



WEDNESDAYS OF LENT

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 20, 2024 7 P.M.

WELCOME TO WORSHIP

If you are a guest with us today, we are so glad you are here! We invite you to fill out a tan card from the pew rack and put it in the offering plate on the table outside the sanctuary. Or scan the QR code printed here to fill out an electronic guest card. You will find all of the words in the worship service projected at the front of the church or in this bulletin.



If you have something you would like us to pray about this week, you can write it on the back of the tan card. Our staff and prayer team will pray for the requests during the week. If you so choose, we will post your request online at our prayer wall as well.

First Trinity is a Bible-based church. We believe God's Word is the sole authority for this life. We are imperfect people loving imperfect people. Our prayer for you today is that you would connect to God and grow closer and closer to Him each day.

SERVICE NOTES FOR THIS SUNDAY

ADVENT | CHRISTMAS | EPIPHANY | **LENT** | EASTER | PENTECOST | TIME OF THE CHURCH

We are now in the season of Lent, a time to repent and remember. During this time, we study Jesus' final days and crucifixion. You will see penitential purple paraments on the altar. The soldiers who mocked Jesus before His crucifixion dressed Him in a purple robe, calling Him "King of the Jews". We know we deserve to be humbled the way they tried to humble Jesus. Purple reminds us to repent of our sins that brought Jesus to the cross.

To help you understand the different parts of worship today, we've provided several side notes throughout the service folder. Read the notes to discover some of the meaning behind the words and parts of the service. You will find a deeper appreciation for the rich symbolism and spiritual meaning behind Lutheran worship.

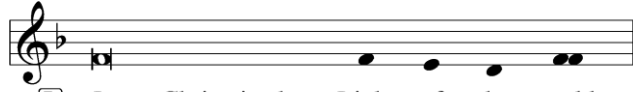
PRAYER BEFORE WORSHIP

Almighty God, by Your great goodness mercifully look upon Your people that we may be governed and preserved evermore in body and soul; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

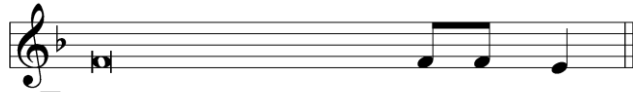
PRELUDE

WELCOME

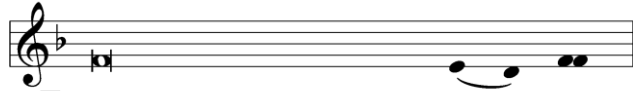
(Stand)



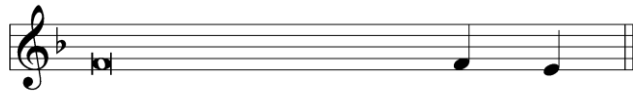
☐ Jesus Christ is the Light of the world,



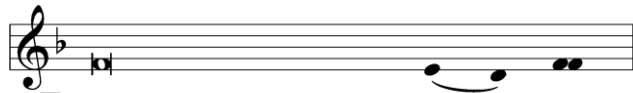
☑ the light no darkness can o - ver - come.



☐ Stay with us, Lord, for it is eve - ning,



☑ and the day is almost o - ver.



☐ Let Your light scatter the dark - ness



☑ and il - lu - mine Your Church.



☐ Joy - ous light of glo - ry:

The Phos Hilaron, or "Joyous Light" dates back to the late 3rd century. It was used as part of the evening worship practices of the Church. Since then, many other hymns have been written to use in this order. This version provides a metrical paraphrase of the original text found on page 244 of the hymnal.

HYMN OF LIGHT *O Light Whose Splendor* LSB Hymnal 891

Verse 1

O Light whose splendor thrills and gladdens
With radiance brighter than the sun,
Pure gleam of God's unending glory,
O Jesus, blest Anointed One;

Verse 2

As twilight hovers near at sunset,
And lamps are lit, and children nod,
In evening hymns we lift our voices
To Father, Spirit, Son: one God.

