

“God’s Amazing Grace Flowing from the Cross of Christ”

A Service of Tenebrae
St. Paul’s Lutheran Church
April 7, 2023
1:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m.

As We Gather

Amazing grace has been our theme during this season of Lent. Never in the history of the world has there been an event like the one we remember today: the passion, the suffering, the scourging, and the crucifixion of our Lord Jesus, Son of the living God. On this Good Friday, may we all ponder the sacrifice required to “save a wretch like me” as we have sung in the hymn of old, Amazing Grace. Jesus’ sacrifice is so great, so full of awe, so sufficient, that it covers the sins of the whole world!

The Service of Tenebrae

The service of Tenebrae is a service of growing darkness. Such a service is inspired by our Lord’s words when Judas betrayed Him and the mob came to take Him away with swords and clubs. Jesus said, “This is your hour, when darkness reigns.” (Luke 22:53b)

In this service we remember that “hour of darkness,” the darkness of our sin, the darkness of injustice, the darkness of the death of God’s only Son – His Holy and Righteous Son, who was crushed for our iniquities, crowned with a bloody, thorny crown, and enthroned on a cross. Jesus endured the darkness that we might be delivered out of the darkness and into His Marvelous Light.

Our service begins a brief rite of confession followed by the Scripture readings. After the sermon, the service of Tenebrae will focus on Jesus seven “Words” from the cross. May God bless us as we ponder the depth of the Darkness of Sin and, more importantly, the depth of the Love of God for us in Jesus, the Christ.

The ministers enter in silence

(Rise)

A Brief Order of Confession Isaiah 53:4-6; 1 Peter 2:24-25; John 10:10, 27-28

PJ: Surely He took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows

C: yet we considered Him stricken by God, smitten by Him and afflicted.

PB: But He was pierced for our transgressions,

C: He was crushed for our iniquities;

PJ: the punishment that brought us peace was upon Him,

C: and by His wounds we are healed.

All: We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to our own way; and the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all!

PB: He, Himself, bore our sins in His body on the tree, so that we might die to sin and live for righteousness; by His wounds we have been healed. We were like sheep going astray, but now we have returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of our souls.

C: By His wounds we have been healed!

PJ: Jesus said, “I am the Good Shepherd. The Good Shepherd lays down His life for the sheep. My sheep listen to My voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of My hand.” For the sake of the Good Shepherd who laid down His life for us all, all your sins have been forgiven in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen! By His wounds we have been healed!

Prayer of the Day

PB: Let us pray together:

All: Almighty God, our heavenly Father, graciously receive us as your children for the sake of Jesus Christ, who was willing to be betrayed, to be given into the hands of sinners, and to suffer the death of crucifixion for each of us; for He lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Hymn #434 “Lamb of God, Pure and Holy”

Lamb of God, pure and holy, Who on the cross didst suffer,
Ever patient and lowly, Thyself to scorn didst offer.

All sins Thou borest for us, Else had despair reigned o'er us:
Have mercy on us, O Jesus! O Jesus!

Lamb of God, pure and holy, Who on the cross didst suffer,
Ever patient and lowly, Thyself to scorn didst offer.

All sins Thou borest for us, Else had despair reigned o'er us:
Have mercy on us, O Jesus! O Jesus!

Lamb of God, pure and holy, Who on the cross didst suffer,
Ever patient and lowly, Thyself to scorn didst offer.

All sins Thou borest for us, Else had despair reigned o'er us:
Thy peace be with us, O Jesus! O Jesus!

(Be seated)

Old Testament Reading *Isaiah 52:13-53:12*

See, my servant will act wisely; he will be raised and lifted up and highly exalted. Just as there were many who were appalled at him—his appearance was so disfigured beyond that of any man and his form marred beyond human likeness—so will he sprinkle many nations, and kings will shut their mouths because of him. For what they were not told, they will see, and what they have not heard, they will understand.

Who has believed our message and to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?

He grew up before him like a tender shoot, and like a root out of dry ground. He had no beauty or majesty to attract us to him, nothing in his appearance that we should desire him. He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows, and familiar with suffering. Like one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we considered him stricken by God, smitten by him, and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed. We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; he was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth. By oppression and judgment he was taken away. And who can speak of his descendants?

For he was cut off from the land of the living; for the transgression of my people he was stricken. He was assigned a grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death, though he had done no violence, nor was any deceit in his mouth.

