

HAPPENINGS AROUND GRACE THIS WEEK

March 24, 2024—March 31, 2024

PALM SUNDAY 3/24/23

8:00AM Spoken Worship

10:15AM Worship

4:00PM Alcoholics Anonymous

Catechism Class

WILL NOT MEET TODAY

MONDAY 3/25/24

9:00AM-11:30AM Food Pantry

7:00PM Alcoholics Anonymous

TUESDAY 3/26/24

9:00AM-11:30AM Food Pantry

12:30 PM 100th Anniversary

Committee Meeting

6:30PM Narcotics Anonymous

7:00PM Alcoholics Anonymous

WEDNESDAY 3/27/24

9:00AM-11:30AM Food Pantry

11:30AM Bayside Duplicate Bridge

7:00PM Narcotics Anonymous

MAUNDY THURSDAY 3/28/24

9:00AM-11:30AM Food Pantry

12:00PM Worship with

Communion

Evening Worship:

5:45PM Stripping of Altar &

Communion

6:15PM Dinner & Movie

“Babette’s Feast”

7:00PM Al-Anon

GOOD FRIDAY 3/29/24

10:30AM Grace Stitchers

12:00PM Worship

6:30PM Worship

7:30PM Alcoholics Anonymous

SATURDAY 3/30/24

No events

EASTER SUNDAY 3/31/24

8:00AM Spoken Worship Service

10:15AM Traditional Worship

4:00PM Alcoholics Anonymous

Happy Easter!
Blessings to all!

PALM SUNDAY

MARCH 24, 2024



GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH

11 East Dawes Avenue, Somers Point, NJ 08244

Church Office: 609-927-3082 **Food Pantry:** 609-927-9982

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Rev. Althea Albright, Pastor † Scott J. Breiner, Music Director

Corinne Rhodes, Administrative Assistant

Alison Toth, Social Media Consultant

We welcome you to worship here at Grace!

*Note that all text written in **bold** is for congregation participation.*

Our hymn songs are found in the Evangelical Lutheran Worship red hymnal found in the pews.

SHORE DINER

Present this bulletin on a Sunday and Shore Diner will donate 20% to Grace Lutheran Church. Present this on any other day, and we will donate 10%.

Shore Diner
6710 Tilton Road
Egg Harbor Township, NJ 08234
609-641-3669

Thank you for joining with us as we worship our Lord together!

Introduction

This week, the center of the church's year, is one of striking contrasts: Jesus rides into Jerusalem surrounded by shouts of glory, only to be left alone to die on the cross, abandoned by even his closest friends. Mark's gospel presents Jesus in his complete human vulnerability: agitated, grieved, scared, forsaken. Though we lament Christ's suffering and all human suffering, we also expect God's salvation: in the wine and bread, Jesus promises that his death will mark a new covenant with all people. We enter this holy week thirsty for the completion of God's astonishing work.

WELCOME

Rev. Althea Albright

PRELUDE

The Palms (congregation) by Jean-Baptiste Faure
Please stand as you are able.

CALL TO WORSHIP

We follow Jesus into Jerusalem and enter this Holy Week. This is the day that the Lord has made; **Let us rejoice and be glad in it.**

Hosanna to the Son of David! Hosanna to the humble King! This is the day that the Lord has made; **Let us rejoice and be glad in it.**

With the Palm branches and shouts of Hosanna, we worship You, O God of Grace. This is the day that the Lord has made; **Let us rejoice and be glad in it.**

Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest heaven! This is the day that the Lord has made; **Let us rejoice and be glad in it.**

Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord! **Hosanna in the Highest!!**

PROCESSIONAL GOSPEL

Mark 11: 1-11

The Holy Gospel according to Mark, the eleventh chapter. **Glory to you, O**



Maundy Thursday, March 28, 2024

12:00PM (noon) Worship with Holy Communion
5:45PM Stripping of the Altar & Communion (Sanctuary)
6:15PM Dinner & Movie "Babette's Feast" (Fellowship Hall)

Good Friday, March 29, 2024

12:00PM (noon) Worship Service
6:30PM Worship Service

Easter Sunday, March 31, 2024

8:00AM and 10:15AM Celebration Worship Service with Holy Communion
(No Adult Forum Sunday School this day at 8:45AM.)

The Church Office will be CLOSED on March 28-April 1, 2024
in observance of Good Friday & Easter

Pastor Althea will be on Easter vacation April 1-2, 2024.
Please call her cell phone directly with any
pastoral emergencies or hospitalizations.



WELCOME GUESTS!

If you are a visitor please fill out a VISITOR CARD in the pews if you are new to our church. Pastor Althea would love to meet you and get in touch with you.

Charts to sponsor flowers and other items are now back up on the bulletin board downstairs across from the elevator, by popular demand. The charts will not be in the narthex. If you are unable to get to the bulletin board, you are always welcome to call the church office and Corinne will sign you up for the date you wish to be a sponsor.

STRONGER TOGETHER Grief Support Group

Groups will continue to meet every other week on **Mondays at 7:00 PM** and **Thursdays, at 2:00 PM**. Anyone is welcome to attend one or both groups as they fit your schedule. Call the church office if you need to check dates or have any questions.



