

# *St. Mark's Episcopal Church*

## *Good Friday Liturgy*

*and*

## *Stations of the Cross*

*March 29, 2024 12 noon*

*Begin the service with silent prayer.*

*Officiant* Blessed be our God.

*People* For ever and ever. Amen.

Let us pray.

Almighty God, we pray you graciously to behold this your family, for whom our Lord Jesus Christ was willing to be betrayed, and given into the hands of sinners, and to suffer death upon the cross; who now lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

**Isaiah 52:13-53:12**

See, my servant shall prosper; he shall be exalted and lifted up, and shall be very high. Just as there were many who were astonished at him--so marred was his appearance, beyond human semblance, and his form beyond that of mortals--so he shall startle many nations; kings shall shut their mouths because of him; for that which had not been told them they shall see, and that which they had not heard they shall contemplate.

Who has believed what we have heard? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed? For he grew up before him like a young plant, and like a root out of dry ground; he had no form or majesty that we should look at him, nothing in his appearance that we should desire him. He was despised and rejected by others; a man of suffering and acquainted with infirmity; and as one from whom others hide their faces he was despised, and we held him of no account.

Surely he has borne our infirmities and carried our diseases; yet we accounted him stricken, struck down by God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the punishment that made us whole, and by his bruises we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have all turned to our own way, and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its

shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth. By a perversion of justice he was taken away. Who could have imagined his future? For he was cut off from the land of the living, stricken for the transgression of my people. They made his grave with the wicked and his tomb with the rich, although he had done no violence, and there was no deceit in his mouth.

Yet it was the will of the LORD to crush him with pain. When you make his life an offering for sin, he shall see his offspring, and shall prolong his days; through him the will of the LORD shall prosper. Out of his anguish he shall see light; he shall find satisfaction through his knowledge. The righteous one, my servant, shall make many righteous, and he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore I will allot him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he poured out himself to death, and was numbered with the transgressors; yet he bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.

The Word of the Lord.

*People Thanks be to God.*

## **Psalm 22**

*Deus, Deus meu*

1 My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? \*  
and are so far from my cry  
and from the words of my distress?

2 O my God, I cry in the daytime, but you do not answer; \*  
by night as well, but I find no rest.

3 Yet you are the Holy One, \*  
enthroned upon the praises of Israel.

4 Our forebears put their trust in you; \*  
they trusted, and you delivered them.

5 They cried out to you and were delivered; \*  
they trusted in you and were not put to shame.

6 But as for me, I am a worm and less than human, \*  
scorned by all and despised by the people.

7 All who see me laugh me to scorn; \*  
they curl their lips and wag their heads, saying,

8 "You trusted in God for deliverance; \*  
let God rescue you, if God delights in you."

9 Yet you, O God, are the one who took me out of the womb, \*  
and kept me safe upon my mother's breast.

10 I have been entrusted to you ever since I was born; \*  
you were my God when I was still in my  
mother's womb.

11 Be not far from me, for trouble is near, \*  
and there is none to help.

12 Many young bulls encircle me; \*  
strong bulls of Bashan surround me.

13 They open wide their jaws at me, \*  
like a ravening and a roaring lion.

14 I am poured out like water;  
all my bones are out of joint; \*  
my heart within my breast is melting wax.

15 My mouth is dried out like a pot-herd;  
my tongue sticks to the roof of my mouth; \*  
and you have laid me in the dust of the grave.

16 Packs of dogs close me in,  
and gangs of evildoers circle around me; \*  
they pierce my hands and my feet;  
I can count all my bones.

17 They stare and gloat over me; \*  
they divide my garments among them;  
they cast lots for my clothing.

18 Be not far away, O God; \*  
you are my strength; hasten to help me.

19 Save me from the sword, \*  
my life from the power of the dog.

20 Save me from the lion's mouth, \*  
my wretched body from the horns of wild bulls.

21 I will declare your Name to my people; \*  
in the midst of the congregation I will praise you.

22 May all who fear you, O God, give praise; \*  
may the offspring of Israel stand in awe  
and all of Jacob's line, give glory.

23 For you do not despise nor abhor the poor in their poverty;  
neither do you hide your face from them; \*  
but when they cry to you, you hear them.

