

# Zion Lutheran Church

*Sunday Worship  
At Home (for now)*

*Wednesday Worship  
At Home (for now)*

## At Home Midweek Lenten Service April 1, 2020

*This service of prayer and reflection is intended to help us prepare our minds for Good Friday and for Easter in the weeks ahead. It can be prayed by an individual person or by groups with the head of the household leading at the boxed [L] portions. You are still encouraged to start with a bit of silence to slow yourself down, and you may still find it profitable to stand and to kneel where indicated, but it is fine if you remain seated instead.*

*The congregation assembles in silence.*

*Stand*

**[L]** The Lord Almighty grant us a quiet night and peace at the last.

**[C] Amen.**

**[L]** It is good to give thanks to the Lord,

**[C] to sing praises to Your name, O Most High;**

**[L]** to herald Your love in the morning,

**[C] Your truth at the close of the day.**

*Sit*

### Holy Scripture

*John 12:31–43*

<sup>31</sup>Now is the judgment of this world; now will the ruler of this world be cast out. <sup>32</sup>And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.” <sup>33</sup>He said this to show by what kind of death he was going to die. <sup>34</sup>So the crowd answered him, “We have heard from the Law that the Christ remains forever. How can you say that the Son of Man must be lifted up? Who is this Son of Man?” <sup>35</sup>So Jesus said to them, “The light is among you for a little while longer. Walk while you have the light, lest darkness overtake you. The one who walks in the darkness does

not know where he is going. <sup>36</sup>While you have the light, believe in the light, that you may become sons of light.”

When Jesus had said these things, he departed and hid himself from them. <sup>37</sup>Though he had done so many signs before them, they still did not believe in him, <sup>38</sup>so that the word spoken by the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled:

“Lord, who has believed what he heard from us,  
and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?”

<sup>39</sup>Therefore they could not believe. For again Isaiah said,

<sup>40</sup>“He has blinded their eyes  
and hardened their heart,  
lest they see with their eyes,  
and understand with their heart, and turn,  
and I would heal them.”

<sup>41</sup>Isaiah said these things because he saw his glory and spoke of him. <sup>42</sup>Nevertheless, many even of the authorities believed in him, but for fear of the Pharisees they did not confess it, so that they would not be put out of the synagogue; <sup>43</sup>for they loved the glory that comes from man more than the glory that comes from God.

**L** O Lord, have mercy on us.

**C Thanks be to God.**

*Silence for reflecting on Scripture*

**L** In many and various ways, God spoke to His people of old by the prophets.

**C But now in these last days, He has spoken to us by His Son.**

## Responsory

LSB 255

**L** Into Your hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit.

**C Into Your hands I commend my spirit.**

**L** You have redeemed me, O Lord, God of truth.

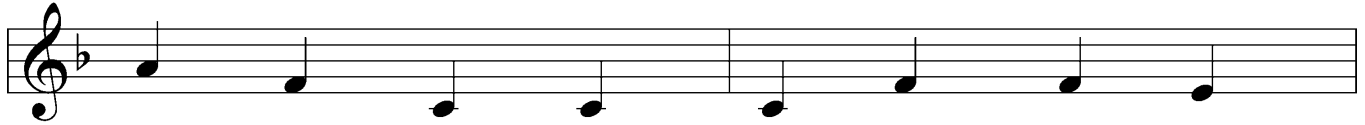
**C Into Your hands I commend my spirit.**

**L** Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

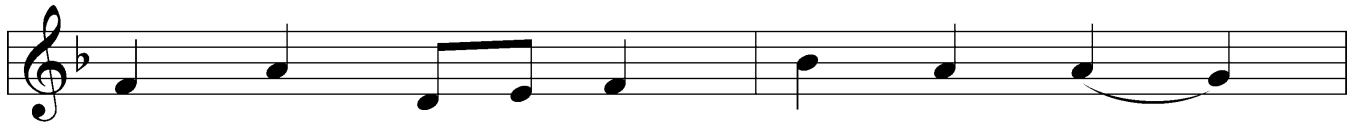
**C Into Your hands I commend my spirit.**

# Cross of Jesus, Cross of Sorrow

LSB #428



1 Cross of Je - sus, cross of sor - row,  
 2 Here the King of all the a - ges,  
 3 O mys - te - rious con - de - scend - ing!  
 4 Cross of Je - sus, cross of sor - row,



Where the blood of Christ was shed,  
 Throned in light ere worlds could be,  
 O a - ban - don - ment sub - lime!  
 Where the blood of Christ was shed,



Per - fect man on thee did suf - fer,  
 Robed in mor - tal flesh is dy - ing,  
 Ver - y God Him - self is bear - ing  
 Per - fect man on thee did suf - fer,



Per - fect God on thee has bled!  
 Cru - ci - fied by sin for me.  
 All the suf - fer - ings of time!  
 Per - fect God on thee has bled!

