

Auburn Road Presbyterian Church



Good Friday Service March 29th, 2024 12:00 PM

“Now from the sixth hour (noon) there was darkness over all the land until the ninth hour (three). And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, ‘Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?’ that is, ‘My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?’”

~ Matthew 27:45,46

Each of the four gospels provides an account of the arrest, trial, and crucifixion of Jesus the Christ. “Christ” is a title, not a name, and it refers to Jesus being the “Messiah” or “Anointed One of God” (See Psalm 2:2). We sometimes lose sight of how Psalm 2:1-3 anticipates the crucifixion of Jesus. (See also Acts 4:23-28 which confirms this.) Today, during the noon hour, we will listen and reflect upon Matthew’s account of the crucifixion of our Lord. The readings begin in the Garden of Gethsemane, after the disciples have followed Jesus out of Jerusalem where they had shared the Passover. Transitions are noted in the program with terms descriptive of the complexity of sin’s grip on our lives and the sorrows endured by Him Who came to deliver us.

BETRAYAL – Matthew 26:36-50, 56b

Scene One: The Garden of Gethsemane on the Mount of Olives. The opening scene of the human story takes place in the Garden of God (Eden). There Adam and Eve know something of the richness and glory of God’s presence. The Garden of Gethsemane portrays God in the garden of Man. On this night it was a scene of loneliness, anxiety, and intense prayer. Of course, it is also the scene of betrayal. There is no peace in the “garden of man.”

DENIAL – Matthew 26:57-75

Scene Two: Jesus is brought by the armed mob to the courtyard of the High Priest. Peter follows at a distance and is surrounded by the opposition. Peter had talked earlier about the strength of his commitment to Jesus. He proved to be less.

HOPELESSNESS – Matthew 27:1-10

Scene Three: Morning has broken on the sixth day of the week.

In the creation account, this was the day when man was fashioned from the dust of the ground. This was the day woman was formed from the body of Adam. This would be the day when the Son of Man would be lifted up to die in sinful man's place. Very early that morning Jesus was sent from the High Priest of the Jews to Pilate, the Roman governor. Matthew takes the opportunity of this transition to catch-up with Judas. This is one of the most hopeless "chapters" in the human story.

The religious leaders provide no comfort as they care only about their own agenda. Judas took his own life.

ACCUSATION – Matthew 27:11-23

Scene Four: Jesus before Pilate. The accusations start, being provided by the chief priests and elders. Jesus makes no answer.

Jesus is delivered by Pilate to be crucified, with these words from Pilate hanging in the air, "What evil has he done?"

SUFFERING – Matthew 27:24-31

Scene Five: The Governor's Headquarters (Praetorium). Pilate has Jesus scourged and turns him over to the Romans soldiers. A "scourge" involved a severe beating with a multi-lashed whip containing embedded pieces of stone and metal. The soldiers then take Jesus before the whole battalion, where he is stripped, dressed in a mocking robe and crown of thorns, and spat upon.

CRUCIFIXION – Matthew 27:32-44

Scene Six: Golgotha (Place of a Skull) Having known eternal fellowship with the Father and the Holy Spirit in joy and love, His fellowship in death is with two crucified sinners, one on his right and one on his left. Those taunting him used these words, “If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross.”

DEATH – Matthew 27:45-56

Scene Seven: Jesus yields up his spirit to his Father. The curtain in the Temple is torn from top to bottom. The earth quakes, rocks split, tombs are opened, and dead saints come back to life. The centurion and those with him who were keeping watch over Jesus saw the earthquake and what took place. They were filled with awe and said, “Truly this was the Son of God!”

BURIAL – Matthew 27:57-61

Postlude: Loving hearts engage and linger...

Quiet Recessional

Breakfast – Resurrection Sunday Morning, 9:00 AM

Table Talk on the Resurrection – 9:20 AM

Catered by Panera Bread

ARPC Fellowship Hall and Portico

Resurrection Sunday Morning Worship Service: 10:30 AM