24 My praise is of you in the great assembly; \*  
I will perform my vows in the presence of those who  
worship you.

25 The poor shall eat and be satisfied,  
and those who seek you shall praise you: \*  
"May your heart live for ever!"

26 All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to  
you, \*  
and all the families of the nations bow before you.

27 For yours is the royal power, O God, \*  
you rule over the nations.

28 To you alone all who sleep in the earth bow down  
in worship; \*  
all who go down to the dust fall before you.

29 My soul shall live for you;  
my descendants shall serve you; \*  
they shall be known as yours for ever.

30 They shall come and make known to a people yet unborn \*  
the saving deeds that you have done.

### **Hebrews 4:14-16; 5:7-9**

Since, then, we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast to our confession. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who in every respect has been tested as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore approach the throne of grace with boldness, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need. In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to the one who was able to

save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission. Although he was a Son, he learned obedience through what he suffered; and having been made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him,

The Word of the Lord.

*People Thanks be to God.*

### **The Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John**

*The congregation may be seated for the first part of the Passion. At the verse which mentions the arrival at Golgatha (John 19:17) all stand.*

#### **John 18:1-19:42**

Jesus went out with his disciples across the Kidron valley to a place where there was a garden, which he and his disciples entered. Now Judas, who betrayed him, also knew the place, because Jesus often met there with his disciples. So Judas brought a detachment of soldiers together with police from the chief priests and the Pharisees, and they came there with lanterns and torches and weapons. Then Jesus, knowing all that was to happen to him, came forward and asked them, "Whom are you looking for?" They answered, "Jesus of Nazareth." Jesus replied, "I am he." Judas, who betrayed him, was standing with them. When Jesus said to them, "I am he," they stepped back and fell to the ground. Again he asked them, "Whom are you looking for?" And they said, "Jesus of Nazareth." Jesus answered, "I told you that I am he. So if you are looking for me, let these men go." This was to fulfill the word that he had spoken, "I did not lose a single one of those whom you gave me." Then Simon Peter, who had a sword, drew it, struck the high priest's slave, and cut off his right ear. The slave's name was Malchus. Jesus said to Peter, "Put your sword back into its sheath. Am I not to drink the cup that the Father has given me?"

So the soldiers, their officer, and the Jewish police arrested Jesus and bound him. First they took him to Annas, who was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, the high priest that year. Caiaphas was the one who had advised the Jews that it was better to have one person die for the people.

Simon Peter and another disciple followed Jesus. Since that disciple was known to the high priest, he went with Jesus into the courtyard of the high priest, but Peter was standing outside at the gate. So the other disciple, who was known to the high priest, went out, spoke to the woman who guarded the gate, and brought Peter in. The woman said to Peter, "You are not also one of this man's disciples, are you?" He said, "I am not." Now the slaves and the police had made a charcoal fire because it was cold, and they were standing around it and warming themselves. Peter also was standing with them and warming himself.

Then the high priest questioned Jesus about his disciples and about his teaching. Jesus answered, "I have spoken openly to the world; I have always taught in synagogues and in the temple, where all the Jews come together. I have said nothing in secret. Why do you ask me? Ask those who heard what I said to them; they know what I said." When he had said this, one of the police standing nearby struck Jesus on the face, saying, "Is that how you answer the high priest?" Jesus answered, "If I have spoken wrongly, testify to the wrong. But if I have spoken rightly, why do you strike me?" Then Annas sent him bound to Caiaphas the high priest.

Now Simon Peter was standing and warming himself. They asked him, "You are not also one of his disciples, are you?" He denied it and said, "I am not." One of the slaves of the high priest, a relative of the man whose ear Peter had cut off, asked, "Did I not see you in the garden with him?" Again Peter denied it, and at that moment the cock crowed.

Then they took Jesus from Caiaphas to Pilate's headquarters. It was early in the morning. They themselves did not enter the headquarters, so as to avoid ritual defilement and to be able to eat the Passover. So Pilate went out to them and said, "What accusation do you bring against this man?" They answered, "If this man were not a criminal, we would not have handed him over to you." Pilate said to them, "Take him yourselves and judge him according to your law." The Jews replied, "We are not permitted to put anyone to death." (This was to fulfill what Jesus had said when he indicated the kind of death he was to die.)

