

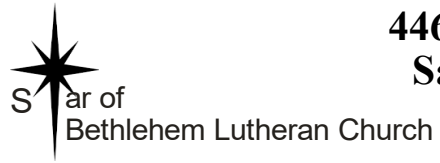
LENT

**Midweek
4**

**HIS
FINAL
STEPS**

... led to a fig tree ...





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Pastor Michael Foley

Worship Service

Wednesday, March 15, 2023 7:00 p.m.

LENTEN Vespers Lent Midweek 4

Evening Prayer Vespers

OPENING HYMN: # 873 “Rise, My Soul, to Watch and Pray”

♪ **Rise, my soul, to watch and pray; from your sleep awaken!
Be not by the evil day unawares o’ertaken;
for the foe, well we know,
is a harvest reaping while the saints are sleeping.**

**Watch against the devil’s snares lest asleep he find you;
for indeed no pains he spares to deceive and blind you.
Satan’s prey oft are they
who secure are sleeping and no watch are keeping.**

**Watch! Let not the wicked world with its lies defeat you
lest with bold deceptions hurled it betray and cheat you.
Watch and see lest there be
faithless friends to charm you who but seek to harm you.**

**Watch against yourself, my soul, lest with grace you trifle;
let not self your thoughts control nor God’s mercy stifle.
Pride and sin lurk within,
all your hopes to shatter; heed not when they flatter.**

Please stand for last verse:

**But while watching also pray to the Lord unceasing.
God protects you day by day, strength and faith increasing,
so that still mind and will
shall unite to serve him and forever love him.**



M: O Lord, o - pen my lips.



C: And my mouth shall de - clare your praise.



M: Has - ten to save me, O God.



C: O Lord, come quick - ly to help me.



M: The Lord be with you.



C: And al - so with you.

M: Lord God, you have brought us safely to this hour of evening prayer. We thank you for providing all that we need for body and life. Bless us who have gathered in your name. Forgive our sins. Speak to our hearts. Dispel our sorrows with the comfort of your Word, and receive our hymns of thanks and praise, through Jesus Christ, our living Savior, who reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

C: Let my prayer rise be - fore you as in - cense, the lift - ing
up of my hands as the eve - ning sac - ri - fice. O Lord, I
call to you; come to me quick - ly; hear my voice when I
cry to you. Let my prayer rise be - fore you as in - cense,
the lift - ing up of my hands as the eve - ning sac - ri - fice.

M: Let our prayers be acceptable in your sight. Come and help us in time of need that we may sing your praise in holy joy now and forever, through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

C: **Amen.**

PSALM 4

M: My righteous God, answer me when I call. When I was under pressure, you gave me relief.

C: **Be merciful to me and hear my prayer.**

M: You people, how long will you turn my glory into shame?
How long will you love empty delusions?

C: **How long will you pursue lies?**

M: Know this: The LORD has set apart his favored one for himself.

C: **The LORD will hear when I call to him.**

M: You may be upset, but do not sin. When you are on your beds,

C: **speak to your heart, but remain silent.**

M: Offer righteous sacrifices,
C: **and trust in the LORD.**

M: Many are saying, “Who can show us any good?”
C: **Shine the light of your face on us, O LORD.**

M: You have placed joy in my heart greater than the joy
C: **when grain and new wine are plentiful.**

M: In complete peace I will lie down, and I will sleep,
C: **for you alone, O LORD, make me dwell in safety.**

M: Grant peace to your people, Lord, that amid the stresses of life, we may rest quietly, knowing all is right with you. Since your Son has paid for every sin, defeated every enemy, and rules at the right hand of your throne in heaven, let us fall asleep each night in peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

C: **Amen.**

THE PASSION HISTORY OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST

LESSON THREE

While Jesus was still speaking, suddenly Judas (one of the Twelve) arrived. With him was a large crowd with lanterns, torches, swords, and clubs, who came from the chief priests and elders of the people. Judas was leading them.

Jesus, knowing everything that was going to happen to him, went out and asked them, “Who are you looking for?”

“Jesus the Nazarene,” they replied.

“I am he,” Jesus told them.

Judas, the betrayer, was standing with them. When Jesus told them, “I am he,” they backed away and fell to the ground.

Then Jesus asked them again, “Who are you looking for?”

“Jesus the Nazarene,” they said.

“I told you that I am he,” Jesus replied. “So if you are looking for me, let these men go.” This was to fulfill the statement he had spoken: “I did not lose any of those you have given me.”

Now the betrayer had given them a sign: “The one I kiss is the man. Arrest him.” Immediately he went to Jesus and said, “Greetings, Rabbi!” and kissed him. Jesus said to him, “Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?”

