

# St. Paul's Episcopal Church

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Good Friday

Friday, March 29, 2024 • 12:00pm

*Officiating: The Rev. Charles L. Fischer III*

*Preaching: The Rev. Erin Morey*

*Assisting: The Rev. Noah H. Evans, The Rev. Laura Di Panfilo*

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## A Note Toward Repentance

As we hear John's Passion narrative read, we are reminded of how, throughout history, its central event and symbol have been conscripted against our Jewish and Muslim brothers and sisters. The cross, that symbol intended to proclaim love's victory over violence, has all too often fallen painfully short of its ideal, still evoking memories of the murderous Crusades – and in more recent times, the haunting violence suffered by members of other faith traditions at the hands of Christians during Holy Week.

This history, for example, has given rise to hate-filled language and violence across the world, marking Good Friday as a historically dangerous time for Jewish and Muslim communities living in Christian contexts. And, as we approach the 100th anniversary of St. Paul's first worship service in Mt. Lebanon, we remember that our church home left its original location in the Hill District of the City of Pittsburgh in response to “changing demographics (beginning to) affect the parish as Jewish, and later Black, families moved into the area.”

The Episcopal Church has recognized this is a legacy to which we are accountable. And, as part of our work toward repairing relationships, the liturgy we use today, which includes offering prayers that affirm God's unique covenant with our Jewish neighbors, has been offered for use in our worship.

The Gospel text for today has given license and fuel to untold acts of hatred, which upon even the slightest reflection bids the church to cast ourselves in repentance upon Jesus, and to rid ourselves and our worship, this day, of any note of contempt toward our neighbors. To worship our Lord in Spirit and in truth demands nothing less. And so, we today draw near the cross of the Crucified – pleading again for his mercy, for us, and for the church in every age.

*Lord, have mercy. Christ, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.*

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**Prelude Music: Wondrous Love**  
**Ann McStay, piano**

**Traditional hymn, arr. John Carter**

**Welcome and Greetings**

*Celebrant* Blessed be our God.  
*People* For ever and ever. Amen.  
*Celebrant* Let us pray.

Almighty God, we pray you graciously to behold this your family, for whom our Lord Jesus Christ was willing to be betrayed, and given into the hands of sinners, and to suffer death upon the cross; who now lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

**The First Lesson**  
**Isaiah 52:13-53:12**

See, my servant shall prosper; he shall be exalted and lifted up, and shall be very high. Just as there were many who were astonished at him—so marred was his appearance, beyond human semblance, and his form beyond that of mortals—so he shall startle many nations; kings shall shut their mouths because of him; for that which had not been told them they shall see, and that which they had not heard they shall contemplate. Who has believed what we have heard? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed? For he grew up before him like a young plant, and like a root out of dry ground; he had no form or majesty that we should look at him, nothing in his appearance that we should desire him. He was despised and rejected by others; a man of suffering and acquainted with infirmity; and as one from whom others hide their faces he was despised, and we held him of no account. Surely he has borne our infirmities and carried our diseases; yet we accounted him stricken, struck down by God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the punishment that made us whole, and by his bruises we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have all turned to our own way, and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth. By a perversion of justice he was taken away. Who could have imagined his future? For he was cut off from the land of the living, stricken for the transgression of my people. They made his grave with the wicked and his tomb with the rich, although he had done no violence, and there was no deceit in his mouth. Yet it was the will of the LORD to crush him with pain. When you make his life an offering for sin, he shall see his offspring, and shall prolong his days; through him the will of the LORD shall prosper. Out of his anguish he shall see light; he shall find satisfaction through his knowledge. The righteous one, my servant, shall make many righteous, and he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore I will allot him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he poured out himself to death, and was numbered with the transgressors; yet he bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.

The Word of the Lord.  
*People* Thanks be to God.

**Psalm 22**  
*Read together*

1 My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? \*  
and are so far from my cry  
and from the words of my distress?  
2 O my God, I cry in the daytime, but you do not answer; \*  
by night as well, but I find no rest.  
3 Yet you are the Holy One, \*  
enthroned upon the praises of Israel.  
4 Our forefathers put their trust in you; \*  
they trusted, and you delivered them.  
5 They cried out to you and were delivered; \*  
they trusted in you and were not put to shame.  
6 But as for me, I am a worm and no man, \*  
scorned by all and despised by the people.  
7 All who see me laugh me to scorn; \*  
they curl their lips and wag their heads, saying,  
8 “He trusted in the LORD; let him deliver him; \*  
let him rescue him, if he delights in him.”  
9 Yet you are he who took me out of the womb, \*  
and kept me safe upon my mother’s breast.  
10 I have been entrusted to you ever since I was born; \*  
you were my God when I was still in my mother’s womb.

