

Welcome. Peace be with you.

Welcome to all who are joining us virtually. In this time of social distancing and COVID-19 pandemic response, we are grateful for the opportunity to gather in spirit.

Children are welcome in worship. Kids, grab your SPARK Story Bibles and set up your craft tables!

We welcome your feedback as we experiment with livestreaming worship! What works or doesn't work? What should we try? Our contact info is on the back page of this bulletin.

University Lutheran Church of Hope is a welcoming, Christian community of faith centered on God's grace and called to demonstrate God's love for the world. University Lutheran Church of Hope is a Reconciling in Christ congregation and a sanctuary congregation with a commitment to racial equity.

Good Friday

April 2, 2021

7:00 p.m.

Today's Worship Leaders:

Pastor Jen Nagel and Pastor Barbara Johnson (presiding ministers);
Zach Busch, Hope Choir (music); Diane Greve, Eric Ringham,
Cyndi Ganzkow-Wold, Brian McCaffrey, Marty Lewis-Hunstiger,
Pastor Jen, Pastor Barbara, Zach Busch (lectors); Dan Bielenberg,
Rebecca Tetlie (tech facilitators)



gathering

We gather for worship on the land of our Creator.

*Many of us and our church building dwell in the traditional home of the Dakota people,
and a land over which the Anishinaabeg people and others also moved.*

They gathered and ate food, rested, died and gave birth, and prayed here, and many still do.

Assembly parts are marked in bold.

Beholding the Cross

Pictures furnished by the ULCH community

be - hold the cross, be - hold the cross.

here be - hold where Love is cru - ci - fied.

The first system consists of two staves in 4/4 time, key of B-flat major. The melody is on the top staff, and the bass line is on the bottom staff. The lyrics are: 'be - hold the cross, be - hold the cross.' on the first line, and 'here be - hold where Love is cru - ci - fied.' on the second line.

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Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son. Chris - te e - le - i - son.

Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son, e - le - i - son, e - le - i - son.

The second system consists of two staves in 4/4 time, key of B-flat major. The melody is on the top staff, and the bass line is on the bottom staff. The lyrics are: 'Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son. Chris - te e - le - i - son.' on the first line, and 'Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son, e - le - i - son, e - le - i - son.' on the second line.

Text: Traditional
Music: Marty Haugen, from *Gift of God*

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Je - sus, re - mem - ber me when you come in - to your king - dom.

Je - sus, re - mem - ber me when you come in - to your king - dom.

The third system consists of two staves in 4/4 time, key of B-flat major. The melody is on the top staff, and the bass line is on the bottom staff. The lyrics are: 'Je - sus, re - mem - ber me when you come in - to your king - dom.' on the first line, and 'Je - sus, re - mem - ber me when you come in - to your king - dom.' on the second line.

Text: Luke 23:42; Taizé Community
Music: REMEMBER ME, Jacques Berthier, 1923-1994
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Prayer of the Day

**Let us pray. God our Savior...In the name of the Crucified One, whose victory is life.
Amen.**

word

Stations of the Cross

Artwork by Janet MacKenzie

Reflections from “The Way of the Cross,” by Joan Chittister,
published by Orbis Books

The First Station

Jesus is condemned to death

Mark 15:1-15 (Brian)

As soon as it was morning, the chief priests held a consultation with the elders and scribes and the whole council. They bound Jesus, led him away, and handed him over to Pilate. Pilate asked him, ‘Are you the King of the Jews?’ He answered him, ‘You say so.’ Then the chief priests accused him of many things. Pilate asked him again, ‘Have you no answer? See how many charges they bring against you.’ But Jesus made no further reply, so that Pilate was amazed.

