

LENT


**Midweek
3**

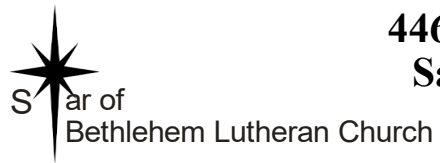


GOD ON TRIAL

TESTIMONY



 **S**tar of
Bethlehem Lutheran Church



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Pastor Michael Foley

Worship Service

Wednesday, February 28, 2024 7:00 p.m.

LENTEN Vespers Lent Midweek 3

OPENING HYMN: # 784 “Now the Light Has Gone Away”

♪ **Now the light has gone away; Father, listen while I pray,
asking you to watch and keep and to send me quiet sleep.**

**Jesus, Savior, wash away all that I’ve done wrong today.
Make me ever more like you, good and gentle, kind and true.**

**Let my near and dear ones be safe with you eternally.
O bring me and all I love to your happy home above.**

**Now my evening praise I give; you once died that I might live.
All your precious gifts are free— oh, how good you are to me!**

Please stand for last verse:

**Ah, my best and kindest Friend, you will love me to the end.
Let me love you more and more, always better than before.**

Confession of Sins

Minister: In the name of our God, to whom all hearts are open and
from whom no secrets are hidden.

Congregation: **Amen.**

**C: I confess that I am by nature sinful.
I am guilty of many sins.
I am distressed by the sins that trouble me.
For all this I am sorry. I pray for forgiveness.
Have mercy on me, O God, according to your unfailing love.**

M: Jesus says to his people, “If you forgive anyone’s sins, their sins are forgiven.” His death paid for the guilt of your sins and the sins of the whole world. Do you believe this?

C: **Yes, I believe.**

M: By the authority of Christ, I forgive you your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son (†) and of the Holy Spirit.

C: **Amen.**

PSALM 119 c

Refrain



Psalm tone



Oh, how I love your law!*

I meditate on it all day long.

I have more insight than all my teachers,*

for I meditate on your statutes.

I have more understanding than the elders,*

for I obey your precepts.

Refrain

I have kept my feet from every evil path*

so that I might obey your Word.

I have not departed from your laws,*

for you yourself have taught me.

**How sweet are your words to my taste,*
sweeter than honey to my mouth!**

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son*
and to the Holy Spirit,
as it was in the beginning,*
is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

Refrain

M: Lord, your Word is my delight. When I was lost in the darkness of sin, you penetrated my heart with the light of your Word. Let it enlighten my path each day that I may serve you in holiness. Let your Word shine through all I say and do that others may see you and praise your saving name. In Jesus' name I pray.

C: Amen.

**THE PASSION HISTORY OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST
LESSON TWO**

While they were reclining and eating, Jesus said, "Amen I tell you: One of you will betray me, one who is eating with me." They were very sad and began to say to him one after another, "Surely, not I, Lord?"

He said to them, "It is one of the Twelve, one who is dipping bread with me in the dish. Indeed, the Son of Man is going to go just as it has been written about him, but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been better for that man if he had not been born."

After saying this, Jesus was troubled in his spirit and testified, "Amen, Amen, I tell you: One of you will betray me."

The disciples were looking at each other, uncertain which of them he meant. One of his disciples, the one Jesus loved, was reclining at Jesus' side. Simon Peter motioned to him to find out which one Jesus was talking about. So leaning back against Jesus' side, he asked, "Lord, who is it?"

Jesus replied, "It is the one to whom I will give this piece of bread, after I have dipped it in the dish." Then he dipped the piece of bread and gave it to Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot.

As soon as Judas took the bread, Satan entered into him. So Jesus told him, “What you are about to do, do more quickly.”

None of those reclining at the table understood why Jesus said this to him. Because Judas kept the money box, some thought that Jesus was telling him, “Buy what we need for the Festival,” or to give something to the poor. As soon as Judas had taken the bread, he went out. And it was night.

