

**HIS
FINAL
STEPS**

HIS FINAL STEPS LED TO A TOMB

Midweek Lent

BETHEL EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH | York, Nebraska

March 15, 2023

THEME OF THE DAY: HIS FINAL STEPS LED TO A TOMB

The theme for this year's Lenten season is "His Final Steps." The series will ponder the significance of the people and places on Jesus' resolute final steps to the cross.

Worship Leader
Organist/Pianist

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Acknowledgments

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Opening Hymn: 784 Now the Light Has Gone Away

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|---|---|--|---|
| 1 | Now the light has gone away;
Father, listen while I pray,
asking you to watch and keep
and to send me quiet sleep. | O bring me and all I love
to your happy home above. | |
| 2 | Jesus, Savior, wash away
all that I've done wrong today.
Make me ever more like you,
good and gentle, kind and true. | 4 | Now my evening praise I give;
you once died that I might live.
All your precious gifts are free—
oh, how good you are to me! |
| 3 | Let my near and dear ones be
safe with you eternally. | 5 | Ah, my best and kindest Friend,
you will love me to the end.
Let me love you more and more,
always better than before. |

Text: Frances R. Havergal, 1836–1879, alt.
Text: Public domain

Confession of Sins

Almighty God, our heavenly Father,

We have sinned against you

**in our thoughts, in our words, in our deeds,
and in all that we have not done.**

Forgive us in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Deliver and restore us, that we may rest in peace.

By the mercy of God we are redeemed by Jesus Christ, and in him we are forgiven. Let us rest in his peace until the rising of the sun, when we shall serve him in the newness of life.

Amen.

Psalm: 51A Be Merciful, O Lord

Refrain



Tone

Be mer - ci - ful, O Lord, for we have sinned.

Have mercy on / me, O God,
according to your un- / failing love;
according to your great com- / passion
blot out my trans- / gressions.

Wash away all my in- / iquity
and cleanse me / from my sin.
For I know my trans- / gressions,
and my sin is always be- / fore me. *Refrain*

Against you, you only, / have I sinned
and done what is evil / in your sight.
Surely I was sin- / ful at birth,
sinful from the time my mother con- / ceived me.

Cleanse me with hyssop, and I / will be clean;
wash me, and I will be whit- / er than snow.
Hide your face / from my sins
and blot out all my in- / iquity.

**Glory be to the Father and / to the Son
and to the Holy / Spirit,
as it was in the be- / ginning,
is now, and will be forever. / Amen. *Refrain***

Psalm Prayer

Lord, we confess our sins to you and plead for your mercy. We acknowledge that sin runs too deep in our nature for us ever to rid ourselves of it, but we thank you that Jesus has done what we could not do, washing us clean of every stain. We plead that your Spirit would give us the strength to live a new life; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Readings: *Isaiah 59:12-20; 2 Corinthians 7:8-13a; Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21*

Hymn: 425 Go to Dark Gethsemane

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| 1 Go to dark Gethsemane,
all who feel the tempter's pow'r;
your Redeemer's conflict see,
watch with him one bitter hour.
Turn not from his griefs away;
learn from Jesus Christ to pray. | 3 Calv'ry'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 from Jesus Christ to die. |
| 2 Follow to the judgment hall,
view the Lord of life arraigned.
Oh, the wormwood and the gall,
oh, the pangs his soul sustained!
Shun not suffering, pain, or loss;
learn from him to bear the cross. | 4 Early hasten to the tomb
where they laid his breathless clay;
all is solitude and gloom.
Who has taken him away?
Christ is ris'n! He meets our eyes.
Savior, teach us so to rise. |

Text: James Montgomery, 1771–1854, alt.
Text: Public domain

Sermon

Reading

John 11:3–15, 21–26, 32–33, 39–52

³ So the sisters sent a message to Jesus, saying, "Lord, the one you love is sick!" ⁴ When Jesus heard it, he said, "This sickness is not going to result in death, but it is for the glory of God, so that the Son of God may be glorified through it." ⁵ Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. ⁶ Yet when he heard that Lazarus was sick, he stayed in the place where he was two more days. ⁷ Then afterwards he said to his disciples, "Let's go back to Judea." ⁸ The disciples said to him, "Rabbi,

recently the Jews were trying to stone you. And you are going back there again?" ⁹ Jesus answered, "Are there not twelve hours of daylight? If anyone walks around during the day, he does not stumble because he sees this world's light. ¹⁰ But if anyone walks around at night, he stumbles because there is no light on him." ¹¹ He said this and then told them, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I am going there to wake him up." ¹² Then the disciples said, "Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will get well." ¹³ Jesus had been speaking about his death, but they thought he was merely talking about ordinary sleep. ¹⁴ So Jesus told them plainly, "Lazarus is dead. ¹⁵ And I am glad for your sake that I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him."

