

WE GATHER IN THE PRESENCE OF CHRIST

Gathering Music

Adagio in G Minor

Tommaso Albinoni/ Arr. Hopson ©2006 Hope Publishing Co.

Call to Worship

One: Draw near to the cross of Christ.

All: We draw near in awe and gratitude.

One: Enter this ancient and sacred story.

All: We enter, open to transformation.

One: Find your place in this holy narrative.

All: We seek to receive anew the grace and love of Christ Jesus.

Welcome

Opening Hymn

Beneath the Cross of Jesus

UMH 297

- Beneath the cross of Jesus I fain would take my stand, the shadow of a mighty rock within a weary land; a home within the wilderness, a rest upon the way, from the burning of the noontide heat, and the burden of the day.
- 2. Upon that cross of Jesus mine eye at times can see the very dying form of One who suffered there for me; and from my stricken heart with tears two wonders I confess: the wonders of redeeming love and my unworthiness.
- 3. I take, O cross, thy shadow for my abiding place; I ask no other sunshine than the sunshine of his face; content to let the world go by, to know no gain nor loss, my sinful self my only shame, my glory all the cross.

Pastoral Prayer

The 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 tresspasses, 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. Amen.

WE HEAR OF THE LOVE OF CHRIST

Scripture

John 18:1-27 (CEB)

After he said these things, Jesus went out with his disciples and crossed over to the other side of the Kidron Valley. He and his disciples entered a garden there. Judas, his betrayer, also knew the place because Jesus often gathered there with his disciples. Judas brought a company of soldiers and some guards from the chief priests and Pharisees. They came there carrying lanterns, torches, and weapons. Jesus knew everything that was to happen to him, so he went out and asked, "Who are you looking for?"

They answered, "Jesus the Nazarene."

He said to them, "I Am." (Judas, his betrayer, was standing with them.) When he said, "I Am," they shrank back and fell to the ground. He asked them again, "Who are you looking for?"

They said, "Jesus the Nazarene."

Jesus answered, "I told you, 'I Am.' If you are looking for me, then let these people go." This was so that the word he had spoken might be fulfilled: "I didn't lose any one of those whom you gave me."

Then Simon Peter, who had a sword, drew it and struck the high priest's servant, cutting off his right ear. (The servant's name was Malchus.) Jesus told Peter, "Put your sword away! Am I not to drink the cup the Father has given me?" Then the company of soldiers, the commander, and the guards from the Jewish leaders took Jesus into custody. They bound him and led him first to Annas. He was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, the high priest that year. (Caiaphas was the one who had advised the Jewish leaders that it was better for one person to die for the people.)

Simon Peter and another disciple followed Jesus. Because this other disciple was known to the high priest, he went with Jesus into the high priest's courtyard. However, Peter stood outside near the gate. Then the other disciple (the one known to the high priest) came out and spoke to the woman stationed at the gate, and she brought Peter in. The servant woman stationed at the gate asked Peter, "Aren't you one of this man's disciples?"

"I'm not," he replied. The servants and the guards had made a fire because it was cold. They were standing around it, warming themselves. Peter joined them there, standing by the fire and warming himself.

Meanwhile, the chief priest questioned Jesus about his disciples and his teaching. Jesus answered, "I've spoken openly to the world. I've always taught in synagogues and in the temple, where all the Jews gather. I've said nothing in private. Why ask me? Ask those who heard what I told them. They know what I said."

After Jesus spoke, one of the guards standing there slapped Jesus in the face. "Is that how you would answer the high priest?" he asked.

Jesus replied, "If I speak wrongly, testify about what was wrong. But if I speak correctly, why do you strike me?" Then Annas sent him, bound, to Caiaphas the high priest.

Meanwhile, Simon Peter was still standing with the guards, warming himself. They asked, "Aren't you one of his disciples?"

Peter denied it, saying, "I'm not."

A servant of the high priest, a relative of the one whose ear Peter had cut off, said to him, "Didn't I see you in the garden with him?" Peter denied it again, and immediately a rooster crowed.

Dramatic Reading

In The Servant's Quarters
Read by Jerry Rhodes

Thomas Hardy

Scripture

John 19:1-30 (CEB)

Then Pilate had Jesus taken and whipped. The soldiers twisted together a crown of thorns and put it on his head, and dressed him in a purple robe. Over and over they went up to him and said, "Greetings, king of the Jews!" And they slapped him in the face.

Pilate came out of the palace again and said to the Jewish leaders, "Look! I'm bringing him out to you to let you know that I find no grounds for a charge against him." When Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe, Pilate said to them, "Here's the man."

When the chief priests and their deputies saw him, they shouted out, "Crucify, crucify!"

Pilate told them, "You take him and crucify him. I don't find any grounds for a charge against him."

The Jewish leaders replied, "We have a Law, and according to this Law he ought to die because he made himself out to be God's Son."

When Pilate heard this word, he was even more afraid. He went back into the residence and spoke to Jesus, "Where are you from?" Jesus didn't answer. So Pilate said, "You won't speak to me? Don't you know that I have authority to release you and also to crucify you?"