After Judas left, Jesus said, “Now the Son of Man is glorified, and God is glorified in him. If God is glorified in him, God will also glorify the Son in himself and will glorify him at once.”

While they were eating, on the night when he was betrayed, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to the disciples. He said, “Take, eat, this is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.” Then he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, “Drink from it, all of you, for this is my blood of the new testament, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.

“Dear children, I am going to be with you only a little longer. You will look for me, and just as I told the Jews, so I tell you now: Where I am going, you cannot come.

“A new commandment I give you: Love one another. Just as I have loved you, so also you are to love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”

Simon Peter said to him, “Lord, where are you going?”

Jesus answered, “Where I am going you cannot follow now, but you will follow later.”

Peter asked, “Lord, why can’t I follow you now? I will lay down my life for you!”

Jesus replied, “Will you really lay down your life for me? Simon, Simon, pay attention: Satan has asked to have you all, so that he may sift you as wheat. But I prayed for you, Simon, that your faith may not fail. And when you have returned to me, strengthen your brothers.”

Peter answered him, “Even if all fall away because of you, I will never fall away.”

Jesus said to him, “Amen I tell you: Tonight, before the rooster crows, you will deny me three times.”

Peter said to him, “Even if I have to die with you, I will never deny you.” And all the disciples said the same.

He said to them, “When I sent you out without money bag, traveler’s bag, and sandals, did you lack anything?”

“Nothing,” they said.

Then he told them, “But now, let the one who has a money bag take it, and likewise a traveler’s bag. And let the one who has no sword sell his cloak and buy one. For I tell you that this Scripture must be fulfilled in me: ‘He was counted with transgressors.’ Indeed, what is written about me is going to have its fulfillment.”

They said, “Lord, look, here are two swords.”

He said to them, “That is enough.”

Then Jesus said to them, “This night you will all fall away on account of me, for it is written, ‘I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered.’ But after I have been raised, I will go ahead of you into Galilee.”

After they sang a hymn, Jesus went out with his disciples across the Kidron Valley, to the Mount of Olives, where there was a garden called Gethsemane. He and his disciples went into it. Now Judas, who was betraying him, also knew the place, because Jesus often met there with his disciples.

When he reached the place, Jesus told his disciples, “Sit here, while I go over there and pray. Keep praying that you may not enter into temptation.”

Then he took Peter, James, and John along with him and began to be troubled and distressed. He said to them, “My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow, even to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch.”

He withdrew from them about a stone’s throw, knelt down, and prayed, “Father, if you are willing, take this cup away from me. Nevertheless, not my will, but yours be done.”

When he rose from prayer, he went to the disciples and found them sleeping as a result of sorrow. He said to Peter, “Simon, are you sleeping? Were you not strong enough to keep watch for one hour? Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.”

He went away a second time and prayed, “My Father, if it is not possible for this cup to pass from me unless I drink it, may your will be done.”

Again he returned and found them sleeping, because their eyes were heavy. They did not know what they should answer him.

He left them again, went away, and prayed a third time. He said the same words as before.

An angel from heaven appeared to him and strengthened him. As he was in agony, he prayed more fervently. His sweat became like great drops of blood falling to the ground.

Then he returned to his disciples and said to them, “Are you still sleeping and resting? Look, the hour is near, and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise. Let us go. Look, my betrayer is near!”

HYMN: # 406 “In the Hour of Trial”

♪ In the hour of trial, Jesus, plead for me
lest by base denial I unworthy be.
When you see me waver, with a look recall,
nor for fear or favor ever let me fall.

With forbidden pleasures should this vain world charm
or its tempting treasures spread to work me harm,
bring to my remembrance sad Gethsemane
or, in darker semblance, cross-crowned Calvary.

Should your mercy send me sorrow, toil, and woe,
or should pain attend me on my path below,
grant that I may never fail your cross to view;
grant that I may ever cast my care on you.

When my life is ending, though in grief or pain,
when my body changes back to dust again,
on your truth relying, through that mortal strife,
Jesus, take me, dying, to eternal life.

