

MIDWEEK OF LENT 5

PONTIUS PILATE

AS WE GATHER

Pontius Pilate, a witness to Christ, consented to order Jesus' execution. Pilate may wash his hands and proclaim his own innocence in the death of Jesus, but Pilate is guilty. Pilate is caught between a rock and a hard place. Instead of doing what is right, Pilate has Jesus' flesh ripped, shredded, dressed in purple, and crowned with thorns. His hard heart is complicit in the death of Christ. While it may be an uncomfortable thought, Pilate's failures make us examine our own complicity in the evil of others. How have we deceived ourselves in proclaiming innocence? How have we been pressured into allowing evil to occur? Thanks be to God that our journey to the cross shows us Jesus' forgiveness.

HYMN

“Lord, Whose Love through Humble Service” (*LSB* 848)

INVOCATION

- P** In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son
and of the Holy Spirit.
- C** Amen.

OPENING SENTENCES

- P** As we continue our Lenten journey, we meet the Roman governor, Pontius Pilate.
- C** **Pilate condemns Jesus to death by crucifixion.**
- P** Pilate tries to release Jesus,
- C** **but the crowds demand Barabbas.**
- P** Pilate washes his hands of Jesus' blood,
- C** **but Pilate is still guilty. Pilate caves to blackmail.**
- P** Pilate cares more about keeping his position
- C** **than he does about executing an innocent man.**

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

- P** Pilate can proclaim his own innocence and justify himself all he wants. He is still guilty. He is still a selfish sinner with a hardened heart who is complicit in the death of not only an innocent man, but of the sinless Son of God. We might be tempted to point a finger at Pilate to justify ourselves, but truth be told, we, too, struggle with hardened hearts. Still, our heavenly Father invites us to come to Him with repentant hearts and seek His forgiveness. Together we confess:
- C** **Heavenly Father, we have sinned against You in what we have done and in all that we have failed to do. We have not loved You with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We justly deserve Your present and eternal**

punishment. We do not seek to wash our hands of these sins, Lord, but we seek Your forgiveness. We seek Your washing and renewal through the blood of Christ.

P Almighty God, in His grace and mercy, has given His only Son, Jesus, to die and rise for our forgiveness and our salvation. As a called and ordained servant of our crucified and risen Lord, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the † Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen. We are washed clean and forgiven by the blood of the Lamb, Jesus Christ!

PSALM

P Vindicate me, O LORD,
for I have walked in my integrity,
and I have trusted in the LORD without
wavering.

**C Prove me, O LORD, and try me;
test my heart and my mind.**

P For Your steadfast love is before my eyes,
and I walk in Your faithfulness.

**C I do not sit with men of falsehood,
nor do I consort with hypocrites.**

P I hate the assembly of evildoers,
and I will not sit with the wicked.

**C I wash my hands in innocence
and go around Your altar, O LORD,**

P proclaiming thanksgiving aloud,
and telling all Your wondrous deeds.

- C** O LORD, I love the habitation of Your house
and the place where Your glory dwells.
- P** Do not sweep my soul away with sinners,
nor my life with bloodthirsty men,
- C** in whose hands are evil devices,
and whose right hands are full of bribes.
- P** But as for me, I shall walk in my integrity;
redeem me, and be gracious to me.
- C** My foot stands on level ground;
in the great assembly I will bless the LORD.

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son and
to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will
be forever. Amen.**

HYMN

“When I Behold Jesus Christ” (*LSB* 542)

OLD TESTAMENT READING

- P** The Old Testament Reading is from Ezekiel,
the eleventh chapter.

¹⁷“Therefore say, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD: I will gather you from the peoples and assemble you out of the countries where you have been scattered, and I will give you the land of Israel.’ ¹⁸And when they come there, they will remove from it all its detestable things and all its

abominations. ¹⁹And I will give them one heart, and a new spirit I will put within them. I will remove the heart of stone from their flesh and give them a heart of flesh, ²⁰that they may walk in My statutes and keep My rules and obey them. And they shall be My people, and I will be their God. ²¹But as for those whose heart goes after their detestable things and their abominations, I will bring their deeds upon their own heads, declares the Lord GOD.”

P O Lord, have mercy on us.

C Thanks be to God.

EPISTLE

P The Epistle is from Second Corinthians, the fourth chapter.