Verse 3

In all life's brilliant timeless moments,
Let faithful voices sing Your praise,
O Son of God, our Life-bestower,
Whose glory lightens endless days.

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THANKSGIVING FOR LIGHT

Leader We praise and thank You, O God, through Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, that You have enlightened us by revealing the Light that never fades. Night has fallen, and day's allotted span draws to a close. The daylight which You created for our pleasure has fully satisfied us, and yet, of Your free gift, now the evening lights do not fail us. We praise You and glorify You through Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord; through Him be glory, honor, and power to You in the Holy Spirit now and always and forever and ever.

People Amen.

CONFESSION

Leader Holy and gracious God,

People **I confess that I have sinned against You this day. Some of my sin I know—the thoughts and words and deeds of which I am ashamed—but some is known only to You. In the name of Jesus Christ I ask forgiveness. Deliver and restore me that I may rest in peace.** *(Silence for personal confession)*

This confession is from the order of Compline which was typically the last prayer service of the day when following the daily offices of prayer. Because of its place at the close of day, the confession has a nighttime flavor to it as we "rest in peace" this evening. Compline is the only daily office with a confession of sins.

ABSOLUTION

Leader By the mercy of God we are redeemed by Jesus Christ, and in Him we are forgiven. We are now at peace with God.

People Amen.

(Sit)

THE PASSION OF OUR LORD, PART 5: CALVARY

Leader The soldiers led Jesus away into the palace (that is, the Praetorium) and called together the whole company of soldiers. And when they had mocked Him, they took off the purple robe and put His own clothes on Him. Then they led Him out to crucify Him. 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.

Women **A large number of people followed Him, including women who mourned and wailed for Him. Jesus turned and said to them:**

Leader "Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for Me; weep for yourselves and for your children. For the time will come when you will say,

Women "Blessed are the barren women, the wombs that never bore and the breasts that never nursed!"

Men "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?"

Women **Two other men, both criminals, were also led out with Him to be executed. They came to a place called Golgatha (which means The Place of the Skull). There they offered Jesus wine to drink, mixed with gall; but after tasting it, He refused to drink it.**

Men **There they crucified Him, along with the criminals—one on His right, the other on His left. Jesus said,**

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

Women Pilate had a notice prepared and fastened to the cross. It read, Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews. Many of the Jews read this sign, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city, and the sign was written in Aramaic, Latin and Greek. The chief priests of the Jews protested to Pilate:

People "Do not write, 'The King of the Jews,' but that this man claimed to be king of the Jews."

Women Pilate answered:

Men "What I have written, I have written."

Leader When the soldiers crucified Jesus, they took His clothes, dividing them into four shares, one for each of them, with the undergarment remaining. This garment was seamless, woven in one piece from top to bottom. They said to one another:

People "Let's not tear it. Let's decide by lot who will get it."

Leader This happened that the scripture might be fulfilled which said,

Women "They divided My garments among themselves and cast lots for My clothing."

Leader So this is what the soldiers did. And sitting down, they kept watch over Him there. Those who passed by hurled insults at Him, shaking their heads and saying,

People "You who are going to destroy the temple and build it in three days, save Yourself! Come down from the cross, if You are the Son of God!"

Leader In the same way, the chief priests, the teachers of the law, and the elders mocked Him:

People "He saved others, but He can't save Himself! He's the king of Israel! Let Him come down now from the cross, and we will believe in Him. He trusts in God. Let God rescue Him now if He wants Him, for He said, 'I am the Son of God.'"

Women One of the criminals who hung there hurled insults at Him:

Men "Aren't You the Christ? Save Yourself and us!"

Women But the other criminal rebuked him. He said:

Men "Don't you fear God, since you are under the same sentence? We are punished justly, for we are getting what our deeds deserve. But this Man has done nothing wrong. Jesus, remember me when You come into Your kingdom."

Leader "I tell you the truth, today you will be with Me in paradise."