Now at the festival he used to release a prisoner for them, anyone for whom they asked. Now a man called Barabbas was in prison with the rebels who had committed murder during the insurrection. So the crowd came and began to ask Pilate to do for them according to his custom. Then he answered them, ‘Do you want me to release for you the King of the Jews?’ For he realized that it was out of jealousy that the chief priests had handed him over. But the chief priests stirred up the crowd to have him release Barabbas for them instead. Pilate spoke to them again, ‘Then what do you wish me to do with the man you call the King of the Jews?’ They shouted back, ‘Crucify him!’ Pilate asked them, ‘Why, what evil has he done?’ But they

shouted all the more, 'Crucify him!' So Pilate, wishing to satisfy the crowd, released Barabbas for them; and after flogging Jesus, he handed him over to be crucified.

Reflection (Marty)

The first station of the cross requires us to examine our entire philosophy of life. Jesus is condemned to die because he defied the standards of both the state and the religious establishment in which he lived. To both he brought a truth they did not want to hear. He set out to witness to the love and justice of the God of all creation: Jews and non-Jews, women as well as men, underlings as well as the professional types of his time. Surely we are all called to do the same, to speak our truth with clarity, simplicity and conviction. What must rise in us in times like these is a clear commitment to what must be, to the truth that must surely come if the will of God is really to be done on earth and to our role in bringing it. He cured on the sabbath, mixed with foreigners, taught theology to women, played with children, questioned every law, chose people over ritual every time, and never made institutional authority a god. He threatened the establishment with his incessant attempts to build a better world and they set out to destroy him for it.

The question with which the first station confronts us is a stark one: what is it in life for which we are willing to be condemned? The goal in life is not to avoid condemnation. No one does. Life's great challenge is simply to decide who will condemn us and why. If we were better people, perhaps, we would be condemned more often. Most of all, when we are condemned for the right reasons, the first station reminds us, we know we will not be there alone. Jesus will be standing beside us, full of pain for our sake, but head up and unyielding.

Hymn - Were You There, stanza 1 (Virtual choir)

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?

The Second Station

Jesus takes up his cross

John 19:16-17 (Barbara)

So they took Jesus; and carrying the cross by himself, he went out to what is called The Place of the Skull, which in Hebrew is called Golgotha.

Reflection (Diane)

The very act of accepting a cross for the sake of another gives rise in us to the best of ourselves. In that act, the heart of Jesus awakens in us and we become new of soul again. It is the moment in which we rise from the grave of a world that long ago gave up the ideal in favor of the pragmatic, the just in favor of the profitable. The very impulse to choose the best over the comfortable or the secure is sign that the resurrection has begun in us. Every action of Jesus to stretch the vision of Israel—the choice of the menstruating woman over the dictates of the law, the choice of the children over the prestigious adults, the choice of the Roman soldier over the officials of his own system—made him more and more of an enemy of the system. But it also made him more and more clearly a sign of the presence of God on earth, so will it do the same in us.

Hymn - Ah, Holy Jesus, stanza 1 (Virtual Choir)

**Ah, holy Jesus, how hast thou offended
that we to judge thee have in hate pretended?
By foes derided, by thine own rejected,
O most afflicted.**

(Johann Heerman, tr. Robert Bridges)

The Third Station

Jesus falls the first time

Reflection (Eric)

Here at the third station all pretense ends. Reality sets in.

We ourselves have set out to glorify the crucifixion of Jesus. From a distance of over two thousand years it is easy enough to forget the crowd shouting “Crucify him” during the greatest of the Jewish holidays. We have lost sight of the fact that it was during one of the most crowded feasts of the year where all of Israel heard of his downfall, his disgrace, his loss of status even among the peasants. They, after all, are the kind of people who would later say, “I know not the man” and “Others he saved; Himself he cannot save.” It is easy to look at the third station and forget that Jesus the wonder worker, at the height of his popularity, fell in the mud on a dirty garbage strewn street of a sandy village in the Middle East. It is easy to forget now that he looked anything but regal, that the Crown was made from the branches of a thornbush, and that this is the one who said, “follow me.” It is easy to ignore the necessary question now: will you? And if you do not follow this one, whom will you follow?

Hymn - The Summons, stanza 1 (Zach)

Will you come and follow me

If I but call your name?