Then Pilate entered the headquarters again, summoned Jesus, and asked him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" Jesus answered, "Do you ask this on your own, or did others tell you about me?" Pilate replied, "I am not a Jew, am I? Your own nation and the chief priests have handed you over to me. What have you done?" Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not from this world. If my kingdom were from this world, my followers would be fighting to keep me from being handed over to the Jews. But as it is, my kingdom is not from here." Pilate asked him, "So you are a king?" Jesus answered, "You say that I am a king. For this I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice." Pilate asked him, "What is truth?"

After he had said this, he went out to the Jews again and told them, "I find no case against him. But you have a custom that I release someone for you at the Passover. Do you want me to release for you the King of the Jews?" They shouted in reply, "Not this man, but Barabbas!" Now Barabbas was a bandit.

Then Pilate took Jesus and had him flogged. And the soldiers wove a crown of thorns and put it on his head, and they dressed him in a purple robe. They kept coming up to him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" and striking him on the face. Pilate went out again and said to them, "Look, I am bringing him out to you to let you know that I find no case against him." So Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, "Here is the man!" When the chief priests and the police saw him, they shouted, "Crucify him! Crucify him!" Pilate said to them, "Take him yourselves and crucify him; I find no case against him." The Jews answered him, "We have a law, and according to that law he ought to die because he has claimed to be the Son of God."

Now when Pilate heard this, he was more afraid than ever. He entered his headquarters again and asked Jesus, "Where are you from?" But Jesus gave him no answer. Pilate therefore said to him, "Do you refuse to speak to me? Do you not know that I have power to release you, and power to crucify you?" Jesus answered him, "You would have no power over me unless it had been given you from above; therefore the one who handed me over to you is guilty of a greater sin." From then

on Pilate tried to release him, but the Jews cried out, "If you release this man, you are no friend of the emperor. Everyone who claims to be a king sets himself against the emperor."

When Pilate heard these words, he brought Jesus outside and sat on the judge's bench at a place called The Stone Pavement, or in Hebrew Gabbatha. Now it was the day of Preparation for the Passover; and it was about noon. He said to the Jews, "Here is your King!" They cried out, "Away with him! Away with him! Crucify him!" Pilate asked them, "Shall I crucify your King?" The chief priests answered, "We have no king but the emperor." Then he handed him over to them to be crucified.

So they took Jesus; and carrying the cross by himself, he went out to what is called The Place of the Skull, which in Hebrew is called Golgotha. There they crucified him, and with him two others, one on either side, with Jesus between them. Pilate also had an inscription written and put on the cross. It read, "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews." Many of the Jews read this inscription, because the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city; and it was written in Hebrew, in Latin, and in Greek. Then the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate, "Do not write, 'The King of the Jews,' but, 'This man said, I am King of the Jews.'" Pilate answered, "What I have written I have written." When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took his clothes and divided them into four parts, one for each soldier. They also took his tunic; now the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece from the top. So they said to one another, "Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it to see who will get it." This was to fulfill what the scripture says,

"They divided my clothes among themselves,  
and for my clothing they cast lots."  
And that is what the soldiers did.

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

After this, when Jesus knew that all was now finished, he said (in order to fulfill the scripture), "I am thirsty." A jar full of sour wine was standing there. So they put a sponge full of the wine on a branch of hyssop and held it to his mouth. When Jesus had received the wine, he said, "It is finished." Then he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

Since it was the day of Preparation, the Jews did not want the bodies left on the cross during the sabbath, especially because that sabbath was a day of great solemnity. So they asked Pilate to have the legs of the crucified men broken and the bodies removed. Then the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first and of the other who had been crucified with him. But when they came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. Instead, one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once blood and water came out. (He who saw this has testified so that you also may believe. His testimony is true, and he knows that he tells the truth.) These things occurred so that the scripture might be fulfilled, "None of his bones shall be broken." And again another passage of scripture says, "They will look on the one whom they have pierced."

After these things, Joseph of Arimathea, who was a disciple of Jesus, though a secret one because of his fear of the Jews, asked Pilate to let him take away the body of Jesus. Pilate gave him permission; so he came and removed his body. Nicodemus, who had at first come to Jesus by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, weighing about a hundred pounds. They took the body of Jesus and wrapped it with the spices in linen cloths, according to the burial custom of the Jews. Now there was a garden in the place where he was crucified, and in the garden there was a new tomb in which no one had ever been laid. And so, because it was the Jewish day of Preparation, and the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there.

