



MY GOD, MY GOD,
WHY HAVE YOU FORSAKEN ME?
WHY ARE YOU SO FAR FROM SAVING ME,
SO FAR FROM MY CRIES OF ANGUISH?
MY GOD, I CRY OUT BY DAY,
BUT YOU DO NOT ANSWER,
BY NIGHT, BUT I FIND NO REST.

YET YOU ARE ENTHRONED AS THE HOLY ONE;
YOU ARE THE ONE ISRAEL PRAISES.

PSALMS 22:1-3

Welcome to worship at Spirit of Christ!



Missouri Synod. We gather here as the living body of Jesus Christ to be nourished and empowered by the Holy Spirit in what we call the “Means of Grace” — God’s gifts of Word and Sacrament. Through these Means of Grace, we receive the promise of the Gospel: that in the Spirit of Christ, God forgives us, remakes us, and reigns in us. May t We are a member congregation of the Lutheran Church -The Lord bless your worship today!

Easter Vigil

April 4, 2026

“Why?”

“Where are you?”

“Why are you letting this happen?”

“When will you save?”

These questions are common to people of faith, and we might imagine that those who witnessed Jesus’ death had some of the same questions on Holy Saturday as they experienced exhaustion, hopelessness, despair, and doubt. Though we are confident that Easter Sunday and the promise of the resurrection is God’s answer, we still experience the tension of doubt and faith throughout our lives. Tonight, as we wait for the Risen Lord to give us joy, we sit in the tension of “Lord, I believe...help my unbelief.”

Invocation

P In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

Blessing of the Paschal Candle

P Christ Jesus, the same yesterday, today, and forever, the beginning and the ending, the Alpha and the Omega. His are time and eternity; his are the glory and dominion, now and forever. By his wounds we have healing both now and forever. May the light of Christ, who is risen in glory from the dead, scatter all the darkness of our hearts and minds.

All light their candles from the paschal candle and follow the

candle bearer in procession into the darkened church.

When all have processed, the bearer of the paschal candle lifts the paschal candle high.

Collect

P Let us pray. Christ, light of the world, rising in glory, dispel the darkness of our hearts and minds.

C Amen.

The Paschal candle is placed in its stand.

All extinguish their candles.

Holy Gospel

Mark 9:19-24

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Mark , the ninth chapter.

C Glory to you, O Lord.

¹⁹“You unbelieving generation,” Jesus replied, “how long shall I stay with you? How long shall I put up with you? Bring the boy to me.”

²⁰ So they brought him. When the spirit saw Jesus, it immediately threw the boy into a convulsion. He fell to the ground and rolled around, foaming at the mouth.

²¹ Jesus asked the boy’s father, “How long has he been like this?” “From childhood,” he answered. ²² “It has often thrown him into fire or water to kill him. But if you can do anything, take pity on us and help us.”

²³ ““If you can’?” said Jesus. “Everything is possible for one who believes.”

²⁴ Immediately the boy’s father exclaimed, “I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief!

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to you, O Christ.

Sit

O God, Why Are You Silent

ELW 703

1 **O God, why are you silent?**

(tune 527)

I cannot hear your voice;

The proud and strong and violent

All claim you and rejoice;

**You promised you would hold me
With tenderness and care.
Draw near, O Love, enfold me,
Ease the pain I bear.**

**2 My home lies brusied and battered,
My wounded heart is torn;
My spirit speant and shattered
By life's relentless storm;
Will you not bend to hear me,
My cries from deep within?
Have you no word to cheer me
When night is closing in?**

**3 Through endless nights of weeping,
Through weary days of grief,
My heart is in your keeping,
My comfort my relief.
Come share my tears and sadness,
Come suffer in my pain,
Oh, bring me home to gladness,
Restore my hope again.**

**4 May pain draw forth compassion,
Let wisdom rise from loss;
Oh, take my heart and fashion
the image of your cross;
Then may I know your healing,
Through healing that I share,
Your grace and love revealing,
Your tenderness and care.**

Psalm 22

Psalm 22 Responsorial

Score

My God, my God, why have You abandoned me? [Composer]
Jeremy Mayfield

Piano

My God, my God, why have you a - ban - doned me?

Why have You a - ban - doned me?

L

My God,

C

My God, why have you forsaken me?

