

RETURN
to the
LORD



MIDWEEK OF LENT 3

RETURN FROM FALSE WITNESS

One of the most straightforward sayings in the Book of Proverbs states, "A faithful witness does not lie, but a false witness breathes out lies" (Proverbs 14:5). A word of false witness can direct a series of actions in a deviant and destructive path. We find that negative action happening in the Passion account of our Lord, where we see Jesus standing before Caiaphas with a series of false witnesses seeking to defame the holy, innocent Lamb of God with untruths and lies. False witness can be a deadly weapon. Whenever we ask, as did the psalmist, "O Lord, open my lips" (Psalm 51:15), may what we then express always be true witness set in speech that declares the praises of God.

PRELUDE

No Shade So Rare

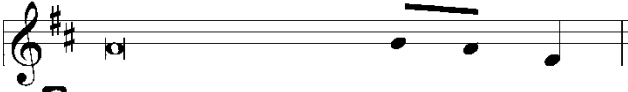
Handel

Stand

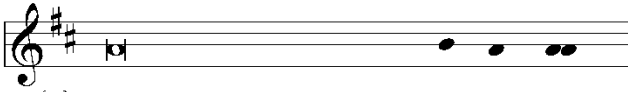
OPENING VERSICLES



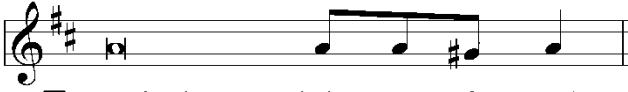
L O Lord, o - pen my lips,



C and my mouth will de - clare Your praise.



L Make haste, O God, to de - liv - er me;



C make haste to help me, O Lord.



C Glo - ry be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spir - it;



as it was in the be - gin - ning, is now, and will be for - ev - er. A - men.



Lent: Praise to You, O Christ, Lamb of our sal - va - tion.

✠ PSALMODY ✠

PSALM

Psalm 27:11–14



- P** ¹¹ Teach me Your way, | O LORD,*
and lead me on a level path
because of my | enemies.
- C** ¹² **Give me not up to the will of my adver- | saries;*
for false witnesses have risen against me,
and they breathe out | violence.**
- P** ¹³ I believe that I shall look upon the goodness | of the
LORD*
in the land of the | living!
- C** ¹⁴ **Wait | for the LORD;*
be strong, and let your heart take courage;
wait | for the LORD!**
- 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.**

Sit

✠ READINGS ✠

FIRST READING

Leviticus 24:13–16

P A reading from Leviticus, the twenty-fourth chapter.

¹³ Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ¹⁴ “Bring out of the camp the one who cursed, and let all who heard him lay their hands on his head, and let all the congregation stone him. ¹⁵ And speak to the people of Israel, saying, Whoever curses his God shall bear his sin. ¹⁶ Whoever blasphemes the name of the LORD shall surely be put to death. All the congregation shall stone him. The sojourner as well as the native, when he blasphemes the Name, shall be put to death.”

P O Lord, have mercy on us.

G **Thanks be to God.**

ANTHEM

Meditation No. 1

arr. Delancy

SECOND READING

Acts 22:12–16

P A reading from Acts, the twenty-second chapter.

¹² And one Ananias, a devout man according to the law, well-spoken of by all the Jews who lived there, ¹³ came to me, and standing by me said to me, “Brother Saul, receive your sight.” And at that very hour I received my sight and saw him. ¹⁴ And he said, “The God of our fathers appointed you to know His will, to see the Righteous One and to hear a voice from His mouth; ¹⁵ for you will be a witness for Him to everyone of what you have seen and heard. ¹⁶ And now why do you wait? Rise and be baptized and wash away your sins, calling on His name.”

P O Lord, have mercy on us.