**Sermon**

**The Reverend Nancy L. Threadgill**

**The Solemn Collects**

*All standing, the Deacon, or other person appointed, says to the people*

Dear People of God: Our heavenly Father sent his Son into the world, not to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved; that all who believe in him might be delivered from the power of sin and death, and become heirs with him of everlasting life.

We pray, therefore, for people everywhere according to their needs.

*The biddings may be read by a Deacon or other person appointed. The Officiant says the Collects.*

Let us pray for the holy Catholic Church of Christ throughout the world;

For its unity in witness and service  
For all bishops and other ministers  
and the people whom they serve  
For Ketlen, our Bishop, and all the people of this diocese  
For all Christians in this community  
For those about to be baptized

That God will confirm his Church in faith, increase it in love, and preserve it in peace.

*Silence*

Almighty and everlasting God, by whose Spirit the whole body of your faithful people is governed and sanctified: Receive our supplications and prayers which we offer before you for all members of your holy Church, that in their vocation and ministry they may truly and devoutly serve you; through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

Let us pray for all nations and peoples of the earth, and for those in authority among them;

For Joe, the President of the United States  
For the Congress and the Supreme Court

For the Members and Representatives of the United Nations  
For all who serve the common good

That by God's help they may seek justice and truth, and live  
in peace and concord.

*Silence*

Almighty God, kindle, we pray, in every heart the true love of  
peace, and guide with your wisdom those who take counsel for  
the nations of the earth; that in tranquility your dominion may  
increase, until the earth is filled with the knowledge of your  
love; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Let us pray for all who suffer and are afflicted in body or in mind;

For the hungry and the homeless, the destitute  
and the oppressed  
For the sick, the wounded, and the crippled  
For those in loneliness, fear, and anguish  
For those who face temptation, doubt, and despair  
For the sorrowful and bereaved  
For prisoners and captives, and those in mortal danger

That God in his mercy will comfort and relieve them, and  
grant them the knowledge of his love, and stir up in us the  
will and patience to minister to their needs.

*Silence*

Gracious God, the comfort of all who sorrow, the strength of  
all who suffer: Let the cry of those in misery and need come  
to you, that they may find your mercy present with them in all  
their afflictions; and give us, we pray, the strength to serve  
them for the sake of him who suffered for us, your Son Jesus  
Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Let us pray for all who have not received the Gospel of Christ;

For those who have never heard the word of salvation  
For those who have lost their faith  
For those hardened by sin or indifference  
For the contemptuous and the scornful  
For those who are enemies of the cross of Christ and  
persecutors of his disciples  
For those who in the name of Christ have persecuted others

That God will open their hearts to the truth, and lead them to  
faith and obedience.

*Silence*

Merciful God, creator of all the peoples of the earth and  
lover of souls: Have compassion on all who do not know you  
as you are revealed in your Son Jesus Christ; let your Gospel  
be preached with grace and power to those who have not  
heard it; turn the hearts of those who resist it; and bring  
home to your fold those who have gone astray; that there  
may be one flock under one shepherd, Jesus Christ our Lord.  
*Amen.*

Let us commit ourselves to God, and pray for the grace  
of a holy life, that, with all who have departed this world and  
have died in the peace of Christ, and those whose faith is  
known to God alone, we may be accounted worthy to enter  
into the fullness of the joy of our Lord, and receive the crown  
of life in the day of resurrection.