Will you go where you don't know

And never be the same?

Will you let my love be shown,

Will you let my name be known,

Will you let my life be grown

In you and you in me?

The Fourth Station

Jesus meets his mother

Reflection (Cyndi)

This station is about the place of love in life. With love we can do anything, even the clouded parts of life, so tenebrous but at the same time so necessary, so commonplace. But without love, we can only die long before death takes us.

Central to it all is Mary, the mother, the one who never goes away regardless who says what about this savior of the people who is at one and the same time the enemy of the state, the apostate of the law. Mary who herself braved the negative reactions of both religion and culture to have this child refuses to deny him now. Love for the outcast is the gift she brings to the moment. The proclamation of presence is the sermon she preaches. Disgraced in the eyes of the population who have abandoned him, she does nothing to hide her love or her continuing commitment. They have leaned on one another all their lives. No way to change that now. They will simply both suffer this cataclysmic moment together, she for him, he for her, both of them for the sake of the world which they serve.

The question with which the 4th station of the cross confronts us is why do we love and how well? If we love one another for our own sake, that love is doomed for both of us because it stands to twist both of us into shapes that are not our own. The truth is that there is no one who can ever satisfy all our needs. The moment of new life happens for us when we can love the other and at the same time let them go. Let them free to become the wholeness of themselves. Allow them to do what they are meant to do in life. And let them do it better because they feel the support of genuine love every step of the way. Love like that can never fail us because the freedom we give to the other to become frees our own becoming as well.

Hymn - O Love that Wilt Not Let Me Go, two stanzas (Zach)

O Love, that wilt not let me go,
I rest my weary soul in Thee;
I give Thee back the life I owe,
That in Thine ocean depths its flow
May richer, fuller be.

O Joy, that seekest me through pain,
I cannot close my heart to Thee;
I trace the rainbow through the rain,
And feel the promise is not vain
That morn shall tearless be.

Text: George Matheson/Music: Albert L. Peace

The Fifth Station

Simon helps Jesus carry the cross

Mark 15:21 (Jen)

They compelled a passer-by, who was coming in from the country, to carry his cross; it was Simon of Cyrene, the father of Alexander and Rufus.

Reflection (Barbara)

There is no word recorded in scripture about how Simon responded or why he hadn't stopped to help in the first place, but we can guess: he was embarrassed, perhaps; irritated, perhaps; repulsed, perhaps. And all those things are exactly the proof that we are being called to do something. The fact is that when we feel like that about something, it is sure proof that we are being called to respond to it—because, obviously, we need as much help in dealing with this thing as does the person we're avoiding on the street.

The call of the fifth station is a clear one: The function of the follower of Christ is to get involved...What are we being called to do for someone in need right now for which we are a disinclined observer? What does the situation have to offer us as well? When we open our hearts to the other in need, we are very likely to discover that our own hidden needs have been healed in the process.

Hymn - Stay With Me (Virtual Choir)

The Sixth Station

Veronica wipes the face of Jesus

Reflection (Zach)

[Veronica explanation]

The story of Veronica, whose act of compassion left the wounded face of Jesus imprinted on the veil with which she wiped his bleeding face, is a mixture of tradition, legend and devotions that developed over the centuries from one end of Europe to another. There is no ascertainable historical accuracy attached to any of the tellings, let alone to any of the “veils” themselves, but there is a great deal of spiritual truth to be recognized here. The truth is that nothing we do for the suffering other ever goes unnoticed or unnoted. The kindness we bring to great moments of pain and grief marks us and lasts forever not only in the heart of the person whose pain we assuage but in our own soul as well.

The woman Veronica, unlike Simon, is said to have stepped from the crowd voluntarily as Jesus stumbled by under the weight of the cross in order to wipe the sweat and grime from his eyes. That the image of the face of Jesus remained on the veil she used to do it endures from one century to the next without a single shred of data to support the story. And yet, clearly, it is not the historicity of the story that counts after all these centuries. Veronica has become part of the universal spiritual psyche in the stations of the cross because the witness of Veronica to the power of witness stands for all to see.