Then they advanced, took hold of Jesus, and arrested him. When those who were around him saw what was about to happen, they said to him, “Lord, should we strike with a sword?” Then Simon Peter, who had a sword, drew it, struck the high priest’s servant, and cut off his right ear. The servant’s name was Malchus.

But Jesus responded, “Stop! No more of this! Put your sword back into its place, because all who take the sword will die by the sword. Do you not realize that I could call on my Father, and at once he would provide me with more than twelve legions of angels? But then how would the Scriptures be fulfilled that say it must happen this way?” Then he touched the servant’s ear and healed him.

At that same time Jesus said to the crowd, “Have you come out to arrest me with swords and clubs as if I were a robber? Day after day I was sitting in the temple courts teaching, and you did not arrest me. But all this has happened so that the writings of the prophets would be fulfilled.” Then all the disciples deserted him and fled.

The company of soldiers, their commander, and the Jewish guards arrested Jesus and bound him. First they led him to Annas, because he was father-in-law to Caiaphas, who was the high priest that year. Now it was Caiaphas who had advised the Jews, “It is better that one man die for the people.”

Simon Peter and another disciple kept following Jesus. That disciple was known to the high priest, so he went into the high priest’s courtyard with Jesus. But Peter stood outside by the door. So the other disciple, the one known to the high priest, went out and talked to the girl watching the door and brought Peter in.

The servants and guards were standing around a fire of coals that they had made because it was cold. While they warmed themselves, Peter was standing with them, warming himself too.

One of the servant girls of the high priest came there. When she saw Peter warming himself, she looked directly at him and said, “You were also with Jesus the Galilean.”

But he denied it in front of everyone, saying, “I don’t know what you are talking about. Woman, I do not know him.”

When Peter went out to the entryway, someone else saw him and said to those who were there, “This is one of them. This fellow was with Jesus of Nazareth.”

Again Peter denied it with an oath and said, “I do not know the man.”

After a little while those who stood by came and said to Peter, “Surely you are also one of them, because even your accent gives you away. You are a Galilean!”

Then he began to curse and to swear, “I do not know this man you are talking about! I do not know the man!”

At that very moment, while he was still speaking, the rooster crowed. The Lord turned and looked at Peter. Then Peter remembered the Lord’s word, how he had said to him, “Before the rooster crows today you will deny me three times.” He went outside, broke down, and wept bitterly.

The high priest questioned Jesus about his disciples and his teaching.

Jesus answered him, “I have spoken openly to the world. I always taught in a synagogue or at the temple, where all the Jews gather. I said nothing in secret. Why are you questioning me? Ask those who heard what I told them. Look, they know what I said.”

When he said this, one of the guards standing there hit Jesus in the face. “Is that how you answer the high priest?” he demanded.

“If I said something wrong,” Jesus answered, “testify about what was wrong. But if I was right, why did you hit me?”

The chief priests and the whole Sanhedrin were looking for false testimony against Jesus so that they could put him to death. They found none, even though many false witnesses came forward. Finally two came forward and said, “This fellow said, ‘I am able to destroy the temple of God and rebuild it in three days.’” Yet even on this point, their testimony did not agree.

The high priest stood up and said to him, “Have you no answer? What is this that these men are testifying against you?” But Jesus remained silent. Then the high priest said to him, “I place you under oath by the living God: Tell us if you are the Christ, the Son of God!”

Jesus said to him, “It is as you have said. But I tell you, soon you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of power and coming on the clouds of heaven.”

Then the high priest tore his robes and said, “He has spoken blasphemy! Why do we need any more witnesses? See, you have just heard the blasphemy! What do you think?”

They answered, “He is deserving of death!” Then some began to spit on him. They covered his face, struck him with their fists, and said, “Prophecy to us, Christ! Who hit you?” The guards also took him and beat him. And they went on saying many other blasphemous things against him.

HYMN: # 409 “Jesus, Refuge of the Weary”

**♪ Jesus, refuge of the weary,
blest Redeemer, whom we love,
fountain in life’s desert dreary,
Savior from the world above,
often have your eyes, offended,
gazed upon the sinner’s fall;
yet, upon the cross extended,
you endured the pain of all.**

**Dare we pass that cross unheeding,
breathing no repentant vow,
as we see you wounded, bleeding,
see your thorn-encircled brow?
Since your sinless death has brought us
life eternal, peace, and rest,
only what your grace has taught us
calms the sinner’s deep distress.**

**Jesus, may our hearts be burning
with more fervent love for you!
May our eyes be ever turning
to behold your cross anew,
till in glory, parted never
from the blessed Savior’s side,
graven in our hearts forever,
dwell the cross, the Crucified!**

MESSAGE: Mark 11:12-14,20-25

¹²The next day, after they had set out from Bethany, Jesus was hungry. ¹³When he saw a fig tree in leaf in the distance, he went to see if he might find anything on it. When he came to it, he found nothing but leaves, since it was not the season for figs. ¹⁴Jesus said to it, “May no one ever eat fruit from you again!” And his disciples were listening.