Yet it was the LORD's will to crush him and cause him to suffer, and though the LORD makes his life a guilt offering, he will see his offspring and prolong his days, and the will of the LORD will prosper in his hand. After the suffering of his soul, he will see the light of life and be satisfied; by his knowledge my righteous servant will justify many, and he will bear their iniquities. Therefore I will give him a portion among the great, and he will divide the spoils with the strong, because he poured out his life unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors. For he bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.

New Testament Reading *Hebrews 4:14-16, 5:7-9*

Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has gone through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are-- yet was without sin. Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

During the days of Jesus' life on earth, he offered up prayers and petitions with loud cries and tears to the one who could save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission. Although he was a son, he learned obedience from what he suffered and, once made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him.

Reading from the Holy Gospel *John 19:1-42*

Pilate took Jesus and had him flogged. The soldiers twisted together a crown of thorns and put it on his head. They clothed him in a purple robe and went up to him again and again, saying, "Hail, king of the Jews!" And they struck him in the face. Once more Pilate came out and said to the Jews, "Look, I am bringing him out to you to let you know that I find no basis for a charge against him." When Jesus came out wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe, Pilate said to them, "Here is the man!" As soon as the chief priests and their officials saw him, they shouted, "Crucify! Crucify!" But Pilate answered, "You take him and crucify him. As for me, I find no basis for a charge against him." The Jews insisted, "We have a law, and according to that law he must die, because he claimed to be the Son of God." When Pilate heard this, he was even more afraid,

and he went back inside the palace. "Where do you come from?" he asked Jesus, but Jesus gave him no answer. "Do you refuse to speak to me?" Pilate said. "Don't you realize I have power either to free you or to crucify you?" Jesus answered, "You would have no power over me if it were not given to you from above. Therefore the one who handed me over to you is guilty of a greater sin."

From then on, Pilate tried to set Jesus free, but the Jews kept shouting, "If you let this man go, you are no friend of Caesar. Anyone who claims to be a king opposes Caesar."

When Pilate heard this, he brought Jesus out and sat down on the judge's seat at a place known as the Stone Pavement (which in Aramaic is Gabbatha). It was the day of Preparation of Passover Week, about the sixth hour. "Here is your king," Pilate said to the Jews. But they shouted, "Take him away! Take him away! Crucify him!" "Shall I crucify your king?" Pilate asked. "We have no king but Caesar," the chief priests answered. Finally Pilate handed him over to them to be crucified.

So the soldiers took charge of Jesus. Carrying his own cross, he went out to the place of the Skull (which in Aramaic is called Golgotha). Here they crucified him, and with him two others-- one on each side and Jesus in the middle. 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, "Do not write 'The King of the Jews,' but that this man claimed to be king of the Jews." Pilate answered, "What I have written, I have written."

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. "Let's not tear it," they said to one another. "Let's decide by lot who will get it." This happened that the scripture might be fulfilled which said, "They divided my garments among them and cast lots for my clothing." So this is what the soldiers did.

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, "Dear woman, here is your son," and to the disciple, "Here is your mother." From that time on, this disciple took her into his home.

Later, knowing that all was now completed, and so that the Scripture would be fulfilled, Jesus said, "I am thirsty." 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, "It is finished." With that, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

Now it was the day of Preparation, and the next day was to be a special Sabbath. Because the Jews did not want the bodies left on the crosses during the Sabbath, they asked Pilate to have the legs broken and the bodies taken down. The soldiers therefore came and broke the legs of the first man who had been crucified with Jesus, and then those of the other. But when they came to Jesus and found that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. Instead, one of the soldiers pierced Jesus' side with a spear, bringing a sudden flow of blood and water. The man who saw it has given testimony, and his testimony is true.

He knows that he tells the truth, and he testifies so that you also may believe. These things happened so that the scripture would be fulfilled: "Not one of his bones will be broken," and, as another scripture says, "They will look on the one they have pierced."

Later, Joseph of Arimathea asked Pilate for the body of Jesus. Now Joseph was a disciple of Jesus, but secretly because he feared the Jews. With Pilate's permission, he came and took the body away. He was accompanied by Nicodemus, the man who earlier had visited Jesus at night. Nicodemus brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about seventy-five pounds. Taking Jesus' body, the two of them wrapped it, with the spices, in strips of linen. This was in accordance with Jewish burial customs. At the place where Jesus was crucified, there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb, in which no one had ever been laid. Because it was the Jewish day of Preparation and since the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there.