**Why are you so far from saving me,
so far from my cries of anguish?**

**² My God, I cry out by day, but you do not answer,
by night, but I find no rest.** *(Refrain)*

L

**³ Yet you are enthroned as the Holy One;
you are the one Israel praises.**

**⁴ In you our ancestors put their trust;
they trusted and you delivered them.**

**⁵ To you they cried out and were saved;
in you they trusted and were not put to shame.**

C

**⁶ But I am a worm and not a man,
scorned by everyone, despised by the people.**

**⁷ All who see me mock me;
they hurl insults, shaking their heads.**

**⁸ "He trusts in the LORD," they say,
"let the LORD rescue him.**

**Let him deliver him,
since he delights in him."** *(Refrain)*

L

**⁹ Yet you brought me out of the womb;
you made me trust in you, even at my mother's breast.**

**¹⁰ From birth I was cast on you;
from my mother's womb you have been my God.**

¹¹ Do not be far from me,
for trouble is near
and there is no one to help.

C

¹² Many bulls surround me;
strong bulls of Bashan encircle me.

¹³ Roaring lions that tear their prey
open their mouths wide against me.

¹⁴ I am poured out like water,
and all my bones are out of joint.

My heart has turned to wax;
it has melted within me.

¹⁵ My mouth is dried up like a potsherd,
and my tongue sticks to the roof of my mouth;
you lay me in the dust of death.

¹⁶ Dogs surround me,
a pack of villains encircles me;
they pierce my hands and my feet.

¹⁷ All my bones are on display;
people stare and gloat over me.

¹⁸ They divide my clothes among them
and cast lots for my garment.

(Refrain)

L

¹⁹ But you, LORD, do not be far from me.
You are my strength; come quickly to help me.

²⁰ Deliver me from the sword,
my precious life from the power of the dogs.

²¹ Rescue me from the mouth of the lions;
save me from the horns of the wild oxen.

²² I will declare your name to my people;
In the assembly I will praise you.

²³ You who fear the LORD, praise him!
All you descendants of Jacob, honor him!
Revere him, all you descendants of Israel!

²⁴ For he has not despised or scorned
the suffering of the afflicted one;
he has not hidden his face from him
but has listened to his cry for help.

²⁵ From you comes the theme of my praise in the great
assembly;

- before those who fear you, I will fulfill my vows.
26 The poor will eat and be satisfied;
those who seek the LORD will praise him—
may your hearts live forever!
27 All the ends of the earth
will remember and turn to the LORD,
and all the families of the nations
will bow down before him,
28 for dominion belongs to the LORD
and he rules over the nations.
29 All the rich of the earth will feast and worship;
all who go down to the dust will kneel before him—
those who cannot keep themselves alive.
30 Posterity will serve him;
future generations will be told about the Lord.
31 They will proclaim his righteousness,
declaring to a people yet unborn:
He has done it!

Homiletic Comment

God Moves in a Mysterious Way

LSB 765

- 1 God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform;
He plants his footsteps in the sea
And rides upon the storm.
- 3 His purposes will ripen fast,
Unfolding ev'ry hour;
The bud may have a bitter taste,
But sweet will be the flow'r.
- 4 Blind unbelief is sure to err
And scan his work in vain;
God is his own interpreter,
And he will make it plain.

Old Testament Reading

Isaiah 45

“This is what the LORD says to his anointed,
to Cyrus, whose right hand I take hold of
to subdue nations before him

and to strip kings of their armor,
to open doors before him
so that gates will not be shut:
² I will go before you
and will level the mountains;
I will break down gates of bronze
and cut through bars of iron.
³ I will give you hidden treasures,
riches stored in secret places,
so that you may know that I am the LORD,
the God of Israel, who summons you by name.
⁴ For the sake of Jacob my servant,
of Israel my chosen,
I summon you by name
and bestow on you a title of honor,
though you do not acknowledge me.
⁵ I am the LORD, and there is no other;
apart from me there is no God.
I will strengthen you,
though you have not acknowledged me,
⁶ so that from the rising of the sun
to the place of its setting
people may know there is none besides me.
I am the LORD, and there is no other.
⁷ I form the light and create darkness,
I bring prosperity and create disaster;
I, the LORD, do all these things.
⁸ “You heavens above, rain down my righteousness;
let the clouds shower it down.
Let the earth open wide,
let salvation spring up,
let righteousness flourish with it;
I, the LORD, have created it.

Homiletic Comment

⁹ “Woe to those who quarrel with their Maker,
those who are nothing but potsherds
among the potsherds on the ground.

