



Good Friday Worship

**April 10, 2020
at 1 p.m. on Facebook Live**

**Or in the Afternoon on Our Church
Website at westminsterakron.org**

To set a more worshipful tone while watching this service at home, we encourage you to find a quiet space and light a candle. If you are joining us on Facebook Live, then you can find a copy of today's bulletin on our church website at westminsterakron.org. Our virtual Easter worship service can be accessed on Facebook Live at 10:30 a.m. or, from that afternoon onward, on our church website.

What is Good Friday? It is a day of contradictions, to be sure. Now is the "acceptable time" of which Paul spoke in 2 Corinthians 6:2. We are always dying and rising to new life, but especially on this day. We are all the actors in this story: the people shouting "Crucify him!" and the women who stand vigil at the foot of the cross, the soldiers who cast lots for his tunic and Joseph of Arimathea who gave his own tomb for Jesus' burial. Today we lament the pain of this world and we face our complicity in that pain; we seek to be witnesses to--and participants in--God's power over the evil of this world. Now is the acceptable time – the time when Christ's death sets us free to choose life.

Voluntary

O Sacred Head, Sore Wounded

Phillip Jonson

Call to Worship

Today God makes common cause with our human suffering.

We read the Scriptures, sing the hymns, feel the feelings of the day Christ died.

Suffering is not rational. It has no answer.

But in the cross God meets us in our suffering.

From this day forward we know that there is nowhere we can go where God is not with us.

God, into your hands we commend our spirits.

Call to Confession

The promise of our faith is that if we call on the name of the Lord, our God will remember our sin no more. Therefore, let us confess our wrongdoing.

Prayer of Confession

Christ, at times we act as if we do not know you, at times we say of you, “Away with him!” When we think of those times we weep and ask you to forgive us. Amen.

A time of silent confession is observed.

Assurance of Pardon

Take heart, for we have a high priest, Jesus Christ, the son of God, who understands our human experience and sympathizes with our weakness. He deals gently with the ignorant and the wayward and is the source of our eternal salvation.

Prayer for Illumination

Holy One, since the days our mothers bore us you have been our God. By your Holy Spirit, draw close to us through this your Word. Amen.

The First Lesson

Psalm 22:1-31

Old Testament

- 1 My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?
Why are you so far from helping me, from the words of my groaning?
- 2 O my God, I cry by day, but you do not answer;
and by night, but find no rest.
- 3 Yet you are holy,
enthroned on the praises of Israel.
- 4 In you our ancestors trusted;
they trusted, and you delivered them.
- 5 To you they cried, and were saved;
in you they trusted, and were not put to shame.
- 6 But I am a worm, and not human;
scorned by others, and despised by the people.
- 7 All who see me mock at me;
they make mouths at me, they shake their heads;
- 8 “Commit your cause to the LORD; let him deliver —
let him rescue the one in whom he delights!”
- 9 Yet it was you who took me from the womb;
you kept me safe on my mother’s breast.
- 10 On you I was cast from my birth,

- and since my mother bore me you have been my God.
- 11 Do not be far from me,
for trouble is near
and there is no one to help.
- 12 Many bulls encircle me,
strong bulls of Bashan surround me;
- 13 they open wide their mouths at me,
like a ravening and roaring lion.
- 14 I am poured out like water,
and all my bones are out of joint;
my heart is like wax;
it is melted within my breast;
- 15 my mouth is dried up like a potsherd,
and my tongue sticks to my jaws;
you lay me in the dust of death.
- 16 For dogs are all around me;
a company of evildoers encircles me.
My hands and feet have shriveled;
- 17 I can count all my bones.
They stare and gloat over me;
- 18 they divide my clothes among themselves,
and for my clothing they cast lots.
- 19 But you, O LORD, do not be far away!
O my help, come quickly to my aid!
- 20 Deliver my soul from the sword,
my life from the power of the dog!
- 21 Save me from the mouth of the lion!
From the horns of the wild oxen you have rescued me.
- 22 I will tell of your name to my brothers and sisters;
in the midst of the congregation I will praise you:
- 23 You who fear the LORD, praise him!
All you offspring of Jacob, glorify him;
stand in awe of him, all you offspring of Israel!
- 24 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.
- 25 From you comes my praise in the great congregation;
my vows I will pay before those who fear him.
- 26 The poor shall eat and be satisfied;
those who seek him shall praise the LORD.
May your hearts live forever!
- 27 All the ends of the earth shall remember
and turn to the LORD;
and all the families of the nations

- shall worship before him.
28 For dominion belongs to the LORD,
and he rules over the nations.
29 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.
30 Posterity will serve him;
future generations will be told about the Lord,
31 and proclaim his deliverance to a people yet unborn,
saying that he has done it.

