

March 6, 2024: Midweek Lent 4

God On Trial: Testimony

Opening Hymn: 407 When I Survey the Wondrous Cross

Confession of Sins

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

Amen.

We confess our sins and receive forgiveness.

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.

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?

Yes, I believe.

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

Amen.

Psalm 119D Teach Me, O LORD

Refrain

Teach me, O LORD, the way of your statutes.

Tone

Oh, how I / love your law!

I meditate on it / all day long.

Your commands are always / with me
and make me wiser than my / enemies.

I have more insight than all my / teachers,
for I meditate on your / statutes. *Refrain*

I have kept my feet from every / evil path
so that I might o- / bey your word.

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

I gain understanding from your / precepts;
therefore I hate every / wrong path.

**Glory be to the Father and / to the Son
and to the Holy / Spirit,**

as it was in the be- / ginning,

is now, and will be forever. / Amen. *Refrain*

Tune and Setting: Thomas Pavlechko

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Psalm Prayer

Lord God, support us all the years of our lives that we may follow your gracious will both in good times and bad, that our lives may be an unending testimony to your love and faithfulness; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Passion History: Trial before the High Priest*Mark 14:43–65*

⁴³Just as he was speaking, Judas, one of the Twelve, appeared. With him was a crowd armed with swords and clubs, sent from the chief priests, the teachers of the law, and the elders.

⁴⁴Now the betrayer had arranged a signal with them: “The one I kiss is the man; arrest him and lead him away under guard.” ⁴⁵Going at once to Jesus, Judas said, “Rabbi!” and kissed him. ⁴⁶The men seized Jesus and arrested him. ⁴⁷Then one of those standing near drew his sword and struck the servant of the high priest, cutting off his ear.

⁴⁸“Am I leading a rebellion,” said Jesus, “that you have come out with swords and clubs to capture me? ⁴⁹Every day I was with you, teaching in the temple courts, and you did not arrest me. But the Scriptures must be fulfilled.” ⁵⁰Then everyone deserted him and fled.

⁵¹A young man, wearing nothing but a linen garment, was following Jesus. When they seized him, ⁵²he fled naked, leaving his garment behind.

⁵³They took Jesus to the high priest, and all the chief priests, the elders and the teachers of the law came together. ⁵⁴Peter followed him at a distance, right into the courtyard of the high priest. There he sat with the guards and warmed himself at the fire.

⁵⁵The chief priests and the whole Sanhedrin were looking for evidence against Jesus so that they could put him to death, but they did not find any. ⁵⁶Many testified falsely against him, but their statements did not agree.

⁵⁷Then some stood up and gave this false testimony against him: ⁵⁸“We heard him say, ‘I will destroy this temple made with human hands and in three days will build another, not made with hands.’ ” ⁵⁹Yet even then their testimony did not agree.

⁶⁰Then the high priest stood up before them and asked Jesus, “Are you not going to answer? What is this testimony that these men are bringing against you?” ⁶¹But Jesus remained silent and gave no answer.

Again the high priest asked him, “Are you the Messiah, the Son of the Blessed One?”

⁶²“I am,” said Jesus. “And you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven.”

⁶³The high priest tore his clothes. “Why do we need any more witnesses?” he asked.

⁶⁴“You have heard the blasphemy. What do you think?”

They all condemned him as worthy of death. ⁶⁵Then some began to spit at him; they blindfolded him, struck him with their fists, and said, “Prophecy!” And the guards took him and beat him.

Hymn: 408 He Stood before the Court

Sermon Text: Matthew 26:57-75

Pastor Justin Shrum

⁵⁷Those who had arrested Jesus took him to Caiaphas the high priest, where the teachers of the law and the elders had assembled. ⁵⁸But Peter followed him at a distance, right up to the courtyard of the high priest. He entered and sat down with the guards to see the outcome.

⁵⁹The chief priests and the whole Sanhedrin were looking for false evidence against Jesus so that they could put him to death. ⁶⁰But they did not find any, though many false witnesses came forward.

Finally two came forward ⁶¹and declared, “This fellow said, ‘I am able to destroy the temple of God and rebuild it in three days.’”

⁶²Then the high priest stood up and said to Jesus, “Are you not going to answer? What is this testimony that these men are bringing against you?” ⁶³But Jesus remained silent.

The high priest said to him, “I charge you under oath by the living God: Tell us if you are the Messiah, the Son of God.”

⁶⁴“You have said so,” Jesus replied. “But I say to all of you: From now on you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven.”

⁶⁵Then the high priest tore his clothes and said, “He has spoken blasphemy! Why do we need any more witnesses? Look, now you have heard the blasphemy. ⁶⁶What do you think?”

“He is worthy of death,” they answered.

⁶⁷Then they spit in his face and struck him with their fists. Others slapped him ⁶⁸and said, “Prophesy to us, Messiah. Who hit you?”

⁶⁹Now Peter was sitting out in the courtyard, and a servant girl came to him. “You also were with Jesus of Galilee,” she said.

⁷⁰But he denied it before them all. “I don’t know what you’re talking about,” he said.

⁷¹Then he went out to the gateway, where another servant girl saw him and said to the people there, “This fellow was with Jesus of Nazareth.”

⁷²He denied it again, with an oath: “I don’t know the man!”

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⁷³After a little while, those standing there went up to Peter and said, “Surely you are one of them; your accent gives you away.”

⁷⁴Then he began to call down curses, and he swore to them, “I don’t know the man!”

Immediately a rooster crowed. ⁷⁵Then Peter remembered the word Jesus had spoken: “Before the rooster crows, you will disown me three times.” And he went outside and wept bitterly.

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Prayer of the Church

O God our Father, by your mercy and might the world turns safely into darkness and returns again to light.

We place into your hands our unfinished tasks, our unsolved problems, and our unfulfilled hopes, knowing that only what you bless will prosper.

To your great love and protection, we commit each other and all those we love, knowing that you alone are our sure defender; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Lord's Prayer

**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.**

Blessing

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him.
Amen.

Closing Hymn: 782 Luther's Morning and Evening Prayer

AM Stanza 1 Morning

PM Stanza 1 Evening

Presiding Minister

Pastor Joe Gawel

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