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in the law and the elders were assembled. ⁵⁸Peter was following him at a distance and went as far as the courtyard of the high priest. He went inside and sat down with the guards to see how it would turn out.

⁵⁹The chief priests and the whole Sanhedrin were looking for false testimony against Jesus so that they could put him to death. ⁶⁰They found none, even though many false witnesses came forward. Finally two came forward ⁶¹and said, “This fellow said, ‘I am able to destroy the temple of God and rebuild it in three days.’”

⁶²The high priest stood up and said to him, “Have you no answer? What is this that these men are testifying against you?” ⁶³But Jesus remained silent. Then the high priest said to him, “I place you under oath by the living God: Tell us if you are the Christ, the Son of God!”

⁶⁴Jesus said to him, “It is as you have said. But I tell you, soon you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of power and coming on the clouds of heaven.”

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

They answered, “He is deserving of death!” ⁶⁷Then they spit in his face and punched him. Some slapped him ⁶⁸and said, “Prophesy to us, Christ! Who hit you?”

⁶⁹Meanwhile Peter was sitting outside in the courtyard. A servant girl came to him and said, “You were also with Jesus the Galilean.”

⁷⁰But he denied it in front of everyone, saying, “I don’t know what you’re talking about.”

⁷¹When Peter went out to the entryway, someone else saw him and said to those who were there, “This fellow was with Jesus of Nazareth.”

⁷²Again Peter denied it with an oath and said, “I do not know the man.”

⁷³After a little while those who stood by came and said to Peter, “Surely you are also one of them because even your accent gives you away.”

⁷⁴Then he began to curse and to swear, “I do not know the man!” Just then the rooster crowed.

⁷⁵And Peter remembered the word Jesus had spoken, “Before the rooster crows, you will deny me three times.” And he went outside and wept bitterly.

GOD ON TRIAL: TESTIMONY

SONG OF MARY (Magnificat): Hymn 956 *Holy Is Your Name*

THE OFFERING

The members of Emanuel Lutheran Church have joined together to do the Lord’s work in this community and around the world. Guests need not feel obligated to participate in this offering which supports our ministry.

LORD, HAVE MERCY (pg. 221-223)

LORD’S PRAYER (pg. 224)

BLESSING (pg. 224)

HYMN: 784 *Now the Light Has Gone Away*

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Midweek Lent #5

Emanuel First Evangelical
Lutheran Church

March 20th, 2024

Order Of Worship: Vespers, pg. 215

The Latin word vesper means “evening star.” Vespers is a historic evening prayer service in the Christian church. Christians gather at the end of the day to raise their voices in thankful praise and prayer. The service folder contains specific readings and prayers for each service, and will give corresponding pages to follow in the hymnal.

HYMN: 406 *In the Hour of Trial*

OPENING RESPONSES (pg. 215)

HYMN OF LIGHT (pg. 216)

PRAYER (pg. 216)

PSALM 141 (pg. 217)

PSALM: 119D

PSALM PRAYER: Lord, your Word is my delight. When I was lost in the darkness of sin, you penetrated my heart with the light of your Word. Let it enlighten my path each day that I may serve you in holiness. Let your Word shine through all I say and do that others may see you and praise your saving name. In Jesus’ name I pray.

Amen.

CHOIR ANTHEM

(ELS 3:30): *The Power of the Cross* v4 (Hymn 423)

(Sr. Choir 6:30): *O Come and Mourn with Me Awhile*

PASSION HISTORY: Lesson Five (unified reading from Matthew, Mark, Luke, & John)

Two other men, who were criminals, were led away with Jesus to be executed. They brought Jesus to the place called Golgotha, which means, “The place of a skull.” They offered him wine to drink, mixed with gall; but when he tasted it, he would not drink it. They crucified him there with the criminals, one on his right and the other on his left.

Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.”

Now it was the third hour when they crucified him.

Pilate also had a notice written and fastened on the cross. It read, “Jesus the Nazarene, the King of the Jews.”

Many of the Jews read this notice, because the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city, and it was written in Aramaic, Latin, and Greek.

So the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate, “Do not write, ‘The King of the Jews,’ but that ‘this man said, ‘I am the King of the Jews.’”

Pilate answered, “What I have written, I have written.”

When the soldiers crucified Jesus, they took his clothes and divided them into four parts, one part for each soldier. They also took his tunic, which was seamless, woven in one piece from top to bottom. So they said to one another, "Let's not tear it. Instead, let's cast lots to see who gets it." This was so that the Scripture might be fulfilled which says:

They divided my garments among them
and cast lots for my clothing.

So the soldiers did these things. Then they sat down and were keeping watch over him there.

People who passed by kept insulting him, shaking their heads and saying, "You who were going to destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, save yourself! If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross!"