The Second Lesson

John 18:1-40

New Testament

1 After Jesus had spoken these words, he went out with his disciples across the Kidron valley to a place where there was a garden, which he and his disciples entered. 2 Now Judas, who betrayed him, also knew the place, because Jesus often met there with his disciples. 3 So Judas brought a detachment of soldiers together with police from the chief priests and the Pharisees, and they came there with lanterns and torches and weapons. 4 Then Jesus, knowing all that was to happen to him, came forward and asked them, "Whom are you looking for?" 5 They answered, "Jesus of Nazareth." Jesus replied, "I am he." Judas, who betrayed him, was standing with them. 6 When Jesus said to them, "I am he; they stepped back and fell to the ground. 7 Again he asked them, "Whom are you looking for?" And they said, "Jesus of Nazareth." 8 Jesus answered, "I told you that I am he. So if you are looking for me, let these men go." 9 This was to fulfill the word that he had spoken, "I did not lose a single one of those whom you gave me." 10 Then Simon Peter, who had a sword, drew it, struck the high priest's slave, and cut off his right ear. The slave's name was Malchus. 11 Jesus said to Peter, "Put your sword back into its sheath. Am I not to drink the cup that the Father has given me?"

12 So the soldiers, their officer, and the Jewish police arrested Jesus and bound him. 13 First they took him to Annas, who was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, the high priest that year. 14 Caiaphas was the one who had advised the Jews that it was better to have one person die for the people.

15 Simon Peter and another disciple followed Jesus. Since that disciple was known to the high priest, he went with Jesus into the courtyard of the high priest, 16 but Peter was standing outside at the gate. So the other disciple, who was known to the high priest, went out, spoke to the woman who guarded the gate, and brought Peter in. 17 The woman said to Peter, "You are not also one of this man's disciples, are you?" He said, "I am not." 18 Now the slaves and the police had made a charcoal fire because it was cold, and they were standing around it and warming themselves. Peter also was standing with them and warming himself.

19 Then the high priest questioned Jesus about his disciples and about his teaching. 20 Jesus answered, "I have spoken openly to the world; I have always taught in synagogues and in the temple, where all the Jews come together. I have said nothing in secret. 21 Why do you ask me? Ask those who heard what I said to them; they know what I said." 22 When he had said this, one of the police standing nearby struck Jesus on the face, saying, "Is that how you answer the high priest?" 23 Jesus answered, "If I have spoken wrongly, testify to the wrong. But if I have spoken rightly, why do you strike me?" 24 Then Annas sent him bound to Caiaphas the high priest.

25 Now Simon Peter was standing and warming himself. They asked him, "You are not also one of his disciples, are you?" He denied it and said, "I am not." 26 One of the slaves of the high priest, a relative of the man whose ear Peter had cut off, asked, "Did I not see you in the garden with him?" 27 Again Peter denied it, and at that moment the cock crowed.

28 Then they took Jesus from Caiaphas to Pilate's headquarters. It was early in the morning. They themselves did not enter the headquarters, so as to avoid ritual defilement and to be able to eat the Passover. 29 So Pilate went out to them and said, "'What accusation do you bring against this man?" 30 They answered, "If this man were not a criminal, we would not have handed him over to you." 31 Pilate said to them, "Take him yourselves and judge him according to your law." The Jews replied, "We are not permitted to put anyone to death." 32 (This was to fulfill what Jesus had said when he indicated the kind of death he was to die.)

33 Then Pilate entered the headquarters again, summoned Jesus, and asked him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" 34 Jesus answered, "Do you ask this on your own, or did others tell you about me?" 35 Pilate replied, "I am not a Jew, am I? Your own nation and the chief priests have handed you over to me. What have you done?" 36 Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not from this world. If my kingdom were from this world, my followers would be fighting to keep me from being handed over to the Jews. But as it is, my kingdom is not from here." 37 Pilate asked him, "So you are a king?" Jesus answered, "You say that I am a king. For this I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice." 38 Pilate asked him, "What is truth?"

After he had said this, he went out to the Jews again and told them, "I find no case against him. 39 But you have a custom that I release someone for you at the Passover. Do you want me to release for you the King of the Jews?" 40 They shouted in reply, "Not this man, but Barabbas!" Now Barabbas was a bandit.

The Third Lesson

John 19:1-42

New Testament

1 Then Pilate took Jesus and had him flogged. 2 And the soldiers wove a crown of thorns and put it on his head, and they dressed him in a purple robe. 3 They kept

coming up to him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" and striking him on the face. 4 Pilate went out again and said to them, "Look, I am bringing him out to you to let you know that I find no case against him." 5 So Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, "Here is the man!" 6 When the chief priests and the police saw him, they shouted, "Crucify him! Crucify him!" Pilate said to them, "Take him yourselves and crucify him; I find no case against him." 7 The Jews answered him, "We have a law, and according to that law he ought to die because he has claimed to be the Son of God."