Here is a woman who will not allow the story of the journey to Calvary to be romanticized, to go untold, to be overlooked or forgotten. The image on the veil remains forever a reminder of the unmitigated horror of which injustice is capable. The woman's veil stands as mute witness to the depths of the demonic present in the human condition once we permit it to be unleashed. The veil remains a witness to the crime of all times—the destruction of goodness at the center of us, in us, around us forever.

Compassion and witness take the stage of our hearts here. Her act of compassion, we know, puts us to shame. How often do we stop to mend the broken in the streets? Her unblinking witness puts us on notice: for the sake of what life lesson would we draw attention to ourselves? For the sake of the ongoing valor of the world, to what kind of care would we bend our own lives so that the world would not forget? Stolid in her performance, the woman stares into the heart of humanity, challenging us to justify such an act as this senseless, unjustified act of brutal violence.

Neither can be erased. Not the brutality, nor the courageous compassion. Both of them prod our conscience and break our hearts.

The image that Veronica takes away on her veil is an image of serenity, of soulful repose in the midst of human chaos. The veil does not scream at us. It does not sob. It does nothing to draw attention to itself. Instead, in its steadiness it draws attention only to us, to those who see it, to challenge us. You, the veil says, you. Will you yourself ever do anything for those who live in the centrifuge of violence and deprivation, to raise them up, to give them hope, to stop the pain they breathe?

Hymn - Here I Am, Lord, stanza 2

“I, the Lord of snow and rain, I have borne my people’s pain.

I have wept for love of them. They turn away.

I will break their hearts of stone, give them hearts for love alone.

I will speak my word to them. Whom shall I send?”

Here I am, Lord. Is it I, Lord? I have heard you calling in the night.

I will go, Lord, if you lead me. I will hold you people in my heart.

The Seventh Station

Jesus falls the second time

Reflection (Eric)

Certainty is a chimera. All we really know for sure is that what we did last time in dealing with a problem either did or didn't work. Will the same thing work again? Who knows?

Doubt is one of the great spiral challenges of life. We live with it at one level or another every day of our lives. We suffer from it even more when what we did to conquer it the first time was more accident than strategy. What if that same kind of blind happenstance does not save us now? And if we try it again and we fail, then what?

The second effort makes or breaks the average person. The second effort either deadens the soul to the rest of life or redefines us to ourselves. The second effort becomes the "I can't" trap, the point after which we never try again, or it becomes the "I can" truth that lifts us to a new level of courage forever.

Here in the seventh station we see Jesus fall again, more tired this time, more dejected this time, even less committed, perhaps. Why not just die in the dirt? Why try to get up at all?

The call to holiness, to witness, to commitment is undeniable now: 'The Jesus who falls a second time gets up a second time determined to see this cross through to the end.'

Hymn - Ah, Holy Jesus, stanza 4 (Virtual Choir)

**For me, kind Jesus, was thine incarnation,
thy mortal sorrow, and thy life's oblation;
thy death of anguish and thy bitter passion,
for my salvation.**

The Eighth Station

Jesus meets the weeping women of Jerusalem

Luke 23:27-31 (Cyndi)

A great number of the people followed him, and among them were women who were beating their breasts and wailing for him. But Jesus turned to them and said, “Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. For the days are surely coming when they will say, ‘Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bore, and the breasts that never nursed.’ Then they will begin to say to the mountains, ‘Fall on us’; and to the hills, ‘Cover us.’ For if they do this when the wood is green, what will happen when it is dry?”

Reflection (Brian)

One moment Jesus is hailed and applauded, lauded and followed. Then, arrested without cause, the crowds begin to shout for his blood.

And then the miracle happens. The world’s most unlikely group of supporters steps into the scene. They were a rag-tag body of women whose brave presence made it clear that Jesus who had been condemned by the upper class was, nevertheless, a hero to the underclass.