Matthew 26:57-75

⁵⁷Those who had arrested Jesus led him away to Caiaphas, the high priest, where the experts in the law and the elders were assembled. ⁵⁸Peter was following him at a distance and went as far as the courtyard of the high priest. He went inside and sat down with the guards to see how it would turn out.

⁵⁹The chief priests and the whole Sanhedrin were looking for false testimony against Jesus so that they could put him to death.

⁶⁰They found none, even though many false witnesses came forward. Finally two came forward ⁶¹and said, “This fellow said, ‘I am able to destroy the temple of God and rebuild it in three days.’ ”

⁶²The high priest stood up and said to him, “Have you no answer? What is this that these men are testifying against you?” ⁶³But 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!”

⁶⁴Jesus 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.”

⁶⁵Then 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! ⁶⁶What do you think?”

They answered, “He is deserving of death!” ⁶⁷Then they spit in his face and punched him. Some slapped him ⁶⁸and said, “Prophecy to us, Christ! Who hit you?”

⁶⁹Meanwhile Peter was sitting outside in the courtyard. A servant girl came to him and said, “You were also with Jesus the Galilean.”

⁷⁰But he denied it in front of everyone, saying, “I don’t know what you’re talking about.”

⁷¹When Peter went out to the entryway, someone else saw him and said to those who were there, “This fellow was with Jesus of Nazareth.”

⁷²Again Peter denied it with an oath and said, “I do not know the man.”

⁷³After 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.”

⁷⁴Then he began to curse and to swear, “I do not know the man!” Just then the rooster crowed. ⁷⁵And Peter remembered the word Jesus had spoken, “Before the rooster crows, you will deny me three times.” And he went outside and wept bitterly.

HYMN: “Jesus! and Shall It Ever Be”

♪ Jesus! and shall it ever be a mortal man ashamed of thee?
Ashamed of thee, whom angels praise,
whose glories shine through endless days?

**Ashamed of Jesus? Just as soon
let midnight be ashamed of noon.
'Tis midnight with my soul till he,
bright Morning Star, bids darkness flee.**

**Ashamed of Jesus, that dear friend
on whom my hopes of heav'n depend?
No; when I blush, be this my shame,
that I no more revere his name.**

**Ashamed of Jesus? Yes, I may
when I've no guilt to wash away,
no tear to wipe, no good to crave,
no fear to quell, no soul to save.**

**Till then—nor is my boasting vain—
till then I boast a Savior slain;
and oh, may this my glory be:
that Christ is not ashamed of me.**

OFFERING

PRAYER:

M and C:

**In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.**

**I thank you, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, your
dear Son, that you have graciously kept me this day. Forgive me
all my sins, and graciously keep me this night. Into your hands I
commend my body and soul and all things. Let your holy angel
be with me, that the wicked foe may have no power over me.**

**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.**



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 Lord Almighty grant us a quiet night and peace at the last.

C: Amen.

M: It is good to give thanks to the Lord,

C: to sing praise to your name, O Most High,

M: to herald your love in the morning,

C: your truth at the close of day.

M: Keep me as the apple of your eye;

C: hide me in the shadow of your wings.

M: In righteousness I shall see you;

C: when I awake, your presence will give me joy.

M: Be present, O merciful God, and protect us through the silent hours of this night, so that we who are wearied by the changes and chances of this fleeting world may rest in your eternal changelessness; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

C: Amen.



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: # 786 "Now the Day Is Over"

♪ Now the day is over, night is drawing nigh;
shadows of the evening steal across the sky.

Jesus, give the weary calm and sweet repose;
with your tend'rest blessing may my eyelids close.

Comfort ev'ry suff'rer watching late in pain;
those who plan some evil, from their sin restrain.

Thro' the long night watches may your angels spread
their bright wings above me, watching round my bed.

When the morning wakens, then may I arise
pure and fresh and sinless in your holy eyes.