11 Be not far from me, for trouble is near, \*  
and there is none to help.  
12 Many young bulls encircle me; \*  
strong bulls of Bashan surround me.  
13 They open wide their jaws at me, \*  
like a ravening and a roaring lion.  
14 I am poured out like water;  
all my bones are out of joint; \*  
my heart within my breast is melting wax.  
15 My mouth is dried out like a pot-sherd;  
my tongue sticks to the roof of my mouth; \*  
and you have laid me in the dust of the grave.  
16 Packs of dogs close me in,  
and gangs of evildoers circle around me; \*  
they pierce my hands and my feet;  
I can count all my bones.  
17 They stare and gloat over me; \*  
they divide my garments among them;  
they cast lots for my clothing.  
18 Be not far away, O LORD; \*  
you are my strength; hasten to help me.  
19 Save me from the sword, \*  
my life from the power of the dog.  
20 Save me from the lion's mouth, \*  
my wretched body from the horns of wild bulls.  
21 I will declare your Name to my brethren; \*  
in the midst of the congregation I will praise you.  
22 Praise the LORD, you that fear him; \*  
stand in awe of him, O offspring of Israel;  
all you of Jacob's line, give glory.  
23 For he does not despise nor abhor the poor in their poverty;  
neither does he hide his face from them; \*  
but when they cry to him he hears them.  
24 My praise is of him in the great assembly; \*  
I will perform my vows in the presence of those who worship him.  
25 The poor shall eat and be satisfied,  
and those who seek the LORD shall praise him: \*  
"May your heart live for ever!"  
26 All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the LORD, \*  
and all the families of the nations shall bow before him.  
27 For kingship belongs to the LORD; \*  
he rules over the nations.  
28 To him alone all who sleep in the earth bow down in worship; \*  
all who go down to the dust fall before him.  
29 My soul shall live for him;  
my descendants shall serve him; \*  
they shall be known as the LORD'S for ever.  
30 They shall come and make known to a people yet unborn \*  
the saving deeds that he has done.

## **The Second Lesson**

### **Hebrews 4:14-16, 5:7-9**

Since, then, we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast to our confession. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who in every respect has been tested as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore approach the throne of grace with boldness, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to the one who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission. Although he was a Son, he learned obedience through what he suffered; and having been made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him.

The Word of the Lord.

*People* Thanks be to God.

**Sequence Music: Were you there when they crucified my Lord**

**Hymnal 172**

**The Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ, according to John  
John 18:1-19:42**

**The Sermon**

The Rev. Erin Morey

**The Solemn Collects**

*Please kneel or stand.*

Dear People of God: Our heavenly Father sent his Son into the world, not to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved; that all who believe in him might be delivered from the power of sin and death, and become heirs with him of everlasting life.

We pray, therefore, for people everywhere according to their needs.

Let us pray for the holy Catholic Church of Christ throughout the world;

For its unity in witness and service  
For all bishops and other ministers  
and the people whom they serve  
For Ketlen, our Bishop, and all the people of this diocese  
For all Christians in this community  
For those awaiting to be baptized

That God will confirm his Church in faith, increase it in love, and preserve it in peace.

*Silence*

Almighty and everlasting God, by whose Spirit the whole body of your faithful people is governed and sanctified: Receive our supplications and prayers which we offer before you for all members of your holy Church, that in their vocation and ministry they may truly and devoutly serve you; through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

Let us pray for all nations and peoples of the earth, and for those in authority among them;

For Joseph, the President of the United States  
For the Congress and the Supreme Court  
For the Members and Representatives of the United Nations  
For all who serve the common good

That by God's help they may seek justice and truth, and live in peace and concord.

*Silence*

Almighty God, kindle, we pray, in every heart the true love of peace, and guide with your wisdom those who take counsel for the nations of the earth; that in tranquility your dominion may increase, until the earth is filled with the knowledge of your love; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Let us pray for the Jewish people who possess an eternal covenant with the Lord, who delivered them from bondage to freedom;

For continued faithfulness to God's covenant with them;  
For their flourishing in peace as witnesses to God's sustaining love;  
For safety from all malice and harm;  
For the fullness of redemption for the sake of God's Name.

That unity and concord may exist between Jews and Christians, in obedience to God's will.