The call of the 8th station is twofold. First, we are challenged to put down the judgments and prejudices that turn societies into social prisons. Then we are called to change the society in which this kind of oppression and injustice is permitted to go on unchecked and even unnoticed. This station calls us to look again at those we ignore.

“Don’t weep for me,” Jesus tells the women of Jerusalem. “Weep for yourselves and your children.” The implication is clear: if this society continues on the road that it is on now, it dooms itself to the effects of such policies. Don’t weep for the people on death row, in other words, weep for the kind of society that would stoop so low as to become what it hates. The question with which the eighth station of the cross confronts us is, Do we really reject what we call sinful or do we really reject only the sinners themselves?

To begin to see beyond the person to the environment, to the social policies of a system, to the circumstances for an understanding of life is to begin to live life to the fullest. Then, we are less likely to allow individuals to bear the sins that belong to us all. Then, we rise to a new level of wisdom.

Hymn - O Sacred Head - two stanzas (Virtual Choir)

**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 wasthine!
Yet, though despised and gory, I joy to call theemine.**

**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 outlive my love to thee.**

(Paul Gerhardt, based on Arnulf of Louvain)

The Ninth Station

Jesus falls the third time

Reflection (Eric)

There is something about the taste of failure that damps the spirit. But when the failure comes time after time, as it does in this ninth station when, having already fallen twice, Jesus falls again, then the very marrow of a person's soul is frozen in place. What is the use? we say. Why bother? We begin to wonder.

Everything we were sure we could do alone, could do at all, could do maybe as well as anyone else if not better, has come to dust.

There is the option, of course, to go on anyway, go on despite the effort of it all.

The call of the ninth station is to refuse to give up doing what the world needs to have done simply because we do not succeed at it on the first try. The call is to see failure as part of the process of our lives and to learn from it accordingly.

When Jesus falls, Jesus certainly wants to quit. But Jesus' life was about accepting the consequences of love and justice, whatever that might be. Quitting was not an option.

What does it matter if justice never comes, as long as we refuse to abandon the ideal? What happens to the vision of equality if we never let go of our demand for it? What will happen to the will of God for the world if we will doggedly go on giving our own lives to it so that others may know its fullness in their own?

Music - You Gotta Put One Foot in Front of the Other and Lead with Love

The Tenth Station

Jesus is stripped of his garments

Matthew 27:27-31 (Diane)

Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the governor's headquarters, and they gathered the whole cohort around him. They stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him, and after twisting some thorns into a crown, they put it on his head. They put a reed in his right hand and knelt before him and mocked him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" They spat on him, and took the reed and struck him on the head. After mocking him, they stripped him of the robe and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him away to crucify him.

Reflection (Marty)

[A] spiritual summons of the tenth station is to the development of genuine humility. The Jesus who stands before us naked and unashamed, dignified and full of conviction is calling us to pay more attention to who we are than what we...pretend to be.

When we have finally stopped the posturings and personal exaggerations of life, the freedom that comes with being honest with the self and open with others leaves us perfectly free...No one can say anything about us that we have not already admitted, if not to others, certainly to the self. Now we cannot be slighted because we know who we are. We cannot be embarrassed by the past because we have already embraced and confronted it. We cannot be left to the vultures of life because there is no way left to pick us to the bone that we have not already reckoned with ourselves. It is a moment of great liberation. It is a moment of new life.

Being willing to be the self and nothing more is the beginning of truth, the essence of humility, the coming of peace.

Hymn - Lord Jesus Christ, Lover of All OR Let My Spirit Always Sing, two stanzas

The Eleventh Station

Jesus is nailed to the cross

John 19:18-25a (Barbara)

There they crucified him, and with him two others, one on either side, with Jesus between them. Pilate also had an inscription written and put on the cross. It read, 'Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews.' 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. 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."' Pilate answered, 'What I have written I have written.' 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. 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 fulfil what the scripture says,

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

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.