Women Near the cross of Jesus stood His mother, His mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw His mother there, and the disciple whom He loved standing nearby, He said to His mother:

Leader "Dear woman, here is your son."

Women And to the disciple:

Leader "Here is your mother."

Men From that time on, this disciple took her into his home.

Women At the sixth hour, darkness came over the whole land until the ninth hour, for the sun stopped shining. And at the ninth hour, Jesus cried out in a loud voice:

Leader "Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?"

Women –Which means:

Men "My God, my God, why have You forsaken Me?"

Women When some of those standing near heard this, they said:

People "Listen, He's calling Elijah."

Men Later, knowing that all was now completed, and so that the Scripture would be fulfilled, Jesus said,

Leader "I am thirsty."

Women A 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. When He had received the drink, Jesus said:

Leader "It is finished."

Men Jesus called out with a loud voice,

Leader "Father, into Your hands I commit My spirit."

Women With that, He bowed His head and gave up His spirit.

Leader At that moment, the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom.

Men The earth shook and the rocks split.

Women The tombs broke open and the bodies of many holy people who had died were raised to life.

Leader They came out of the tombs, and after Jesus' resurrection they went into the holy city and appeared to many people. When the centurion and those with him who were guarding Jesus saw the earthquake and all that had happened, they were terrified, and exclaimed:

People "Surely He was the Son of God!"

Leader When all the people who had gathered to witness this sight saw what took place, they beat their breasts and went away. Some women were watching from a distance. Among them were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James the younger, and of Joseph, and Salome. In Galilee these women had followed Him and cared for His needs. Many other women who had come up with Him to Jerusalem were also there.

People All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way; and the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all. *Isaiah 53:6 (ESV)*

Leader He poured out His soul to death and was numbered with the transgressors; yet He bore the sin of many, and makes intercession for the transgressors. *Isaiah 53:12 (ESV)*

When we talk about the suffering that Jesus endured for our sake, we often refer to it as "The Passion of Christ". During Lent, we read the passion account from the time of the Last Supper to the Crucifixion of Jesus. This text is a combination of all 4 Gospels arranged in chronological order. So while you won't find this exact text in one Gospel, it is a faithful account of these events. We conclude each of the passion readings with Isaiah 53:6, a reminder of our wayward wanderings and Christ's punishment in our place. Today we conclude the passion reading with that usual response, but also a final concluding word from Isaiah 53:12.

The title and first stanza for this hymn comes from the *Suffering Servant* song in Isaiah 52:13-53:12. The hymn shows the utter pain and grief Jesus endured for us sinners. Stanza 4 shifts our eyes to the firm foundation we now have because of this sacrifice, where "None shall ever be confounded / Who on Him their hope have built."

(Stand)

HYMN *Stricken, Smitten, and Afflicted* LSB Hymnal 451

Verse 1

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.

Verse 2

Tell me, ye who hear Him groaning,
Was there ever grief like His?
Friends through fear His cause disowning,
Foes insulting His distress;
Many hands were raised to wound Him,
None would intervene to save;
But the deepest stroke that pierced Him
Was the stroke that justice gave.

Verse 3

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.

Verse 4

Here we have a firm foundation,
Here the refuge of the lost:
Christ, the Rock of our salvation,
Is the name of which we boast;
Lamb of God, for sinners wounded,
Sacrifice to cancel guilt!
None shall ever be confounded
Who on Him their hope have built.

Text: Public domain

(Sit)

TESTIMONY *Cindy Lackie*

MESSAGE *Rev. Dr. Charles E. Whited, Jr., Lead Pastor*

OFFERING INVITATION *Give at FTGives.com or text "Give" to 716-575-2659.*

OFFERING HYMN *Jesus, Grant That Balm and Healing* LSB Hymn 421, verses 1, 3-5

Verse 1

Jesus, grant that balm and healing
In Your holy wounds I find,
Ev'ry hour that I am feeling
Pains of body and of mind.
Should some evil thought within
Tempt my treach'rous heart to sin,
Show the peril, and from sinning
Keep me from its first
beginning.