*Silence*

O God of Abraham, you planted your people Israel as the root and grafted Gentiles as wild branches into a single olive tree of praise to you: As we come near to the cross, we lament Christian acts of prejudice and violence against your faithful people, of whom Jesus Christ was born. Bless the children of your covenant, so that together we may attain the fullness of your blessing for the world. *Amen.*

Let us pray for all who suffer and are afflicted in body or in mind;

For those who are hungry and homeless, destitute and oppressed  
For those who are ill or disabled, in body, mind, or spirit  
For those in loneliness, fear, and anguish  
For those who face temptation, doubt, and despair  
For those who are sorrowful and bereaved  
For those who are persecuted for the sake of Christ  
For prisoners, refugees, and captives  
For victims of war, genocide, and trafficking, and all those in mortal danger

That God in his mercy will comfort and relieve them, and grant them the knowledge of his love, and stir up in us the will and patience to minister to their needs.

*Silence*

Gracious God, the comfort of all who sorrow, the strength of all who suffer: Let the cry of those in misery and need come to you, that they may find your mercy present with them in all their afflictions; and give us, we pray, the strength to serve them for the sake of him who suffered for us, your Son Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Let us pray for those who have not embraced God's redemptive love;

For those who have never heard the word of salvation  
For those who have lost their faith  
For those hardened by sin and indifference  
For the contemptuous and the scornful  
For those who are persecutors of Christ's disciples  
For those who in the name of Christ have persecuted others

That God will open their hearts to the truth, and lead them to faith and obedience.

*Silence*

Merciful God, the source of life and fountain of mercy, let the Gospel of your Son Jesus Christ be preached with grace and love; turn the hearts of the followers of Jesus who have harmed others in his name; lead all to repentance and amendment of life; and sustain by your loving grace all who lift their eyes to you. *Amen.*

Let us commit ourselves to God, and pray for the grace of a holy life, that, with all who have departed this world and have died in the peace of Christ, and those whose faith is known to God alone, we may be accounted worthy to enter into the fullness of the joy of our Lord, and receive the crown of life in the day of resurrection.

*Silence*

O God of unchangeable power and eternal light: Look favorably on your whole Church, that wonderful and sacred mystery; by the effectual working of your providence, carry out in tranquility the plan of salvation; let the whole world see and know that things which were cast down are being raised up, and things which had grown old are being made new, and that all things are being brought to their perfection by him through whom all things were made, your Son Jesus Christ our Lord; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

### **Veneration of the Cross**

*The congregation is invited to take the paper and pencils provided and write down special prayers, concerns, thanksgivings, or anything troubling them, and nail it to the cross. The papers will be burned at the Easter Vigil in the kindling of the new fire.*

### **Music During the Veneration of the Cross: Choir and Soloists**

**God so loved the world, from *Crucifixion***

**John Stainer (1840-1901)**

*God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son,  
That whosoever believeth in Him should not perish,  
But have everlasting life.  
For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world,  
But that the world through Him might be saved.*

**I Wonder as I Wander**  
**John Sozansky, soloist**

**John Jacob Niles**

**He Was Despised, from *Messiah***  
**Emily Hastings-Keene, soloist**

**G. F. Handel**

*Celebrant*

We offer before you these prayers of our heart and souls hung here today. May they be an offering to you, O God, this day. Let us pray.

O God of peace, *who hast* taught us that in returning and rest we shall be saved, in quietness and confidence shall be our strength: By the might of *thy* Spirit lift us, we pray *thee*, to *thy* presence, where we may be still and know that *thou art* God; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

### **Communion from the Reserved Sacrament**

Almighty Father, whose dear Son, on the night before he suffered, instituted the Sacrament of his Body and Blood: Mercifully grant that we may receive it thankfully in remembrance of Jesus Christ our Lord, who in these holy mysteries gives us a pledge of eternal life; and who lives and reigns for ever and ever. Amen.

### **Confession of Sin**

*Celebrant*

Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

*Minister and People*

Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We are truly sorry and we humbly repent. For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us; that we may delight in your will, and walk in your ways, to the glory of your Name. Amen.

*Celebrant*

Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life. *Amen.*

And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say,

### **The Lord's Prayer**

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, for ever and ever. Amen.

### **Communion**

*All are welcome to receive communion.*

**Communion Music: Pie Jesu, from *Requiem*  
Michele Baum, soloist**

**Gabriel Faure**

### **Concluding Collect**

*Please stand*

Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God, we pray you to set your passion, cross, and death between your judgment and our souls, now and in the hour of our death. Give mercy and grace to the living; pardon and rest to the dead; to your holy Church peace and concord; and to us sinners everlasting life and glory; for with the Father and the Holy Spirit you live and reign, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.*

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