

Maundy Thursday

April 6, 2023

Seven o'clock

The Prelude

“What Wondrous Love Is This?”
Beth McCollum, arr.

Beth McCollum, violin

The Silent Meditation

We remember that it was on Maundy Thursday that the twelve disciples were with Jesus in the upper room for the last time, and that he and they stood in the shadow of the cross. The singing of sacred music, the celebration of Communion, and the reading of scripture and contemporary writings associated with the Stations of the Cross invite us not only to remember the story of salvation but to participate in it, to know the power of Christ's resurrection and share his sufferings.

The Call to Worship¹ (responsive)

LEADER: Come to this place apart to pray; God, who has given us life, meets us here.

PEOPLE: **Will God be revealed to us on this dark night? Has not God turned away and forsaken us?**

LEADER: Come, all who are weary and discouraged, God, whom you have trusted, has not deserted you.

PEOPLE: **Will God hear our cries and replenish our strength? Who can believe in the midst of such sorrow?**

LEADER: Come, all who have laid loved ones to rest; God, who grieves with us, watches with us now.

PEOPLE: **Will God's promise of new life be realized? How shall we know the truth, when Trust is crucified?**

The Invocation

*The Hymn, 225

“Go to Dark Gethsemane”

REDHEAD

The Call to Confession¹

Today we remember tragic events of long ago. A human being who embodied fully God's intention for all of us fell victim to the destructive power of empire. Even his best friends did not dare to challenge this miscarriage of justice. As we put ourselves into the story, we are likely to be counted among either the oppressors or the cowardly friends. In either camp we have much to confess. Trusting that the One who embraces the universe is also the One who knows us intimately and calls us by name, let us open our hearts to God.

The Silent Confession

The Assurance of Forgiveness²

One has lived among us who bore our sin and sorrow, who even yet heals us and makes us whole. We are forgiven; we are healed; we are new persons in Christ, who sets us free from our bondage to lesser gods that we might serve the One True God in joy and thanksgiving. Amen.

The Hebrew Bible

Exodus 12:1-4, 11-14 (p. 51)

LEADER: This is the word of the Lord.

PEOPLE: **Thanks be to God.**

The Christian Testament

1 Corinthians 11:23-26 (p. 933)

LEADER: This is the word of the Lord.

PEOPLE: **Thanks be to God.**

The Gospel

John 13:1-17, 31b-35 (p. 876)

LEADER: This is the Gospel of Christ.

PEOPLE: **Praise be to you, O Christ.**

*The Hymn, 436

“Jesu, Jesu, Fill Us with Your Love”

CHEREPONI

The Celebration of Communion

After the words of invitation and the prayer of thanksgiving, you are invited to come forward, receive a piece of bread to eat there and then a cup, which you will place in the empty tray after you have partaken of it. If you need assistance in receiving communion, please indicate this by raising your hand.

The Invitation to the Table

The Prayer of Thanksgiving

The Bread and the Cup

The Stations of the Cross

Tonight we celebrate a rite which began during the Crusades. Knights and pilgrims followed the route of Christ's walk to the cross through the streets of Jerusalem, a practice actually begun by ancient pilgrims to the city. Along this *Via Dolorosa*, or *Way of Grief*, certain events, some based on scripture and some on tradition, were commemorated with devotions and prayers. By the 14th century, Franciscan monks had spread the practice throughout the western church by placing plaques on the walls of churches representing the different "stations." During Lent the faithful made pilgrimages around the interior of the church stopping at each station. The practice has survived to the present in the Eastern Orthodox and Roman Catholic churches. Though we will not physically move, we will walk with Christ in our minds to the place of his death and our life. Our reflection and meditation will be guided by readings adapted from the book *Prayers* by Michel Quoist.

- I. Jesus is Condemned to Death
- II. Jesus Bears His Cross
Hymn, 658 "Must Jesus Bear the Cross Alone?" (stanzas 1 and 2)
- III. Jesus Falls for the First Time
- IV. Jesus Meets His Mother
- V. Simon of Cyrene Helps Carry Jesus' Cross
Hymn, 549 "Near the Cross" (stanzas 1 and 2)
- VI. A Woman Wipes the Face of Jesus
- VII. Jesus Falls for the Second Time
- VIII. Jesus Rebukes the Daughters of Jerusalem
Hymn, 208 "Alas! and Did My Savior Bleed?" (stanzas 1 and 5)
- IX. Jesus Falls for the Third Time
- X. Jesus Is Stripped of His Garments
- XI. Jesus Is Nailed to the Cross
Hymn, 212 "What Wondrous Love Is This" (stanza 1)
- XII. Jesus Dies on the Cross
Hymn, 218 "Were You There?" (stanzas 1-3)
- XIII. Jesus Is Given to His Mother
- XIV. Jesus Is Laid in the Tomb

The Stripping of the Altar³

A highly vivid and dramatic way of showing forth the desolation and abandonment of the long night in Gethsemane is through stripping the altar table and removing all textile hangings and candles. This practice dates from the seventh century and began for the utilitarian purpose of cleaning and washing the church in preparation of Easter. But the stark, bare church reflected so clearly the fitting tone of the occasion that the stripping became an evocative ceremony in its own right. The ceremony is done in complete silence.

The Benediction

*Depart in Silence

Please remain for a time of reflection; exit quietly.

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LITURGISTS for this service are: Christopher Chapman, Michael Hood, Lynn Lingafelt, and Leah Reed.

MUSICIANS are: Maureen Howell and Warren Howell.

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Easter Services

6:30 a.m. Sunrise Service, Capitol Square
9:45 a.m. Sunday School
11:00 a.m. Worship, Sanctuary

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

99 N. Salisbury Street, Raleigh, NC 27603

919-832-4485 ❖ www.fbcraleigh.org