Reflection (Jen)

The cross brings with it a sense of finality. There is no going back from here. Jesus is nailed to a cross from which there is no return. The glory days are over. The followers are scattered. The entire enterprise seems lost. It is the bleak and final moments of the dream. There is no way whatsoever to plumb the depths of such depression in the human soul.

Jesus cross was not some kind of petty inconvenience. It was a distortion of a great life and even greater plans and in great proportions. It was the cutting off of life in the very thick of it. It was the cost to be paid for confronting the authorities of both synagogue and state in an attempt to make both institutions what they were meant to be for all our sakes.

Every difficult thing in life is not a cross. A lot of things are difficult in life but that does not make them crosses. A cross is that which we do not choose and do not want. It is outside the normal order of life. It is what confounds our plans or disturbs our dreams. It is anything that wrenches

life away from our plans or hopes in a truncated or destructive or pitiable way. It is where we would not go but cannot avoid.

The call of the eleventh station is the call to faith, to believe that a loving God is also present in darkness so deep that nothing can possibly assuage it. It is the call to faith in the God of timelessness in a time of total defeat. It is trust that the God who created us and loves us will hold us up through this moment so that the darkness does not break our hearts.

Hymn - Were You There, stanza 3 (Virtual choir)

Were you there when the sun refused to shine?

Were you there when the sun refused to shine?

O sometimes it causes me to tremble! tremble! tremble!

Were you there when the sun refused to shine?

The Twelfth Station

Jesus dies on the cross

Mark 15:33-39 (Zach)

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!"

Reflection (Diane)

The 12th station of the cross brings us face to face with the finality of defeat. Sometimes things don't have a happy ending in life. They just grind on until loss becomes the new normal.

Sometimes we fail. Sometimes we're beaten. Sometimes we are lost. Sometimes we are abandoned by the very people we love most in life and who we thought also loved us. At that point, without doubt, something in us dies.

Then we learn that there's no going back to things that once were but are no more. The old breath goes out of us and all we can do is to surrender to the dark. It is not a pretty moment. It can take all the energy we have.

The call to us at a time when great pieces of the future crumble in life is not so much to faith as it is to hope. Hope does not tell us that soon life will be the same again as it was before the loss. No, hope tells us that life will go on, differently, yes, but go on nevertheless. Hope tells us that the pieces are there for us to put together, if only we will give ourselves to the doing of it.

It is out of the dark, wet dust of yesterday that life forever blooms.

Song - When I Feel Despair by Bret Hesla

When I feel despair, I remember that truth and love have always won. (Gandhi)

The Thirteenth Station

Jesus is taken down from the cross

John 19:31-40 (Brian)

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. Then the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first and of the other who had been crucified with him. But when they came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. Instead, one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once blood and water came out. (He who saw this has testified so that you also may believe. His testimony is true, and he knows that he tells the truth.) These things occurred so that the scripture might be fulfilled, “None of his bones shall be broken.” And again another passage of scripture says, “They will look on the one whom they have pierced.”

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. Nicodemus, who had at first come to Jesus by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, weighing about a hundred pounds. They took the body of Jesus and wrapped it with the spices in linen cloths, according to the burial custom of the Jews.

Reflection (Cyndi)

Life, we come to understand, is not a monument; it is a crystal ball, fragile and brittle to the touch. Life is a gift of momentous proportions but is given without the security of knowing that once achieved it will be impervious to change. A mystery beyond understanding, it comes, at the same time, laden down with the pain of irredeemable and unexplainable loss. Life comes to us as the reckless joy of possibility but it comes, too, with the agonizing awareness that someday, when we least expect it, we may need to let go of it to begin all over again.

The willingness to start all over again at any point in life comes with great reservation. Can anything worse be imagined than the death of the ideal? The inclination to hold on, even to the less than beautiful, is part of being human, part of being inclined to hoard life rather than to live it with arms open and head up, facing the winds of the day and believing that the destination we cannot see is just as good or better than the one to which we have already set the sails of our hearts.