Tune and text: Public domain

## Reflection

It's always a great time to trust in Jesus.

But here in John 12 we read about Jesus' last public interaction with people who were not His followers. After this passage, Jesus celebrates the Passover privately with His disciples, then He takes them to the garden where He is arrested before being tried, beaten, and crucified. Jesus saw it coming. He anticipated that swift-coming turn of events "when I am lifted up from the earth" (v. 32) to restore all people, corrupted with sin as we are, to being well connected with God. Jesus, who had done so many signs in their sight, proclaims it for these unbelievers one last time before He goes off to His death:

"The light is among you for a little while longer. Walk while you have the light, lest the darkness overtake you" (v. 35).

It's always a great time to trust in Jesus. He is the Light who dispels the darkness that had overtaken our world. That moment would have been a particularly perfect time to listen and to believe, while Jesus stood before them telling what to anticipate. But by stubbornly refusing to trust in Him, these non-disciples were themselves being overtaken by the darkness. And "the one who walks in darkness does not know where he is going" as he goes to His own destruction. "While you have the light", Jesus the Light of the world pleaded with them, "believe in the light, that you may become sons of light" (v. 36).

From here, the Light of the world journeyed into the shadow of death, and He knew exactly where He was going. There in the cross' deathly shadow, hard-hearted men stretched Him out and lifted Him up from the earth to die a shameful death. Abandoned by those He came to save, abandoned by the Father who sent Him, the Light of the world at the cross was left alone to die in darkness. He allowed Himself to be overtaken by the darkness, but it was precisely in being so overtaken that He dispelled the darkness. Lifted up at the cross and drawing His last breath, the Light shone to drive out all darkness and to draw all people to Himself. All who trust in Him walk in His light and so have become sons and daughters of light.

No matter what situation you will face, it's always a great time to trust in Jesus. Therefore, Jesus has shone His light into your life. He has overpowered the darkness of death and disobedience from His cross. He has spoken His Word into your life, shone His light into your soul, and called you to believe in Him. Now is a great time to trust in Jesus, and it always will be.

*Consider/Discuss: What obstacles to trusting in Jesus might you and others face in our present situation? And what does Jesus use to strengthen our faith in Him?*

## **Offering**

*You can always give online at [ZionLutheranNH.org](http://ZionLutheranNH.org) or by mailing it to:*

*Zion Lutheran Church*

*3644 Bolivar Ave.*

*North Highlands, CA 95660*

*If you would like to give a little extra for the Lenten Special Offering in support of Alternatives Pregnancy Center, you are welcome to indicate as much, for example by giving that amount in the "Other" section of the online giving page.*

*Stand*

## **Prayer**

**L** Hear my prayer, O Lord;

**C** **listen to my cry.**

**L** Keep me as the apple of Your eye;

**C** **hide me in the shadow of Your wings.**

**L** In righteousness I shall see You;

**C** **when I awake, Your presence will give me joy.**

**L** Let us pray for those not yet of the Kingdom, that God would make us bold to speak the faith to them and that hearing, they might believe:

**L** Everlasting Father, it is Your will that all should be saved and come to the knowledge of Your Son by faith. Give to Your Word success and deliver from error all those who live in darkness, that they may walk in the light of the Lord Jesus. Lord, in Your mercy,

**C** **Hear our prayer.**

**L** O mighty Lord, You have established the governing authorities in this and every place and hold them accountable. Guide our president; the members of Congress; the governor of this state; and all who make, administer, and judge our laws, that they would serve nobly and wisely, pursuing the path of justice and protecting those least able to protect themselves. Lord, in Your mercy,

**C** **Hear our prayer.**

*You may lift up additional prayers together*

**L** Blessed Lord, You give food to the hungry and provide for all our needs in this mortal life. Grant to us a grateful heart and

knowledge to use wisely and well all that You have entrusted to our care; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

**C Amen.**

## **Lord's Prayer**

**C 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.**

## **Sending with God's Blessing**

*LSB 212*

**A** Let us bless the Lord.

**C Thanks be to God.**

**L** The almighty and merciful Lord, the Father, the ✠ Son, and the Holy Spirit, bless us and keep us.

**C Amen.**

### **Acknowledgments**

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