P** Abraham said, "God will provide for Himself the lamb."
- C** Lord, have mercy.
- P** John said, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!"
- C** Christ, have mercy.
- P** John saw "the Lamb in the midst of the throne."
- C** Lord, have mercy and grant us Your peace. Amen.

Sit

DISTRIBUTION HYMN

"Lord Jesus Christ, You Have Prepared"

LSB 622

- 1 Lord Jesus Christ, You have prepared
This feast for our salvation;

It is Your body and Your blood,
And at Your invitation
As weary souls, with sin oppressed,
We come to You for needed rest,
For comfort, and for pardon.

2 Although You did to heav'n ascend,
Where angel hosts are dwelling,
And in Your presence they behold
Your glory, all excelling,
And though Your people shall not see
Your glory and Your majesty
Till dawns the judgment morning,

3 Yet, Savior, You are not confined
To any habitation;
But You are present even now
Here with Your congregation.
Firm as a rock this truth shall stand,
Unmoved by any daring hand
Or subtle craft and cunning.

4 We eat this bread and drink this cup,
Your precious Word believing
That Your true body and Your blood
Our lips are here receiving.
This Word remains forever true;
All things are possible with You,
For You are Lord Almighty.

5 Though reason cannot understand,
Yet faith this truth embraces:
Your body, Lord, is even now
At once in many places.
I leave to You how this can be;
Your Word alone suffices me;
I trust its truth unfailing.

6 Lord, I believe what You have said;
Help me when doubts assail me.
Remember that I am but dust,
And let my faith not fail me.
Your supper in this vale of tears
Refreshes me and stills my fears
And is my priceless treasure.

7 Grant that we worthily receive
Your supper, Lord, our Savior,
And, truly grieving for our sins,
May prove by our behavior
That we are thankful for Your grace

And day by day may run our race,
In holiness increasing.

- 8 For Your consoling supper, Lord,
Be praised throughout all ages!
Preserve it, for in ev'ry place
The world against it rages.
Grant that this sacrament may be
A blessed comfort unto me
When living and when dying.

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DISTRIBUTION HYMN

“O Jesus, Blessed Lord, to Thee”

LSB 632

- 1 O Jesus, blessed Lord, to Thee
My heartfelt thanks forever be,
Who hast so lovingly bestowed
On me Thy body and Thy blood.
- 2 Break forth, my soul, for joy and say:
What wealth is come to me this day!
My Savior dwells within my heart:
How blessed am I! How good Thou art!

Text: Public domain

Stand

POST-COMMUNION THANKSGIVING

P Let us pray.

C We give thanks to You, almighty God, that You have refreshed us through this salutary gift,
and we implore You that of Your mercy You would strengthen us through the same in faith toward You and in fervent love toward one another;

P through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God,
now and forever.

C Amen.

BENEDICTION

P Jesus invites us to walk with him to Pilate's judgment hall, a place of great suffering and a place of great love. We will walk with Jesus all the way to the empty tomb—and resurrection victory.

C Let us ever walk with Jesus!

CLOSING HYMN

“Christ, the Life of All the Living”

LSB 420 sts. 6-7

- 6 Thou hast suffered great affliction
And hast borne it patiently,
Even death by crucifixion,
Fully to atone for me;
Thou didst choose to be tormented
That my doom should be prevented.
Thousand, thousand thanks shall be,
Dearest Jesus, unto Thee.
- 7 Then, for all that wrought my pardon,
For Thy sorrows deep and sore,

For Thine anguish in the Garden,
I will thank Thee evermore,
Thank Thee for Thy groaning, sighing,
For Thy bleeding and Thy dying,
For that last triumphant cry,
And shall praise Thee, Lord, on high.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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