



St. Stephen's Lutheran Church
Worship Service with Holy Communion
Good Friday, April 2, 2021 ■ 11:00 a.m. & 7:00 p.m.

St. Stephen's Lutheran Church

Good Friday—Stations of the Cross / Station Eight

Worship Service



Welcome to the Lenten journey to the cross ...

For this season of Lent at St Stephen's we are using the eight biblical Stations of the Cross as a framework for our worship, including Scripture readings, meditations, music and prayers. Beginning on Ash Wednesday and concluding on Good Friday, we will follow Jesus along the *Via Dolorosa*, the Way of Sorrow, as he journeys from Pilate's Hall to his death on the cross, meditating on one station each service.

We enter this journey with the penitent's prayer, "*Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my thoughts. See if there is any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.*" (Psalm 139:23-24)

We pray that you find peace and be blest by these reflections on God's grace and gift of love. Amen.

WE PREPARE TO WORSHIP

Music

Ben D.

Welcome

Hello and welcome to Lent at St Stephen's Lutheran Church in West St Paul, MN. Our 2021 Journey to the Cross has focused our meditation on seven Biblical Stations of the Cross. We have reflected on one station at each of our midweek Lenten meditations, including Ash Wednesday through this week, Holy Week. Today is Good Friday, and we are focusing on the final station, Station 8: Jesus Dies on the Cross. Please note the barrenness of the altar—reflecting Jesus' complete self-giving. The previous stations have been meditated on in the weeks leading up to this day. If you've missed previous meditations on the Stations of the Cross, you may view those on our Facebook page, sslcwsp. Now let us enter into worship.

Blessing

*All may make the sign of the cross,
the sign marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.*

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,
the love of God the father,
and the Communion of the Holy Spirit
be with you all.

And also with you.

WE HEAR GOD'S WORD

Reading from the Psalms

Psalm 22:1-5, 18-31

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

Why are you so far from helping me, from the words of my groaning?

O my God, I cry by day, but you do not answer;
and by night, but find no rest.

Yet you are holy,
enthroned on the praises of Israel.
In you our ancestors trusted;
they trusted, and you delivered them.
To you they cried, and were saved;
in you they trusted, and were not put to shame.
they divide my clothes among themselves,
and for my clothing they cast lots.
But you, O LORD, do not be far away!
O my help, come quickly to my aid!
Deliver my soul from the sword,
my life from the power of the dog!
Save me from the mouth of the lion!
From the horns of the wild oxen you have rescued me.
I will tell of your name to my brothers and sisters;
in the midst of the congregation I will praise you:
You who fear the LORD, praise him!
All you offspring of Jacob, glorify him;
stand in awe of him, all you offspring of Israel!
For he did not despise or abhor
the affliction of the afflicted;
he did not hide his face from me,
but heard when I cried to him.
From you comes my praise in the great congregation;
my vows I will pay before those who fear him.
The poor shall eat and be satisfied;
those who seek him shall praise the LORD.
May your hearts live forever!
All the ends of the earth shall remember
and turn to the LORD;
and all the families of the nations
shall worship before him.
For dominion belongs to the LORD,
and he rules over the nations.
To him, indeed, shall all who sleep in the earth bow down;
before him shall bow all who go down to the dust,
and I shall live for him.
Posterity will serve him;
future generations will be told about the Lord,
and proclaim his deliverance to a people yet unborn,
saying that he has done it.

Hymn

“O Sacred Head Now Wounded”

ELW #351 vs. 1, 2

**O sacred head, now wounded,
with grief and shame weighed down,
now scornfully surrounded
with thorns, thine only crown;
O sacred head, what glory,
what bliss till now was thine!
Yet, though despised and gory,
I joy to call thee mine.**

**How pale thou art with anguish,
with sore abuse and scorn;
how does thy face now languish,
which once was bright as morn!
Thy grief and bitter passion
were all for sinners' gain;
mine, mine was the transgression,
but thine the deadly pain.**

Prayer

O Lord, we are gathered together here this day as your people,
as those who have been called out of darkness into your marvelous light.
We are here only because you have loved us and been faithful
across the generations that we might be your people.
And yet we quickly confess that we are not worthy of that love.

As we contemplate the Cross and what it means,
we are filled with joy and wonder at the sacrifice that Jesus
has made to show us light in the darkness
and offer us life in the midst of death.
We confess that we have nothing to offer in return for that sacrifice,
nothing that will match such love.
We know that only love can respond to such a gift.
Yet we know that we are not always loving or lovable.
But you remain steadfastly faithful to us.
You love us even when we are not lovable,
and remain steadfast in your grace that calls us
to follow the example of Jesus who is the Christ.