*Silence*

O God of unchangeable power and eternal light: Look  
favorably on your whole Church, that wonderful and sacred  
mystery; by the effectual working of your providence, carry  
out in tranquility the plan of salvation; let the whole world  
see and know that things which were cast down are being  
raised up, and things which had grown old are being made  
new, and that all things are being brought to their perfection  
by him through whom all things were made, your Son Jesus

Christ our Lord; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

*Officiant and People*

And now, as our Savior  
Christ has taught us,  
we are bold to say,

As our Savior Christ  
has taught us,  
we now pray,

*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,  
for ever and ever. Amen.*

*Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your Name,  
your kingdom come,  
your will be done,  
on earth as in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread.  
Forgive us our sins  
as we forgive those  
who sin against us.  
Save us from the time of trial,  
and deliver us from evil.  
For the kingdom, the power,  
and the glory are yours,  
now and for ever. Amen.*

Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God, we pray you to set your passion, cross, and death between your judgment and our souls, now and in the hour of our death. Give mercy and grace to the living; pardon and rest to the dead; to your holy Church peace and concord; and to us sinners everlasting life and glory; for with the Father and the Holy Spirit you live and reign, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.*

From *Book of Common Prayer* (1979)

## Stations of the Cross

Walking the Stations of the Cross while meditating and reflecting on the final hours of Jesus' life is a practice from the medieval church that

has become part of many Good Friday services all across the world. Each station marks a point on Jesus' journey to crucifixion, offering a stark confrontation with the reality of human suffering, evil, and death.

While many churches have beautifully crafted markers that artfully depict each moment on Jesus' way, you can also just use what you have to create a Stations of the Cross in your own home. Choose 14 locations around your house, and mark them each with a simple piece of paper or cardboard that bears the numbers 1—14. Walk between the markers in silence, and as you pause at each station, use the following prayers as a jumping off point for your own reflections on God's suffering and self-emptying sacrifice.

For those with mobility issues, an online slideshow with music, "The Way of the Cross (Stations of the Cross)," is available on St. Mark's website (<https://saintmarksjohnstown.com/the-way-of-the-cross-stations-of-the-cross/>) As you pause at each slide/station, use the following prayers as a jumping off point for your own reflections on God's suffering and self-emptying sacrifice.

### Station 1: Jesus is condemned to death.

*We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you, because by your holy Cross, you have redeemed the world.*

Jesus, you stood all alone before Pilate. Nobody spoke up for you. Nobody tried to defend you. You devoted your life to healing the sick, listening to the poor, and caring for those who were ignored by others. You came to show us how to love one another. Help us learn how to love you with our whole hearts, and help us understand how we can better love our neighbors as ourselves. Give us eyes to see how we can avoid falling into patterns of scapegoating, judgment, and blame, and teach us to treat all those we meet in our lives with compassion and mercy. **Amen.**

### Station 2: Jesus takes up his cross.

*We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you, because by your holy Cross, you have redeemed the world.*



Jesus, you took up your cross knowing that you would carry it to your own death. You knew that this would not be easy, but you carried it anyway. When our problems seem too heavy for us, and we become anxious and afraid, give us the strength and the grace to do what we need to do. Grant us the wisdom and the humility to turn to you when we need help. And in difficult times help us to know that you recognize and stand in solidarity with our suffering. **Amen.**

**Station 3: Jesus falls the first time.**

*We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you, because by your holy Cross, you have redeemed the world.*

Jesus, when you were weak and fell, the soldiers responded with frustration and indignation. They only wanted to get things over with so that they could go home. At times when we see others fall, help us not to respond with impatience or frustration, but with compassion and wisdom. Help us to remember that even the stone of someone's greatest stumbling can be transformed into the cornerstone of new life on the other side. **Amen.**

**Station 4: Jesus meets his mother.**

*We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you, because by your holy Cross, you have redeemed the world.*

Jesus, when you looked into that crowd, you saw the loving face of your own mother. Even though she could not take your pain away, she loved you and suffered along with you. Having experienced the pain of saying goodbye, help us in the midst of our own goodbyes to remember that love never dies. **Amen.**

**Station 5: Simon of Cyrene helps Jesus to carry his cross.**

*We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you, because by your holy Cross, you have redeemed the world.*

Jesus, when you were too weak to carry your cross any further and no one offered to help, the soldiers forced a passerby to carry your cross for you. In moments when we are unwillingly asked to carry the burdens of another, help us to do so with open hearts that are filled with compassion and understanding, rather than with begrudging

hearts that are motivated by a sense of obligation. Help us to look at the suffering of others through your eyes. **Amen.**

**Station 6: Veronica wipes the face of Jesus.**

*We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you, because by your holy Cross, you have redeemed the world.*