8 Now when Pilate heard this, he was more afraid than ever. 9 He entered his headquarters again and asked Jesus, "Where are you from?" But Jesus gave him no answer. 10 Pilate therefore said to him, "Do you refuse to speak to me? Do you not know that I have power to release you, and power to crucify you?" 11 Jesus answered him, "You would have no power over me unless it had been given you from above; therefore the one who handed me over to you is guilty of a greater sin." 12 From then on Pilate tried to release him, but the Jews cried out, "If you release this man, you are no friend of the emperor. Everyone who claims to be a king sets himself against the emperor."

13 When Pilate heard these words, he brought Jesus outside and sat on the judge's bench at a place called The Stone Pavement, or in Hebrew Gabbatha. 14 Now it was the day of Preparation for the Passover; and it was about noon. He said to the Jews, "Here is your King!" 15 They cried out, "Away with him! Away with him! Crucify him!" Pilate asked them, "Shall I crucify your King?" The chief priests answered, "We have no king but the emperor." 16 Then he handed him over to them to be crucified.

So they took Jesus; 17 and carrying the cross by himself, he went out to what is called The Place of the Skull, which in Hebrew is called Golgotha. 18 There they crucified him, and with him two others, one on either side, with Jesus between them. 19 Pilate also had an inscription written and put on the cross. It read, "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews." 20 Many of the Jews read this inscription, because the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city; and it was written in Hebrew, in Latin, and in Greek. 21 Then the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate, "Do not write, 'The King of the Jews,' but, 'This man said, I am King of the Jews.'" 22 Pilate answered, "What I have written I have written." 23 When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took his clothes and divided them into four parts, one for each soldier. They also took his tunic; now the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece from the top. 24 So they said to one another, "Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it to see who will get it." This was to fulfill what the scripture says,

"They divided my clothes among themselves,
and for my clothing they cast lots."

25 And that is what the soldiers did.

Meanwhile, standing near the cross of Jesus were his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. 26 When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing beside her, he said to his mother, "Woman, here is your son." 27 Then he said to the disciple, "Here is your mother." And from that hour the disciple took her into his own home.

Musical Reflection

At the Cry of the First Bird

David Guion

Susan Wallin, soloist*

*At the cry of the first bird, They began to crucify thee, O Swan!
It was not right ever to cease lamenting.
It was like the parting of day from night.
Ah! Though sore the suffering put upon the body of Mary's son,
Sorer to Him was the grief
That was upon her for His sake.*

28 After this, when Jesus knew that all was now finished, he said (in order to fulfill the scripture), "I am thirsty." 29 A jar full of sour wine was standing there. So they put a sponge full of the wine on a branch of hyssop and held it to his mouth. 30 When Jesus had received the wine, he said, "It is finished." Then he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

31 Since it was the day of Preparation, the Jews did not want the bodies left on the cross during the sabbath, especially because that sabbath was a day of great solemnity. So they asked Pilate to have the legs of the crucified men broken and the bodies removed. 32 Then the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first and of the other who had been crucified with him. 33 But when they came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. 34 Instead, one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once blood and water came out. 35 (He who saw this has testified so that you also may believe. His testimony is true, and he knows that he tells the truth.) 36 These things occurred so that the scripture might be fulfilled, "None of his bones shall be broken." 37 And again another passage of scripture says, "They will look on the one whom they have pierced."

38 After these things, Joseph of Arimathea, who was a disciple of Jesus, though a secret one because of his fear of the Jews, asked Pilate to let him take away the body of Jesus. Pilate gave him permission; so he came and removed his body. 39 Nicodemus, who had at first come to Jesus by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, weighing about a hundred pounds. 40 They took the body of Jesus and wrapped it with the spices in linen cloths, according to the burial custom of the Jews. 41 Now there was a garden in the place where he was crucified, and in the garden there was a new tomb in which no one had ever been

laid. 42 And so, because it was the Jewish day of Preparation, and the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there.

Prayers of Intercession

A time of silence follows each petition.

Redeeming God, we cry out to you for the suffering of the world.

We pray for the church, both near and far, that we may always be on the side of the oppressed and not the oppressors.

We pray for the gift of faith, that we may put our trust in you, even in times of suffering.

And so we pray for those who suffer, that they may feel your presence with them.

We pray for the earth, too often crucified by our folly and selfishness.

We pray for the Mary Magdalenes and Joseph of Arimatheas of this world who care for those who struggle and for those who are dying, that, through us, you may strengthen them in their service.

We pray for all who wrestle with their faith, struggling to know if you are with them, that your face will not be hidden from them.

We pray for all the families and all the nations of the earth, that they shall remember and turn toward you, and find peace.

We pray in the name of our great High Priest, Jesus Christ, your Son and our Lord. Amen.

Charge

Do not leave Jesus alone,
but pick up your own cross,
that God's way may be exalted and lifted up.

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