¹Therefore, having this ministry by the mercy of God, we do not lose heart. ²But we have renounced disgraceful, underhanded ways. We refuse to practice cunning or to tamper with God’s word, but by the open statement of the truth we would commend ourselves to everyone’s conscience in the sight of God. ³And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled only to those who are perishing. ⁴In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of

Christ, who is the image of God. ⁵For what we proclaim is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, with ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. ⁶For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

P O Lord, have mercy on us.

C Thanks be to God.

HOLY GOSPEL

P The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the nineteenth chapter.

C Glory to You, O Lord.

¹Then Pilate took Jesus and flogged Him. ²And the soldiers twisted together a crown of thorns and put it on His head and arrayed Him in a purple robe. ³They came up to Him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" and struck Him with their hands. ⁴Pilate went out again and said to them, "See, I am bringing Him out to you that you may know that I find no guilt in Him." ⁵So Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, "Behold the man!" ⁶When the chief priests and the officers saw Him, they cried out, "Crucify Him, crucify Him!" Pilate said to them, "Take Him yourselves and

crucify Him, for I find no guilt in Him.”

⁷The Jews answered him, “We have a law, and according to that law He ought to die because He has made Himself the Son of God.” ⁸When Pilate heard this statement, he was even more afraid. ⁹He entered his headquarters again and said to Jesus, “Where are You from?” But Jesus gave him no answer. ¹⁰So Pilate said to Him, “You will not speak to me? Do You not know that I have authority to release You and authority to crucify You?” ¹¹Jesus answered him, “You would have no authority over Me at all unless it had been given you from above. Therefore he who delivered Me over to you has the greater sin.”

¹²From then on Pilate sought to release Him, but the Jews cried out, “If you release this man, you are not Caesar’s friend. Everyone who makes himself a king opposes Caesar.” ¹³So when Pilate heard these words, he brought Jesus out and sat down on the judgment seat at a place called The Stone Pavement, and in Aramaic Gabbatha. ¹⁴Now it was the day of Preparation of the Passover. It was about the sixth hour. He said to the Jews, “Behold your King!” ¹⁵They cried out, “Away with Him, away with Him, crucify Him!” Pilate said to them, “Shall I crucify your King?” The chief priests answered,

“We have no king but Caesar.” ¹⁶So he delivered Him over to them to be crucified.

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to You, O Christ.

HYMN

“Lord Jesus Think on Me” (*LSB* 610)

SERMON

OFFERING

HYMN

“Cross of Jesus, Cross of Sorrow” (*LSB* 428)

KYRIE

P Lord, have mercy.

C Christ, have mercy.

P Lord, have mercy.

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.**

PRAYERS

P Let us pray for the whole people of God in Christ Jesus and for all people according to their needs.

For all who seek the truth, that they might find the truth in Jesus, let us pray to the Lord.

C **Lord, have mercy.**

P For all whose hearts are hardened by sin, that their hearts might be softened and their desires turned to others, let us pray to the Lord.

C **Lord, have mercy.**

P For our president, vice president, and governor, that they might lead our nation and state, seeking truth, liberty, and justice, let us pray to the Lord.

C **Lord, have mercy.**

P For all Senators and members of the House of Representatives, that they may represent their constituencies well, seeking not their own enhancement and advancement, but the good of all people, let us pray to the Lord.

C **Lord, have mercy.**

P For the justices of the Supreme Court and all judges throughout the nation, that the Holy Spirit would guide them to judge with wisdom and clarity, let us pray to the Lord.

C **Lord, have mercy.**

P For those who have been deceived, whether by their own foolishness or by others, that God might deliver them from their enslavement to lies, let us pray to the Lord.

C **Lord, have mercy.**

P For all those who are sick, injured, or recovering from surgery, [*especially . . .*], that God might provide healing in His time and in His way, let us pray to the Lord.

C **Lord, have mercy.**

P For all those who lost loved ones recently, [*especially . . .*], that they might be comforted by the power and hope of resurrection and eternal life, let us pray to the Lord.

C **Lord, have mercy.**

P O God, from whom come all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works, give to us, Your servants, that peace which the world cannot give, that our hearts may be set to obey Your commandments and also that we, being defended from the fear of our enemies, may live in peace and quietness; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives

and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one
God, now and forever.

C Amen.

BENEDICAMUS

P Let us bless the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

BENEDICTION

P The almighty and merciful Lord, the Father,
the ✠ Son, and the Holy Spirit, bless and
preserve you.

C Amen.

HYMN

“Abide With Me” (*LSB* 878 vs. 1,6)