Jesus, as the blood and sweat poured down your face, a woman emerged from the crowd who became the first to voluntarily offer you care. Placing her compassion for you over her concern for what others might think, she ran over and wiped your face with a cloth. When we are afraid of what others in the group might think of us, help us also to act without fear in saying or doing what is right. Help us put justice and compassion over our own personal sense of group identity or religious belonging. **Amen.**

**Station 7: Jesus falls a second time.**

*We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you, because by your holy Cross, you have redeemed the world.*

Jesus, with each step towards Calvary, it became harder and harder to move forward, causing you to fall down a second time. When we have already been weakened by an injury or adversity, we often become even more vulnerable to subsequent hardships. Sometimes the burdens of illness, job loss, hunger, poverty, oppression, cruelty, or natural disasters can all seem to pile up, and life just does not seem fair. It becomes harder and harder for us to keep moving forward in faith, trusting in God's goodness. When we fall into despair, help us to remember that our real strength lies in you. **Amen.**

**Station 8: Jesus speaks with the women of Jerusalem.**

*We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you, because by your holy Cross, you have redeemed the world.*

Jesus, even in the midst of your suffering, you stopped to talk with a group of women who were weeping over what was happening to you. You redirected their grief away from your own personal suffering and towards the suffering of the larger society. When we are suffering, help us to look beyond our own individual experiences of victimhood

in order to see how our suffering relates to the suffering of others, as well as to larger patterns of systemic sin. Help us to work towards the alleviation of suffering, not just in our own lives, but in the whole world. **Amen.**

**Station 9: Jesus falls a third time.**

*We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you, because by your holy Cross, you have redeemed the world.*

Jesus, your failing strength at the end of your journey reminds us how fragile and vulnerable we humans really are. Help us to let go of our need for control, and the idea that we can save our lives by clinging to them. Release us from the compulsion to prop up our lives with more possessions, prestige, or power. Give us faith to remember that you never abandon us, even in our failings and our falling. **Amen.**

**Station 10: Jesus is stripped of his clothing.**

*We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you, because by your holy Cross, you have redeemed the world.*

Jesus, when the soldiers tore the clothing from your wounded body, they took away the last of your earthly belongings, so that you died possessing nothing. Through Adam's sin we came to see poverty and nakedness as shameful, and the soldiers mocked you as they competed for your property. Strip us of our shame and our pride, so that we might let go of our own obsession with prosperity and prestige. Give us eyes to see what really matters, when everything else has been stripped away. **Amen.**

**Station 11: Jesus is nailed to the cross.**

*We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you, because by your holy Cross, you have redeemed the world.*

Jesus, you stretched out your arms of love on the hard wood of the cross, so that everyone might come within reach of your saving embrace. As we consider your wounds with the deepest sorrow and compassion, we pray that you will give us grace to accept the sufferings that we must face in our own time with strength and

confidence in God's saving activity in the world. Help us to remember that this is not the end of the story. **Amen.**

**Station 12: Jesus dies on the cross.**

*We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you, because by your holy Cross, you have redeemed the world.*

Jesus, as you died on the cross, you cried out "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" In your death, God tasted death, and came to know the depths of human suffering. Yet through your death you took away the sting of death, making a way for all those who seek eternal life. Help us to remember that nothing, not even death, can separate us from the love and mercy of God. **Amen.**

**Station 13: The body of Jesus is laid in the arms of his mother.**

*We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you, because by your holy Cross, you have redeemed the world.*

Jesus, as your broken body was taken down from the cross and laid in arms of your mother, she was deeply grieved. In our moments of grief, help us to remember that we are always being held in God's loving embrace. At the hour of our death, fill the sadness of our hearts with faith and hope in the life that is yet to come. **Amen.**

**Station 14: The body of Jesus is laid in the tomb.**

*We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you, because by your holy Cross, you have redeemed the world.*

Jesus, your suffering is over. Though you have triumphed, in the eyes of the world you seem to have failed. And yet sin, death, and hell have been conquered. Give us the courage and clarity of vision to have faith in your power to bring light out of darkness, and life out of death. Help us to know that even in our darkest hours, your love has conquered the grave. **Amen.**

Created by Kristen Leigh Mitchell, M.Div.

With reflections by The Rev. Joe & Kristen Leigh Mitchell

*Please exit the church in silence.*

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transformational worship and service*