Pastor: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

People: Praise to you, Christ Jesus.

Hymn #451 "Stricken, Smitten, and Afflicted"

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.

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.

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.

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.

Sermon *"The Darkness of Sin and the Price of Redemption"*

(Rise)

Good Friday Litany

PJ: O Lord, have mercy upon us.

PB: O Christ, have mercy upon us.

C: O Lord, have mercy upon us.

PJ: God the Father, in heaven,

C: have mercy.

PB: God the Son, Redeemer of the world,

C: have mercy.

PJ: God the Holy Spirit,

C: have mercy.

PB: Be gracious to us.

C: Spare us, good Lord.

PJ: In all time of tribulation, in all time of prosperity, in the hour of death and on the Day of Judgment:

C: Help us, good Lord.

PB: To prosper the preaching of your Word; to bless our prayer and meditation; to strengthen and preserve us in the true faith; to give heart to our sorrow and strength to our repentance;

C: We implore you to hear us, good Lord.

PJ: To draw all people to yourself; to bless those who are instructed in the faith; to watch over and console the poor, the sick, and the distressed; to bless and be with the lonely, the forsaken, the abandoned, and all who stand in need of prayer; to give abundant blessing to all works of mercy; and to have mercy on us all:

C: We implore you to hear us, good Lord.

PB: To turn our hearts to you; to turn the hearts of our enemies, persecutors, and slanderers; and to graciously hear our prayers:

C: We implore you to hear us, good Lord.

PJ: O Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world,

C: Have mercy on us.

PB: O Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world,

C: Have mercy on us.

PJ: O Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world,

C: Grant us your peace.

PB: O Christ,

C: hear us.

PJ: O Lord,

C: have mercy.

PB: O Christ,

C: have mercy on us.

PJ: O Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray:

All: 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.

(Be Seated)

The Service of Tenebrae

The Tenebrae service calls us to reflect upon the increasing darkness that was evident in all the circumstances that led our Lord to the cross of Calvary. Therefore, as we progress through the service, the candles will be progressively extinguished as will also the lighting of the church. We will hear our Lord's dying words and sing of our Lord's passion for us.

The First Word from the Cross

The Word of **Forgiveness:** Luke 23:33-38

When they came to the place called the Skull, they crucified him there, along with the criminals—one on his right, the other on his left. Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.” And they divided up his clothes by casting lots. The people stood watching, and the rulers even sneered at him. They said, “He saved others; let him save himself if he is God’s Messiah, the Chosen One.” The soldiers also came up and mocked him. They offered him wine vinegar and said, “If you are the king of the Jews, save yourself.” There was a written notice above him, which read: THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS.

Hymn #440 “Jesus, I Will Ponder Now” vv. 1, 2 & 5

Jesus, I will ponder now On Your holy passion;
With Your Spirit me endow For such meditation.
Grant that I in love and faith May the image cherish
Of Your suff’ring, pain, and death That I may not perish.

Make me see Your great distress, Anguish, and affliction,
Bonds and stripes and wretchedness And Your crucifixion;
Make me see how scourge and rod,
Spear and nails did wound You,
How for them You died, O God,
Who with thorns had crowned You.

If my sins give me alarm And my conscience grieve me,
Let Your cross my fear disarm;
Peace of conscience give me.
Help me see forgiveness won By Your holy passion.
If for me He slays His Son, God must have compassion!

The first candle is extinguished

The Second Word from the Cross

The Word of **Promised Paradise:** Luke 23:39-43

One of the criminals who hung there hurled insults at him: “Aren’t you the Messiah? Save yourself and us!” But the other criminal rebuked him. “Don’t you fear God,” he said, “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.” Then he said, “Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.” Jesus answered him, “Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise.”

Hymn #709 “The King of Love My Shepherd Is” vv. 1, 3, 6

The King of love my shepherd is,
Whose goodness faileth never;
I nothing lack if I am His And He is mine forever.

Perverse and foolish oft I strayed,
But yet in love He sought me
And on His shoulder gently laid
And home rejoicing brought me.

And so through all the length of days
Thy goodness faileth never;
Good Shepherd, may I sing Thy praise
Within Thy house forever!