We wonder what life was ever about if this is all it comes to, despite all the goodwill, all our great struggles to have it be otherwise. Then, we realize that only God is God, that we are not in charge of time or truth or the architecture of our definition of the perfect world. Then, we understand: this next step is, like Jesus, to give ourselves over to the arms of God and trust.

Trust is the gift that makes life exciting. It is the golden thread between the human search for the fullness of life and the heart of God that wills it for us.

Hymn - Give Me Jesus, stanza 4

Oh, when I come to die, give me Jesus.

You can have all the rest, give me Jesus.

The Fourteenth Station

Jesus is laid in the tomb

John 19:41-42 (Barbara)

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

Reflection (Eric)

Death is not a single action; it is many actions overlapping that haunt, plague, empty the soul of every strand of life and all at the same time. It is a time of mixed emotions. There is the sense of weightlessness, the thought that life comes down nowhere at all.

We find ourselves at the intersection between commitment and desperation. We can begin again or we can give way to despair.

It is precisely then when the tombs of our lives become one thing or another—a shocking propulsion into a world we never foresaw and do not want or a seal on the goodness of life past the demands we give our own life now to the completion of the unfinished journey. Otherwise, what is the value of the past? What was the good of the dream? What is the purpose of life?

The 14th station of the cross brings us to grapple with the grace of closure. Some phases of life end and cannot be retrieved. Yet only in the ability to realize that life goes on from one stage to another, from one kind of presence to another, can we ever come to new life.

When Jesus submits to the death of his ministry, when Jesus allows both state and synagogue to steal the Thunder of his voice, one life ends so that another can begin —ours as well as his —so that the echo of his might thunders on in us.

Musical Reflection

Jesus, Keep Me Near the Cross, arr. Zach Busch

Paul Odenbach, Ben Larson, Zach Busch

Jesus, keep me near the cross,
there's a precious fountain;
free to all, a healing stream
flows from Calv'ry's mountain.

Near the cross, a trembling soul,
love and mercy found me;
there the bright and morning star
sheds its beams around me.

Refrain

In the cross, in the cross
be my glory ever;
till my ransomed soul shall find
rest beyond the river.

Near the cross! O Lamb of God,
bring its scenes before me;
help me walk from day to day
with its shadow o'er me. Refrain

Near the cross I'll watch and wait,
hoping, trusting ever,
till I reach the golden strand
just beyond the river. Refrain

Text: Fanny J. Crosby, 1820-1915

Bidding Prayers

adapted from Season of Ash and Fire, by Blair Gillmer Meeks

Response to each bid: Savior God, hear our prayer. **Lord, have mercy.**

Loving God, you sent your son into the world not to condemn the world,
but that, through him, the world might be saved:

Hear us as we pray for people everywhere, according to their need.

Send your Spirit to intercede for us when words fail us.

For the holy church throughout the world,
for its people who love and serve others,
for all who suffer for the sake of Christ,
for those preparing for baptism, confirmation, and new ministries,
for those who work to reconcile us in love:

Strengthen them that they may grow in your grace

And give them the peace of Christ.

Savior God, hear our prayer. Lord have mercy.

For the nations of earth and their leaders,
for voices and bodies that rise up in conscience and protest,
for all who work to end conflict and war;
for our own country, its president, legislators, judges,
civil servants, and those in military service:

*Rule in the hearts and minds of those in authority and power,
that they may be subject to your justice.*

*Startle us with your mercy and lead us to peace
that we may proclaim liberty throughout the land.*

Savior God, hear our prayer. Lord have mercy.

For all who suffer in body and mind,
for victims of violence and abuse,
for those who have lost loved ones and those in despair,
for the sick, the dying, and all who care for them:

*Sustain them, help them to know your presence,
and to receive your healing and renewing power.*

*Savior God, hear our prayer. **Lord have mercy.***

For all children, those whose lives are a joy in our midst,
and those whose lives are at risk from famine and disease,
for those who are neglected and those who are homeless,
for children who receive inadequate health care and education:

Teach us to provide for their needs from your abundant gifts.