²¹ Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. ²² But even now I know that whatever you ask from God, God will give you." ²³ Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again." ²⁴ Martha replied, "I know that he will rise in the resurrection on the Last Day." ²⁵ Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me will live, even if he dies. ²⁶ And whoever lives and believes in me will never perish. Do you believe this?"

³² When Mary came to where Jesus was and saw him, she fell at his feet and said, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died." ³³ When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her also weeping, he was deeply moved in his spirit and troubled.

³⁹ "Take away the stone," he said. Martha, the dead man's sister, told him, "Lord, by this time there will be an odor, because it has been four days." ⁴⁰ Jesus said to her, "Did I not tell you that if you believe, you will see the glory of God?" ⁴¹ So they took away the stone. Jesus looked up and said, "Father, I thank you that you heard me. ⁴² I knew that you always hear me, but I said this for the benefit of the crowd standing here, so that they may believe that you sent me." ⁴³ After he said this, he shouted with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!" ⁴⁴ The man who had died came out with his feet and his hands bound with strips of linen and his face wrapped with a cloth. Jesus told them, "Loose him and let him go." ⁴⁵ Therefore many of the Jews who came to Mary and saw what Jesus did believed in him. ⁴⁶ But some of them went to the Pharisees and told them what Jesus had done. ⁴⁷ So the chief priests and the Pharisees called a meeting of the Sanhedrin. They asked, "What are we going to do, because this man is doing many miraculous signs? ⁴⁸ If we let him go on like this, everyone will believe in him. Then the Romans will come and take away both our place and our nation." ⁴⁹ But one of them, Caiaphas, who was high priest that year, said to them, "You know nothing at all. ⁵⁰ You do not even consider that it is better for us that one man die for the people than that the whole nation perish." ⁵¹ He did not say this on his own, but, as high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus was going to die for the nation, ⁵² and not only for that nation, but also in order to gather into one the scattered children of God.

Offering

Offering Hymn: 840 All Men Living Are But Mortal

sts. 1–2

- 1 All men living are but mortal
and will surely fade as grass;
only through death's gloomy portal
to eternal life we pass.
When this body here has perished,
then will heav'nly joys be cherished
where the saints, in glorious dress,
live and reign in righteousness.
- 2 Therefore, when my God shall choose
it,
willingly I'll yield my life,
nor will grieve that I should lose it,
with its sorrow, pain, and strife.
In my dear Redeemer's merit
peace has found my troubled spirit,
and in death my comfort this:
Jesus' death my source of bliss.

Text: tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827–1878, alt.; J. G. Albinus, 1624–1679
Text: Public domain

Prayer

Gracious Lord, according to your will and promise,

You sent your Son into our world to atone for sin and restore eternal life.

You planned his path to the cross,
and he followed it perfectly.

He confronted the blindness of unbelief, the confusion of doubt, and the hurt of death
but was not deterred as he proclaimed your kingdom to the least, the last, and the lost.

As we hear and contemplate the holy record of our Savior's passion and death,
Use the sharp message of the law to empty us of pride and self-reliance.

Humble us as we view the Savior in his humility,
remembering and believing that he endured the cross so we might be freed from its horror.

In his suffering show us our healing,
in his grief show us our joy,

and in his death show us our life.

Hear our prayers, Lord, for the sake of Jesus. Amen.

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 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
forever and ever. Amen.**

Blessing

May God be gracious to us and bless us and make his face shine on us.
May God bless us still, so that all the ends of the earth will fear him.

Hymn: 650 From Depths of Woe, Lord God, I Cry

sts. 1–4

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|---|---|
| 1 From depths of woe, Lord God, I cry;
O hear my humble pleading!
Listen in mercy to my sigh,
my prayer for rescue heeding!
Were you, O Lord, to fix your gaze
on our rebellious, sinful ways,
then who could stand before you? | 3 Thus any merit of my own
is void and unavailing;
I trust in God and God alone,
he is my hope unfailing.
Since he is good, I soon will see
the comfort he has promised me;
I wait for its arrival. |
| 2 What we have done on our best day
is flawed from its beginning;
only your grace can clear away
the guilt of all our sinning.
Before you pride must disappear;
each soul must live in rev'rent fear,
upon your grace relying. | 4 If it delays into the night
or waits until tomorrow,
my heart will lean on God's great
might,
discarding doubt and sorrow.
The Spirit of the Lord is near,
providing strength to persevere;
depend on God to help you! |

Text: tr. Michael D. Schultz, b. 1963; Martin Luther, 1483–1546

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