G **Thanks be to God.**

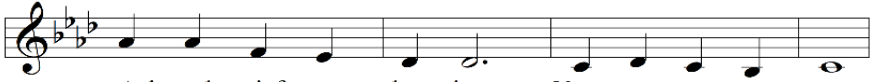
SERIES HYMN

"Break Your Hearts"

Lisa M. Clark/ Jonathan Kohrs



1 Break your hearts with mourn - ing And your pride in two,
2 See your Sav - ior dy - ing, Hung up - on the tree.
3 Gath - er all in num - ber From both far and near;



Ash and grief a - dorn - ing Your re - pen - tance true.
It is vain de - ny - ing What is plain to see:
E - ven those in slum - ber Wait for trum - pets clear.



With your tears and fast - ing, From your God dis - cern
While His heart is break - ing, Still your God will earn
When the Lord grants bless - ing, Bro - ken hearts will learn



His ways ev - er - last - ing: To your Lord re - turn.
Free - dom in the mak - ing. To your Lord re - turn.
Joy be - yond ex - press - ing; To your Lord re - turn.

Stand

HOLY GOSPEL

Matthew 26:57–68

P A reading from St. Matthew, the twenty-sixth chapter.

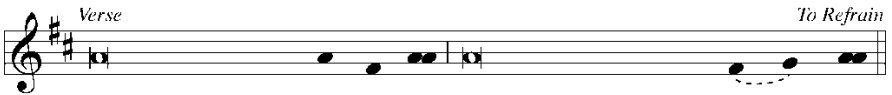
⁵⁷ Then those who had seized Jesus led Him to Caiaphas the high priest, where the scribes and the elders had gathered. ⁵⁸ And Peter was following Him at a distance, as far as the courtyard of the high priest, and going inside he sat with the guards to see the end. ⁵⁹ Now the chief priests and the whole Council were seeking false testimony against Jesus that they might put Him to death, ⁶⁰ but they found none, though many false witnesses came forward. At last two came forward ⁶¹ and said, "This man said, 'I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to rebuild it in three days.'" ⁶² And the high priest stood up and said, "Have You

no answer to make? What is it that these men testify against You?" ⁶³ But Jesus remained silent. And the high priest said to Him, "I adjure You by the living God, tell us if You are the Christ, the Son of God." ⁶⁴ Jesus said to him, "You have said so. But I tell you, from now on you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power and coming on the clouds of heaven." ⁶⁵ Then the high priest tore his robes and said, "He has uttered blasphemy. What further witnesses do we need? You have now heard His blasphemy. ⁶⁶ What is your judgment?" They answered, "He deserves death." ⁶⁷ Then they spit in His face and struck Him. And some slapped Him, ⁶⁸ saying, "Prophecy to us, You Christ! Who is it that struck You?"

P O Lord, have mercy on us.

C **Thanks be to God.**

LENT RESPONSORY



- L** 1 Deliver me, O Lord, my God, for You are
the God of my sal - va - tion.
2 In You, O Lord, do I put my trust, leave me not, O Lord, my God.
3 Deliver me, O Lord, my God, for You are
the God of my sal - va - tion.



- C** Rescue me from my en - e - mies, protect me
from those who rise a - gainst me.

Sit

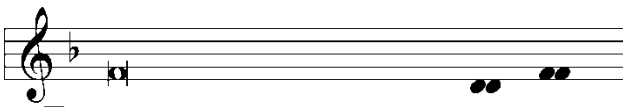
SERMON

Return from False Witness
Vicar Luke Elowsky

✠ CANTICLE ✠

Stand

ANTIPHON



L Let my prayer rise before You as in - cense,



C and the lifting up of my hands as the eve - ning sac - ri - fice.

MAGNIFICAT

LSB 933



1 My soul re - joic - es, My spir - it voic - es— Sing the
2 His arm now bar - ing, His strength de - clar - ing— Sing the



great - ness of the Lord! For God my Sav - ior Has shown me
great - ness of the Lord! The proud He scat - ters, Their rule He



fa - vor— Sing the great - ness of the Lord! With praise and
shat - ters— Sing the great - ness of the Lord! Op - pres - sion



bles - sing, Join in con - fess - ing God, who is sole - ly Might - y and
halt - ed; The meek ex - alt - ed. Full are the hun - gry; Emp - ty, the



ho - ly— O sing the great - ness of God the Lord! His mer - cy
wealth - y— O sing the great - ness of God the Lord! Here is the



sure - ly Shall rest se - cure - ly On all who fear Him,
to - ken All that was spo - ken To A - br'ham's off - spring



Love and re - vere Him— O sing the great - ness of God the Lord!
God is ful - fill - ing— O sing the great - ness of God the Lord!