We are committed to that journey,
to be followers of the One who has given so much
that we might be sons and daughters of God.
But sometimes the journey that we take in following Jesus
who is the Christ is not all light and joy.
Sometimes the Way is rough and dimly lit.
Sometimes the darkness of life threatens to engulf the light.

And so we cry out to you, O Lord.
Forgive us for our sometimes faltering steps.
Show us more clearly the Way.
Shine anew the light of your presence into our lives
so strongly that a new love for You will be kindled.
Light within us a love beyond emotion and sentimentality,
a love that is willing to lay aside all privilege and self-centeredness.
Grow within us a love that is willing to surrender
all our fears and uncertainties to you,
that desires nothing more than to love God
with all our being and to love those around us
with the same faithfulness with which you love us.

Now, as we begin this journey of the Cross,
we open our hearts and minds to you.
We lay aside for these moments the trivialities of our life
and bring ourselves into your presence.
Speak to us what we need to hear.
And help us to hear, not just the words that are spoken,
but your Word spoken afresh in our hearts.

Speak, for your servants are listening.

[A short time of silent prayer and meditation]

Let us continue our journey.

Stations of the Cross

Station 8: Jesus Dies on the Cross

Leader:

When it was noon, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon.
At three o'clock Jesus cried out with a loud voice, "*Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?*"
which means, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"
When some of the bystanders heard it, they said, "Listen, he is calling for Elijah."
And someone ran, filled a sponge with sour wine,
put it on a stick, and gave it to him to drink,
saying, "Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to take him down."
Then Jesus gave a loud cry and breathed his last.
And the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom.
Now when the centurion, who stood facing him,
saw that in this way he breathed his last, he said,
"Truly this man was God's Son!" (Mark 15:33-39)

Speaker:

It is dark in the middle of the day.
It seems that the heavens and the earth are grieving,
telling us that something is horribly wrong.
And yet some still seem to mock.
Or do they really expect some final miracle to save you?

Jesus, I hear you cry out in lament from the Psalms
and know that it is the cry of human pain and desolation.
Here, where too often we see you only as God,
you reveal your true humanity.
Most everyone has forsaken you,
and in your pain the emotion escapes in a cry of abandonment.
Yet, it is a prayer, a cry from human lips to a God who hears such cries.

Finally, it is over. You are dead. What have we done?

The earth shakes.
The curtain in the temple is torn right down the middle.
The Holy of Holies is exposed for all to see.
What does it mean? Who are you?
Even the Romans now think that you are the son of God.
But you are dead. It's too late. What have I done?

Yet you never stopped loving me even in death.
Oh, how I wish I had shown my love for you more while you were here.
You died because of human sin, because of me.
Yet we know that sin is never the final word.
God can redeem the worst that human beings can do.
But this? What can come of this?
What can God do with such a final ending? We hope, and wait

Leader:

O Lord, I cannot comprehend the depth and breadth of your love.
There are not enough words in all languages together
to describe what your love means to me.
May my love for you and my love for all your children
in some way reflect your love.
Let this dark night become fertile soil for growth in your love
and for our growth as a community of Faith.
May you use this night to teach us how to love you
and to love others the way you have loved us.
O Lord, we long for newness, for hope, for renewal,
for life where there is now death.
Out of this darkness bring to us the light of a new dawn.
O Lord, have mercy on us.

O Lord, hear our prayers. We hope in you and trust in your mercy.

Hymn

“When I Survey the Wondrous Cross”

ELW #803 vs. 1-4

When I survey the wondrous cross
on which the prince of glory died,
my richest gain I count but loss
and pour contempt on all my pride.

Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast
save in the death of Christ, my God;
all the vain things that charm me most,
I sacrifice them to his blood.

See, from his head, his hands, his feet,
sorrow and love flow mingled down.
Did e'er such love and sorrow meet,
or thorns compose so rich a crown?

Were the whole realm of nature mine,
that were a present far too small;
love so amazing, so divine,
demands my soul, my life, my all.

Text: Isaac Watts, 1674-1748
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Leader:

We hope for the dawning of a new day.
We hope for God to bring newness out of endings.
But today Go home. There is nothing more to see. Jesus is dead.



Leaders in Today's Service

- Pastor..... The Rev. Tim Thompson, Ph.D
- Lay Liturgist Debbie PirkI
- Director of Worship Bryon Dockter
- Song Leader Deborah Ellis, Philip Dahl
- Christian Music Leader Ben D.
- Audio Visual Ministry Norm Goetzke, Keith Gregory, Jan Perkins
- Prayer Chain Rachel Circle, Mary Circle, Kathy Ericson, Abby Vavra
- Altar Guild Lori Ritt
- Outdoor Street Sign Jerry Thoreson



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Bulletin Acknowledgements

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