Does the clay say to the potter,
‘What are you making?’
Does your work say,
‘The potter has no hands’?
¹⁰ Woe to the one who says to a father,
‘What have you begotten?’
or to a mother,
‘What have you brought to birth?’
¹¹ “This is what the LORD says—
the Holy One of Israel, and its Maker:
Concerning things to come,
do you question me about my children,
or give me orders about the work of my hands?
¹² It is I who made the earth
and created mankind on it.
My own hands stretched out the heavens;
I marshaled their starry hosts.
¹³ I will raise up Cyrus in my righteousness:
I will make all his ways straight.
He will rebuild my city
and set my exiles free,
but not for a price or reward,
says the LORD Almighty.”
¹⁴ This is what the LORD says:
“The products of Egypt and the merchandise of Cush,
and those tall Sabeans—
they will come over to you
and will be yours;
they will trudge behind you,
coming over to you in chains.
They will bow down before you
and plead with you, saying,
‘Surely God is with you, and there is no other;
there is no other god.’”
¹⁵ Truly you are a God who hides himself,
the God and Savior of Israel.

Homiletic Comment

¹⁶ All the makers of idols will be put to shame and disgraced;
they will go off into disgrace together.

¹⁷ But Israel will be saved by the LORD
with an everlasting salvation;
you will never be put to shame or disgraced,
to ages everlasting.

¹⁸ For this is what the LORD says—
he who created the heavens,
he is God;
he who fashioned and made the earth,
he founded it;
he did not create it to be empty,
but formed it to be inhabited—
he says:
“I am the LORD,
and there is no other.

¹⁹ I have not spoken in secret,
from somewhere in a land of darkness;
I have not said to Jacob’s descendants,
‘Seek me in vain.’
I, the LORD, speak the truth;
I declare what is right.

²⁰ “Gather together and come;
assemble, you fugitives from the nations.
Ignorant are those who carry about idols of wood,
who pray to gods that cannot save.

²¹ Declare what is to be, present it—
let them take counsel together.
Who foretold this long ago,
who declared it from the distant past?
Was it not I, the LORD?
And there is no God apart from me,
a righteous God and a Savior;
there is none but me.

²² “Turn to me and be saved,
all you ends of the earth;
for I am God, and there is no other.

²³ By myself I have sworn,
my mouth has uttered in all integrity

a word that will not be revoked:
Before me every knee will bow;
by me every tongue will swear.
24 They will say of me, ‘In the LORD alone
are deliverance and strength.’”
All who have raged against him
will come to him and be put to shame.
25 But all the descendants of Israel
will find deliverance in the LORD
and will make their boast in him.

Homiletic Comment

Time of Silent Prayer

As we keep vigil awaiting the resurrection, we share an extended time of silent prayer. We take time to acknowledge our fears, doubts, frustrations, and concerns. We bring these before the God who hides, trusting that he is also the God who keeps his promises. You may find the words below helpful for your meditation, but they are only intended as inspiration and guide. In the long minutes that follow, may the Spirit lead you to address the outcry of your soul to the God who sees, the God who hears, the God who rescues — your loving heavenly Father.

Holy God, I come to you in reverent worship, to be still before you. Within my worship I seek to understand why my God seems so distant from me and to ask you why my prayers sometimes do not seem to be heard. My generous God, why are you ignoring me, and why do you seem so distant? O God, why have you forsaken me?

Yet, despite my anxiety, my uncertainty, my bewilderment — I know that you do not change. Your word and my history remind me that I worship a dependable God. Today, I worship and revere you even though I do not understand you or your ways.

Holy God, I come to plead with you to be present here with me. Without your presence, there is nothing. God, I come to you: I am destabilized by my vivid imaginings and thoughts. I am weakened by my fears. I am damaged by listening to the taunts of unbelievers; and I feel shaken from my secret doubts about myself.

O Lord, my true and only God, do not stay away. You alone are my strength. Come quickly to my aid, I pray of you! God you are the hope of the hopeless, and despite my struggles to understand, I respond to you - declaring in awed wonder my sincere thanks for the blessings you give me.

Holy God, I come to be still before you. In trust, I pray for all people who need compassion and love. I know from experience that you, God, do hear me and answer my prayers. You never ignore the cries of people who are needy or suffering. In the stillness of your holy presence, I humbly give thanks for God my eternal King, who rules all the nations with justice and equity; and who is always ready to hear and answer when I call on his name.