Verse 3

If the world my heart entices
With the broad and easy road,
With seductive, sinful vices,
Let me weigh the awful load
You were willing to endure.
Help me flee all thoughts impure
And to master each temptation,
Calm in prayer and meditation.

Verse 4

Ev'ry wound that pains or grieves me
By Your wounds, Lord, is made whole;
When I'm faint, Your cross revives me,
Granting new life to my soul.
Yes, Your comfort renders sweet
Ev'ry bitter cup I meet;
For Your all-atoning passion
Has procured my soul's salvation.

Verse 5

O my God, my rock and tower,
Grant that in Your death I trust,
Knowing death has lost its power
Since You crushed it in the dust.
Savior, let Your agony
Ever help and comfort me;
When I die be my protection,
Light and life and resurrection.

Text: Public domain

(Stand)

PRAYER

Leader Be our light in the darkness, O Lord, and in Your great mercy defend us from all perils and dangers of this night; for the love of Your only Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

People **Amen.**

Leader Eternal God, the hours both of day and night are Yours, and to You the darkness is no threat. Be present, we pray, with those who labor in these hours of night, especially those who watch and work on behalf of others. Grant them diligence in their watching, faithfulness in their service, courage in danger, and competence in emergencies. Help them to meet the needs of others with confidence and compassion; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

People **Amen.**

Leader Abide with us, Lord, for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent. Abide with us and with Your whole Church. Abide with us at the end of the day, at the end of our life, at the end of the world. Abide with us with Your grace and goodness, with Your holy Word and Sacrament, with Your strength and blessing. Abide with us when the night of affliction and temptation comes upon us, the night of fear and despair, the night when death draws near. Abide with us and with all the faithful, now and forever.

People **Amen.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Leader Taught by our Lord and trusting His promises, we are bold to pray:

People **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. 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.**

These prayers come from the order of Compline--the last service in the Daily Office before bed.

There are six petitions included in the service on page 257 of the hymnal. We use two of the first five on a rotation during Lent. The sixth petition is always our concluding prayer for our Lenten services.

The hymn begins in stanza 1 with the closing of a single, earthly day and the help God provides. It expands this theme with God's presence throughout our life in the next two stanzas, culminating in the end of our days on earth in the 4th and 5th stanzas. In the final stanza, the story reaches a crescendo as death comes with the final closing of our eyes, only for "heav'n's morning" to break through as we begin an everlasting life. The hymn ends with an iconic confession of faith: "In life, in death, O Lord, abide with me."

CLOSING HYMN *Abide With Me* LSB Hymnal 878

Verse 1

Abide with me, fast falls the eventide.
The darkness deepens; Lord, with me abide.
When other helpers fail and comforts flee,
Help of the helpless, O abide with me.

Verse 2

I need Thy presence ev'ry passing hour;
What but Thy grace can foil the tempter's pow'r?
Who like Thyself my guide and stay can be?
Through cloud and sunshine, O abide with me.

Verse 3

Come not in terrors, as the King of kings,
But kind and good, with healing in Thy wings;
Tears for all woes, a heart for ev'ry plea.
Come, Friend of sinners, thus abide with me.

Verse 4

Swift to its close ebbs out life's little day;
Earth's joys grow dim, its glories pass away;
Change and decay in all around I see;
O Thou who changest not, abide with me.

Verse 5

I fear no foe with Thee at hand to bless;
Ills have no weight and tears no bitterness.
Where is death's sting? Where, grave, thy victory?
I triumph still if Thou abide with me!

Verse 6

Hold Thou Thy cross before my closing eyes;
Shine through the gloom, and point me to the skies.
Heav'n's morning breaks, and earth's vain shadows flee;
In life, in death, O Lord, abide with me.

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BLESSING

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