OFFERING

✠ PRAYER ✠

KYRIE



C Lord, have mer-cy; Christ, have mer-cy; Lord, have mer-cy.

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.

COLLECTS



L O Lord, hear my prayer.



C And let my cry come to You.

COLLECT OF THE DAY

P Lord God, in You we find the truth about our world and our lives. Spare us from the ravages of false witness. And when we fall, lift us up again and lead us to Jesus, the Way, the Truth, and the Life; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

COLLECT FOR LENT

P Faithful God, through the ancient prophets You call us to return to You with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength. Let these Lenten days be a time when, remembering how You relentlessly return to us in mercy, we return also to You; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

C Amen.

COLLECT AT EVENING

P Loving God, the light of Your love for us never dims. As yet another day comes to a close and darkness falls, help us by Your Holy Spirit to rest in the light of Your constant presence; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

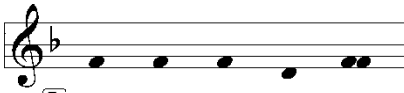
C Amen.

COLLECT FOR PEACE

P Ever-present God, in the midst of this world fractured by sin, You bring wholeness and peace. Where our lives are broken, make us whole again. And where we are experiencing turmoil, bring us calm. For our hope is in You; 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



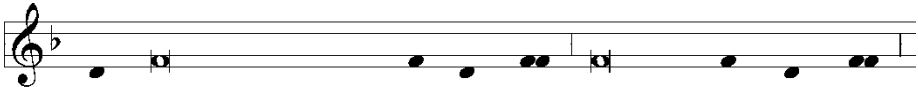
L Let us bless the Lord.



C Thanks be to God.

BENEDICTION

Benediction



P The grace of our Lord † Je - sus Christ and the love of God



and the communion of the Holy Spir - it be with you all.



C A - men.

CLOSING HYMN

Christ, the Life of All the Living

LSB 420:1, 5-7

- 1. Christ, the life of all the living,
Christ, the death of death, our foe,
Who, Thyself for me once giving
To the darkest depths of woe:
Through Thy suff'rings, death, and merit
I eternal life inherit.
Thousand, thousand thanks shall be,
Dearest Jesus, unto Thee.**

- 5. Thou hast suffered men to bruise Thee,
That from pain I might be free;
Falsely did Thy foes accuse Thee:
Thence I gain security;
Comfortless Thy soul did languish
Me to comfort in my anguish.
Thousand, thousand thanks shall be,
Dearest Jesus, unto Thee.**

- 6. Thou hast suffered great affliction
And hast borne it patiently,
Even death by crucifixion,
Fully to atone for me;
Thou didst choose to be tormented
That my doom should be prevented.
Thousand, thousand thanks shall be,
Dearest Jesus, unto Thee.**

7. **Then, for all that wrought my pardon,
 For Thy sorrows deep and sore,
 For Thine anguish in the Garden,
 I will thank Thee evermore,
 Thank Thee for Thy groaning, sighing,
 For Thy bleeding and Thy dying,
 For that last triumphant cry,
 And shall praise Thee, Lord, on high.**

POSTLUDE

Postlude in G Minor

Johann Krieger

Acknowledgments

Vespers from Lutheran Service Book

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Serving the Lord and Us This Evening:

Preaching.....Vicar Luke Elowsky
 Liturgist.....Pastor Joel Schultz
 Organist.....Deb Miller
 Instrumentalists.....Sam Olson, viola; Riley Olson, Flute,
Lauran Delancy, piano
 Acolytes.....John & Peter Yarnell

Join us for the remaining Midweek Lent Services:

Wednesday of Lent 4: “Return from Denial”

Wednesday of Lent 5: “Return to the Kingdom of God”

Holy (Maundy) Thursday: “Return to the Table”

Good Friday: “Return to Truth”

Easter Sunday: “Return and See”