The second candle is extinguished

The Third Word from the Cross

The Word of **Loving Compassion for His Own:**

John 19:25-27

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 her, “Woman, here is
your son,” and to the disciple, “Here is your mother.”
From that time on, this disciple took her into his home.

Hymn #425 “When I Survey the Wondrous Cross” vv. 1 & 3

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.

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?

The third candle is extinguished

The Fourth Word from the Cross

The Word of **Rejection:** Matthew 27:45-46
From noon until three in the afternoon darkness came
over all the land. About three in the afternoon Jesus cried
out in a loud voice, “Eli, Eli, lemasabachthani?” (which
means “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”).

Hymn #439 “O Dearest Jesus” vv. 1-4

O dearest Jesus, what law hast Thou broken
That such sharp sentence should on Thee be spoken?
Of what great crime hast Thou to make confession,
What dark transgression?

They crown Thy head with thorns,
they smite, they scourge Thee;
With cruel mocking to the cross they urge Thee;
They give Thee gall to drink, they still decry Thee;
They crucify Thee.

Whence come these sorrows, whence this mortal anguish?
It is my sins for which Thou, Lord, must languish;
Yea, all the wrath, the woe, Thou dost inherit,
This I do merit.

What punishment so strange is suffered yonder!
The Shepherd dies for sheep that loved to wander;
The Master pays the debt His servants owe Him,
Who would not know Him.

The fourth candle is extinguished

The Fifth Word from the Cross

The Word of **Life Dried Up:** John 19:28-29
Later, knowing that everything had now been finished, and
so that Scripture would be fulfilled, Jesus said, “I am thirsty.”
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.

Hymn #449 “O Sacred Head, Now Wounded” vv. 1 & 3

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.

What language shall I borrow
to thank Thee, dearest Friend
For this Thy dying sorrow, Thy pity without end?
O Make me Thine forever! And should I fainting be,
Lord, let me never, never, out live my love for Thee.

The fifth candle is extinguished

The Sixth Word from the Cross

The Word of **Fulfillment**: John 19:30
When he had received the drink, Jesus said, “It is finished.” With that, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

Hymn #452 “O Perfect Life of Love” vv. 1, 2, 4, 5

O perfect life of love! All, all, is finished now,
All that He left His throne above To do for us below.

No work is left undone Of all the Father willed;
His toil, His sorrows, one by one,
The Scriptures have fulfilled.

And on His thorn-crowned head And on His sinless soul
Our sins in all their guilt were laid
That He might make us whole.

In perfect love He dies; For me He dies, for me.
O all atoning Sacrifice, I cling by faith to Thee.

The sixth candle is extinguished

The Seventh Word from the Cross

The Word of **Trust**: Luke 23:46-49
Jesus called out with a loud voice, “Father, into your hands I commit my spirit.” When he had said this, he breathed his last. The centurion, seeing what had happened, praised God and said, “Surely this was a righteous man.” When all the people who had gathered to witness this sight saw what took place, they beat their breasts and went away. But all those who knew him, including the women who had followed him from Galilee, stood at a distance, watching these things.

The seventh candle is extinguished

Closing Hymn #456 “Were You There?” vv. 1, 2, & 3

Were you there when they crucified my Lord?
Were you there when they crucified my Lord?
Oh! Sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.
Were you there when they crucified my Lord?

Were you there when they nailed Him to a tree?
Were you there when they nailed Him to a tree?
Oh! Sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.
Were you there when they nailed Him to a tree?

Were you there when they laid Him in a tomb?
Were you there when they laid Him in a tomb?
Oh! Sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.
Were you there when they laid Him in a tomb?^{Public Domain}

The Lord’s Prayer (*prayed softly*)

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.

After the closing hymn and Lord's Prayer, there will be a time for silent reflection upon the cross and upon our Savior, Jesus Christ, who died there for us. During this time, worshipers are encouraged to spend some time in personal prayer and confession, pondering the cost of sin and the riches of God's love and grace in Christ. You may leave silently when you so choose.

Preacher	Pastor Harold Bender
Liturgist	Pastor Joshua Grotelueschen
Lectors	Grant Gundersen, Katie Scepanski
Organist	Olivia Kukor

Easter Vigil Saturday April 8 at 5:00 pm

Easter Sunrise Service Sunday April 9 at 6:30 am

Easter Worship Sunday April 9 at 9:00 & 11:00 am

Easter Breakfast begins at 7:30 am on Sunday