Jesus replied, "You would have no authority over me if it had not been given to you from above. That's why the one who handed me over to you has the greater sin." From that moment on, Pilate wanted to release Jesus.

However, the Jewish leaders cried out, saying, "If you release this man, you aren't a friend of the emperor! Anyone who makes himself out to be a king opposes the emperor!"

When Pilate heard these words, he led Jesus out and seated him on the judge's bench at the place called Stone Pavement (in Aramaic, Gabbatha). It was about noon on the Preparation Day for the Passover. Pilate said to the Jewish leaders, "Here's your king."

The Jewish leaders cried out, "Take him away! Take him away! Crucify him!"

Pilate responded, "What? Do you want me to crucify your king?"

"We have no king except the emperor," the chief priests answered. Then Pilate handed Jesus over to be crucified.

The soldiers took Jesus prisoner. Carrying his cross by himself, he went out to a place called Skull Place (in Aramaic, Golgotha). That's where they crucified him—and two others with him, one on each side and Jesus in the middle. Pilate had a public notice written and posted on the cross. It read "Jesus the Nazarene, the king of the Jews." Many of the Jews read this sign, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city and it was written in Aramaic, Latin, and Greek. Therefore, the Jewish chief priests complained to Pilate, "Don't write, 'The king of the Jews' but 'This man said, "I am the king of the Jews.""

Pilate answered, "What I've written, I've written."

When the soldiers crucified Jesus, they took his clothes and his sandals, and divided them into four shares, one for each soldier. His shirt was seamless, woven as one piece from the top to the bottom. They said to each other, "Let's not tear it. Let's cast lots to see who will get it." This was to fulfill the scripture,

They divided my clothes among themselves, and they cast lots for my clothing.

That's what the soldiers did.

Jesus' mother and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene stood near the cross. When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to his mother, "Woman, here is your son." Then he said to the disciple, "Here is your mother." And from that time on, this disciple took her into his home.

After this, knowing that everything was already completed, in order to fulfill the scripture, Jesus said, "I am thirsty." A jar full of sour wine was nearby, so the soldiers soaked a sponge in it, placed it on a hyssop branch, and held it up to his lips. When he had received the sour wine, Jesus said, "It is completed." Bowing his head, he gave up his life.

Scriptural Response

Liturgist: The Word of God for the People of God.

All: Thanks be to God! Amen.

Special Music

Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing

UMH 400

- Come, thou Fount of every blessing, tune my heart to sing thy grace; strings of mercy, never ceasing, call for songs of loudest praise.
 Teach me some melodious sonnet, sung by flaming tongues above.
 Praise the mount! I'm fixed upon it, mount of thy redeeming love.
- 2. Here I raise mine Ebenezer; hither by thy help I'm come; and I hope, by thy good pleasure, safely to arrive at home. Jesus sought me when a stranger, wandering from the fold of God; he, to rescue me from danger, interposed his precious blood.

3. O to grace how great a debtor daily I'm constrained to be! Let thy goodness, like a fetter, bind my wandering heart to thee. Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it, prone to leave the God I love; here's my heart, O take and seal it, seal it for thy courts above.

Message Prone To Leave the God I Love Rev. Lori Leopold

WE RESPOND TO THE PRESENCE OF CHRIST

Prayer of Confession

All: Forgiving God, we speak these words and sing these songs of faith with a confidence we do not always have. We remember times when you answered our prayers, and we remember times when we felt alone, wondering if you even heard us. We know what it is to feel sick in spirit, to follow our own inclinations and wander far away. We are the very ones that Jesus came to find and help. So we put ourselves in your hands, you who make all things whole. God, the giver of life, Jesus, our savior and brother, and the Spirit that carried Jesus's breath back to God upon his death; we rest secure in your mighty love. Amen.

One: Let us hold fast to the confession of our hope. In the name of Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.

All: In the name of Jesus Christ, we are forgiven. Thanks be to God! Amen.

WE FOLLOW CHRIST INTO THE WORLD

Closing Hymn

Go to Dark Gethsemane

UMH 290

- 1. Go to dark Gethsemane, ye that feel the tempter's power; your Redeemer's conflict see, watch with him one bitter hour. Turn not from his griefs away; learn of Jesus Christ to pray.
- See him at the judgment hall, beaten, bound, reviled, arraigned;
 O the wormwood and the gall! O the pangs his soul sustained!
 Shun not suffering, shame, or loss; learn of Christ to bear the cross.
- 3. Calvary's mournful mountain climb; there, adoring at his feet, mark that miracle of time, God's own sacrifice complete. "It is finished!" hear him cry; learn of Jesus Christ to die.
- 4. Early hasten to the tomb where they laid his breathless clay; all is solitude and gloom. Who has taken him away? Christ is risen! He meet our eyes; Savior, teach us so to rise.

† Benediction

Liturgical elements from	The Ahinodon	Worship Annual	and Disciplesh	in Ministries	(UMC)
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