Those who were crucified with him also insulted him. In the same way the chief priests, experts in the law, and elders kept mocking him. They said, "He saved others, but he cannot save himself. If he's the King of Israel, let him come down now from the cross, and we will believe in him. He trusts in God. Let God rescue him now, if he wants him, because he said, 'I am the Son of God.'"

One of the criminals hanging there was blaspheming him, saying, "Aren't you the Christ? Save yourself and us!"

But the other criminal rebuked him. "Don't you fear God, since you are under the same condemnation? We are punished justly, for we are receiving what we deserve for what we have done, but this man has done nothing wrong." Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come in your kingdom."

Jesus said to him, "Amen I tell you: Today you will be with me in paradise."

Jesus' mother, his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene were standing 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 this disciple took her into his own home.

It was now about the sixth hour, and darkness came over the whole land until the ninth hour, while the sun was darkened.

At the ninth hour Jesus shouted with a loud voice, "*Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?*" which means, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

When some of those standing there heard this, they said, "Listen, he's calling Elijah!"

After this, knowing that everything had now been finished, and to fulfill the Scripture, Jesus said, "I thirst."

A jar full of sour wine was sitting there. Immediately one of them ran, took a sponge, and soaked it with sour wine. Then he put it on a stick and gave him a drink.

When Jesus had received the sour wine, he said, "It is finished!"

Jesus cried out with a loud voice, "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit!" When he had said this, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

Suddenly the temple curtain was torn in two from top to bottom. The earth shook and rocks were split. Tombs were opened, and many bodies of saints who had fallen asleep were raised to life. Those who came out of the tombs went into the holy city after Jesus' resurrection and appeared to many people. When the centurion and those who were guarding Jesus with him saw the earthquake and how he cried out with a loud voice and breathed his last, they were terrified and began to glorify God, saying, "This man really was righteous. Truly this was the Son of God."

When all the groups of people who had gathered to see this spectacle saw what had happened, they returned home beating their chests. All those who knew Jesus, and many women who

had followed Jesus from Galilee and who had served him, were there, watching from a distance.³ Among them were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Joseph, Salome, and the mother of Zebedee's sons.

Since it was the Preparation Day, the Jews did not want the bodies left on the crosses over the Sabbath (because that Sabbath was a particularly important day). They asked Pilate to have the men's legs broken and the bodies taken away. So the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first man who was crucified with Jesus, and then those of the other man.

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. Immediately blood and water came out. The one who saw it has testified, and his testimony is true. He knows that he is telling the truth, so that you also may believe. Indeed, these things happened so that the Scripture would be fulfilled, "Not one of his bones will be broken." Again another Scripture says, "They will look at the one they pierced."

When it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathaea, named Joseph, who was also a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews. Joseph of Arimathaea, a prominent member of the council, was a good and righteous man. He had not agreed with their plan and action. He was looking forward to the kingdom of God. He boldly went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus.

Pilate was surprised that Jesus was already dead. He summoned the centurion and asked him if Jesus had been dead for a long time. When he learned from the centurion that it was so, he granted the body to Joseph. Joseph bought a linen cloth, came, and took Jesus' body away. Nicodemus, who earlier had come to Jesus at night, also came bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about seventy-two pounds.

They took Jesus' body and bound it with linen strips along with the spices, in accord with Jewish burial customs.

There was a garden at the place where Jesus was crucified. And in the garden was a new tomb in which no one had ever been laid. So they laid Jesus there, because it was the Jewish Preparation Day, and the tomb was near. Joseph took the body and laid it in his own new tomb that he had cut in the rock. He rolled a large stone over the tomb's entrance and left.

The women who had come with Jesus from Galilee followed after Joseph, and they observed the tomb and how Jesus' body was laid there. Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joseph were watching where the body was laid.⁵⁶ Then they returned and prepared spices and perfumes. On the Sabbath they rested according to the commandment.

On the next day, which was the day after the Preparation Day, the chief priests and Pharisees gathered in the presence of Pilate and said, "Sir, we remembered what that deceiver said while he was still alive: 'After three days I will rise again.' So give a command that the tomb be made secure until the third day. Otherwise his disciples might steal his body and tell the people, 'He is risen from the dead.' And this last deception will be worse than the first."

Pilate said to them, "You have a guard. Go, make it as secure as you know how." So they went and made the tomb secure by sealing the stone and posting a guard.

M: This is the Word of the Lord.

All: All we like sheep have gone astray, and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all. By his wounds we are healed.

HYMN: 430 *Stricken, Smitten, and Afflicted*

SERMON: Matthew 26:57-75

⁵⁷Those who had arrested Jesus led him away to Caiaphas, the high priest, where the experts