Restore our children, our sons, our daughters,

Protect and bring them into your community of love.

*Savior God, hear our prayer. **Lord have mercy.***

For the earth and all its creatures,
for the oceans threatened by waste,
for the forests injured by carelessness,
for the air and water that once were pure,
for the crowded habitats of all living things:

Give us grace to care for all that you have made

and live in harmony with creation that all may have life.

*Savior God, hear our prayer. **Lord have mercy.***

For all prisoners and those on trial,
for those who live in fear of violence,
for those who are victims of unjust practices,
for all persons who are condemned to die:

Hear their cries and share their grief;

redeem them by your mercy;

draw them nearer to the cross of Jesus.

*Savior God, hear our prayer. **Lord have mercy.***

For all who seek to live by God's truth,
for ourselves, our neighbors, our loved ones, our enemies:

Help us to cast on you our grief and anxiety;

guide us through the valley of the shadow of death.

Turn our faces upward toward the cross.

*Savior God, hear our prayer. **Lord have mercy.***

In the name of the One who poured out himself to death,
we pray as he taught us to pray:

The Lord's Prayer

Our Creator, Our Mother, Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

Creador nuestro, Madre nuestra, Padre nuestro que estás en el cielo, santificado sea tu nombre. Venga tu reino. Hágase tu voluntad en la tierra como en el cielo. Danos hoy nuestro pan de cada día. Perdona nuestras ofensas como también nosotros perdonamos a los que nos ofenden. No nos dejes caer en tentación y líbranos del mal. Porque tuyo es el reino, tuyo es el poder y tuya es la gloria, ahora y siempre. Amén

The liturgy ends in silence. You may remain for a short time to pray. The Three Days conclude tomorrow at 7pm with Easter Vigil.

<p>Staff at University Lutheran Church of Hope</p> <p>Lead Pastor Rev. Jen Nagel (Pronouns: she/her) jenn@ulch.org</p> <p>Pastor for Care and Nurture Rev. Barbara Johnson (she/her) barbaraj@ulch.org</p> <p>Minister of Worship & Music Zach Busch (he/him) zachb@ulch.org</p> <p>Church Administrator Nathan Obrestad (he/him) nathano@ulch.org</p> <p>Financial Administrator Kari Olson (she/her) kario@ulch.org</p> <p>Child Care and Sunday Opener/Closer Gus Gustafson (they/them)</p> <p>Custodian Geremew Beshah (he/him)</p> <p>Lutheran Campus Pastor Kate Reuer Welton (she/her) kate@umnlutheran.org</p>	<p>GivePlus Mobile App for Online Giving Give+ Mobile App is free to download and use and includes ACH or debit/credit card processing. Benefits of GivePlus Church for Apple and Android devices include the ability to set up recurring donations and make a one-time donation without setting up account. Search for "GivePlus Church" in the App Store or Google Play. The church's name is listed as "University Lutheran Churc" (Yes, omit the last "h").</p> <p>Giving by Text To initiate a transaction, text 612.294.7621 and enter the amount as a text message. The first time, use the link indicated to load a credit card with account number, expiration date, and CVV number.</p> <p>Copyright Acknowledgements Texts and parts of the liturgy from sundaysandseasons.com. Copyright 2012 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved. Reprinted by permission under Augsburg Fortress Liturgies Annual License #3625.</p> <p>Printed music throughout the service reprinted under OneLicense A-707451 unless otherwise noted.</p> <p>Scripture excerpts in English from New Revised Standard Version Bible, copyright © 1989 National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.</p> <p>Scripture excerpts in Spanish from Santa Biblia, NUEVA VERSIÓN INTERNACIONAL® NVI® © 1999, 2015 por Biblica, Inc.® Usado con permiso de Biblica, Inc.® Reservados todos los derechos en todo el mundo. Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.</p>
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