Steadfast God, I come today in trust, in hope, and faith. Sometimes your presence seems to be far away, and your voice seems to be silent. I thank you that not everyone here at worship will be experiencing this emptiness; but it is a feeling I know all too well from other times when I have felt separation from you. So, in this waiting silence, I express my longing to hear again your loving words of grace, peace, and blessing. Despite my doubts and fears I come trusting that as in the past, you are not absent from me, but are now as near as my breath, and as close as my beating heart.

Generous God, strange as it may seem, but lurking beneath my professions of faith lies a feeling that I have somehow used up all my inner resources. Yet despite this current sense of emptiness, throughout my faith journey I have had many experiences of your gracious love and compassion towards me. Therefore, may the healing memory of these blessings strengthen me in these times of doubt and fear. Help me, O God, to have discernment and faith to understand why you seem so far away. With your Spirit's guidance, may I examine my life to discover where this apparent blockage is in my relationship with you. May I accept that it is I who have moved away from you, because it is against your nature to leave me bereft in life's storms.

Rescuing God, in the past your gracious acts of mercy have freed me from all that imprisoned me. I turn to you again, seeking release from the pain of separation from you. The powers of evil

seem to be loud and rampant in my world, with little evidence of mercy, forgiveness or love being offered by those in power.

Father, come to me now in this holy silence and speak your words of encouragement, forgiveness, and love, so that once again I may proclaim that you are my trustworthy God, in whom I always hope, through Jesus Christ my Lord. Amen.

Lord's Prayer

Baptismal Address

P On this holiest of nights, the whole Church of our Lord Jesus Christ recalls his death and burial, rejoicing with great joy in the Gospel of his glorious and mighty resurrection from the dead. The apostle Paul says: Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?

C **We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.**

P For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin. For one who has died has been set free from sin.

C **Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him.**

P We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. For the death he died he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives he lives to God. So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

The congregation is invited to approach the font to receive a reminder of their baptism.

Easter Acclamation

P Alleluia! Christ is risen!

C **He is risen indeed! Alleluia!**

- 1 I know that my Redeemer lives;
What comfort this sweet sentence gives!
He lives, He lives, who once was dead;
He lives, my ever-living head.
- 2 He lives triumphant from the grave;
He lives eternally to save;
He lives all-glorious in the sky;
He lives exalted there on high.
- 3 He lives to bless me with His love;
He lives to plead for me above;
He lives my hungry soul to feed;
He lives to help in time of need.
- 4 He lives to grant me rich supply;
He lives to guide me with His eye;
He lives to comfort me when faint;
He lives to hear my soul's complaint.
- 5 He lives to silence all my fears;
He lives to wipe away my tears;
He lives to calm my troubled heart;
He lives all blessings to impart.

Holy Gospel

Luke 24:13-29

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the twenty-fourth chapter.

C **Glory to you, O Lord.**

¹³ Now that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem. ¹⁴ They were talking with each other about everything that had happened. ¹⁵ As they talked and discussed these things with each other, Jesus himself came up and walked along with them; ¹⁶ but they were kept from recognizing him.

¹⁷ He asked them, "What are you discussing together as you walk along?"

They stood still, their faces downcast. ¹⁸ One of them, named Cleopas, asked him, "Are you the only one visiting Jerusalem who does not know the things that have happened there in these days?"

¹⁹ “What things?” he asked.

“About Jesus of Nazareth,” they replied. “He was a prophet, powerful in word and deed before God and all the people. ²⁰ The chief priests and our rulers handed him over to be sentenced to death, and they crucified him; ²¹ but we had hoped that he was the one who was going to redeem Israel. And what is more, it is the third day since all this took place. ²² In addition, some of our women amazed us. They went to the tomb early this morning ²³ but didn’t find his body. They came and told us that they had seen a vision of angels, who said he was alive. ²⁴ Then some of our companions went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but they did not see Jesus.”

²⁵ He said to them, “How foolish you are, and how slow to believe all that the prophets have spoken! ²⁶ Did not the Messiah have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?” ²⁷ And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself.

²⁸ As they approached the village to which they were going, Jesus continued on as if he were going farther. ²⁹ But they urged him strongly, “Stay with us, for it is nearly evening; the day is almost over.” So he went in to stay with them.

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to you, O Christ.

Benediction

Blessing

P The Lord bless us, defend us from all evil, and bring us to everlasting life.

C Amen.



SPIRIT of **CHRIST**

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proclaiming, and sharing the love of Christ.**

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