²⁰As they passed by in the morning, they saw the fig tree withered down to the roots. ²¹Peter remembered and said, “Rabbi, look! The fig tree that you cursed has withered.”

²²Jesus replied, “Have faith in God. ²³Amen I tell you: Whoever says to this mountain, ‘Be lifted up and thrown into the sea,’ and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that what he says will happen, it will be done for him. ²⁴Therefore I tell you, everything that you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours. ²⁵Whenever you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive him, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins.

HYMN: # 595 “Fruitful Trees, the Spirit’s Sowing”

♪ Fruitful trees, the Spirit’s sowing, may we ripen and increase,
fruit to life eternal growing, rich in love and joy and peace.

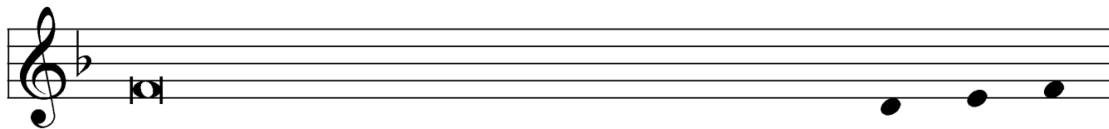
Laden branches freely bearing gifts the Giver loves to bless;
here is fruit that grows by sharing,
patience, kindness, gentleness.

Rooted deep in Christ our Master,
Christ our pattern and our goal,
teach us, as the years fly faster,
goodness, faith, and self-control.

Fruitful trees, the Spirit’s tending,
may we grow till harvests cease;
till we taste, in life unending, heaven’s love and joy and peace.

OFFERING

LORD, HAVE MERCY *Kyrie*



M: In the closing hours of this day, hear us as we pray, O Lord:



C: Lord, have mer - cy.

M: For the well-being of people everywhere, for the growth of your church in all the world, and for the strengthening of all who serve and worship here, we pray, O Lord:



C: Christ, have mer - cy.

M: For one another, young and old, for your blessings that come with every stage of life, and for joy in doing your will, we pray, O Lord:



C: Lord, have mer - cy.

M: For our public servants who work day and night to bring protection, justice, learning, and health to this and every place, we pray to you, O Lord:



C: Lord, hear our prayer.

M: For favorable weather and bountiful harvests, for clothing and food, for health of body, mind, and spirit, and for deliverance from all sin and every form of evil, we pray to you, O Lord:



C: Lord, hear our prayer.

M: For the faithful who have gone before us, who have shared with us your good news, whose souls are now at rest in your heavenly kingdom, we give you thanks, O Lord:



C: Thanks be to God.

M: In thanksgiving for your many and varied gifts to us, we now commend ourselves to your care. Be our shield and strength, O Lord.



C: A - men.

C: 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.

M: Lord God, all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works come from you. Give to us, your servants, that peace which the world cannot give, that our hearts may be set to obey your commandments. Defend us also from the fear of our enemies that we may live in peace and quietness, through the merits of Jesus Christ our Savior, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. C: Amen.



C: In peace, Lord, you let your ser - vant now de - part



ac - cord - ing to your word. For my eyes have seen



your sal - va - tion, which you have pre - pared for ev - 'ry



peo - ple, a light to light - en the Gen - tiles



and the glo - ry of your peo - ple Is - ra - el.



M: The grace of our Lord + Je - sus Christ and the love of God



and the fellowship of the Holy Spir - it be with you all.



C: A - men.

CLOSING HYMN: # 783 (vv. 2,5,6,7) "Abide with Me"

♪ Swift to its close ebbs out life's little day;
earth's joys grow dim, its glories pass away;
change and decay in all around I see;
O thou who changest not, abide with me!

I need thy presence ev'ry passing hour;
what but thy grace can foil the tempter's pow'r?
Who like thyself my guide and stay can be?
Through cloud and sunshine, O, abide with me!

I fear no foe with thee at hand to bless;
ills have no weight and tears no bitterness.
Where is death's sting? Where, grave, thy victory?
I triumph still if thou abide with me.

Hold thou thy cross before my closing eyes;
shine through the gloom and point me to the skies.
Heav'n's morning breaks, and earth's vain shadows flee;
in life, in death, O Lord, abide with me!