Mark 11: 1-11

Jesus enters Jerusalem

¹When they were approaching Jerusalem, at Bethphage and Bethany, near the Mount of Olives, [Jesus] sent two of his disciples ²and said to them, “Go into the village ahead of you, and immediately as you enter it, you will find tied there a colt that has never been ridden; untie it and bring it. ³If anyone says to you, ‘Why are you doing this?’ just say this, ‘The Lord needs it and will send it back here immediately.’” ⁴They went away and found a colt tied near a door, outside in the street. As they were untying it, ⁵some of the bystanders said to them, “What are you doing, untying the colt?” ⁶They told them what Jesus had said; and they allowed them to take it. ⁷Then they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks on it; and he sat on it. ⁸Many people spread their cloaks on the road, and others spread leafy branches that they had cut in the fields. ⁹Then those who went ahead and those who followed were shouting,

“Hosanna!

Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!

¹⁰Blessed is the coming kingdom of our ancestor David!

Hosanna in the highest heaven!”

¹¹Then he entered Jerusalem and went into the temple; and when he had looked around at everything, as it was already late, he went out to Bethany with the twelve. This is the Gospel of our Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

BLESSING OF THE PALMS

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Let us pray. **We praise you, O God, for redeeming the world through our Savior Jesus Christ. Today he entered into the Holy city in triumph and was proclaimed Messiah and King by those who spread garments and branches along his way. Bless the branches and those who carry them.**

Grant us grace to follow our Lord in the way of the cross, so that, joined to his death and resurrection, we enter into life with you; through the same Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

OPENING HYMN

All Glory, Laud, and Honor

CH #300

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Everlasting God, in your endless love for the human race you sent our Lord Jesus Christ to take on our nature and to suffer death on the cross. In your mercy enable us to share in his obedience to your will and in the glorious victory of his resurrection, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Please be seated

WORD

FIRST READING: Isaiah 50:4-9a

The servant of the LORD submits to suffering

The Lord God has given me the tongue of a teacher, that I may know how to sustain the weary with a word. Morning by morning he wakens—wakens my ear to listen as those who are taught.

The Lord God has opened my ear, and I was not rebellious, I did not turn backward.

I gave my back to those who struck me, and my cheeks to those who pulled out the beard; I did not hide my face from insult and spitting.

The Lord God helps me; therefore I have not been disgraced; therefore I have set my face like flint, and I know that I shall not be put to shame; he who vindicates me is near.

Who will contend with me? Let us stand up together.

Who are my adversaries? Let them confront me.

It is the Lord God who helps me; who will declare me guilty?

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM: 31:9-16



⁹Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I | am in trouble; my eye is consumed with sorrow, and also my throat | and my belly.

As we enter into the Holy Week of the Passion of our Lord, let us remember the sacrifice and suffering of Jesus on the cross.

May God fill you with all joy and peace in believing in the power of the cross, so that you may find hope and forgiveness in God's great love.

Amen.

SENDING HYMN

Lamb of God

CH #302

ANNOUNCEMENTS

DISMISSAL Go in peace. Serve in love. **Thanks be to God!**

May the peace of the Lord be with you always! We are glad for your presence today. We hope you come again soon!

We thank all those serving in worship today:

Worship Assistant: Meg La Spina

Many thanks to all who helped to read The Passion Narrative!



for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

For as often as we eat of this bread and drink from this cup, we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes again.

To you, O God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, be all honor and glory in your holy church, now and forever. **Amen.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER *(sung)*

Celebration Hymnal p.631

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.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

COMMUNION HYMN

Lamb of God

White Booklet page 4

DISTRIBUTION OF COMMUNION

EVERYONE IS INVITED to come forward at the direction of the ushers. Pastor and worship assistants will distribute elements as everyone comes forward. Children are invited to come forward for a blessing from the pastor.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Embodied God, at your table, we have tasted the goodness of Jesus. With the eyes of our hearts open to your promise, empower us to hear the needs of our neighbors and touch the world with your love. Amen.

SENDING

Please stand as you are able.

SENDING BLESSING

Christ knows our pain. **Christ suffered as we suffer.**

Christ knows our grief. **His family and friends lose him on the cross.**

Christ knows our need for redemption. **He forgives us all as he dies and rises for our salvation.**

¹⁰**For my life is wasted with grief, and my | years with sighing; /my strength fails me because of affliction, and my bones | are consumed.**

¹¹I am the scorn of all my enemies, a disgrace to my neighbors, a dismay to | my acquaintances; when they see me in the street | they avoid me.

¹²**Like the dead I am forgotten, | out of mind; I am as useless as a | broken pot.**

¹³For I have heard the whispering of the crowd; fear is | all around; they put their heads together against me; they plot to | take my life.

¹⁴**But as for me, I have trusted in | you, O Lord. I have said, "You | are my God.**

¹⁵My times are | in your hand; rescue me from the hand of my enemies, and from those who | persecute me.

¹⁶**Let your face shine up- | on your servant; save me in your | stead-fast love."**

SECOND READING: Philippians 2:5-11

Christ did not act to attain status and glory but was obedient to God even to the point of death. Following Christ's example, we do not seek personal status or glory but care for others as God cared for us with Christ's death.

⁵Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus,⁶who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited,⁷but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form,⁸he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death—even death on a cross.

⁹Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name,¹⁰so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth,¹¹and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Please stand as you are able.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

White Booklet page 3

Please be seated.

THE PASSION NARRATIVE ACCORDING TO MARK 14:1-15:47

The passion story in Mark's gospel presents Jesus as one who dies abandoned by all. He shows himself to be the true Son of God by giving his life for those who have forsaken him.

Narrator: It was two days before the Passover and the Festival of Unleavened Bread. The chief priests and the scribes were looking for a way to arrest Jesus by stealth and kill him, for they said, "Not during the festival, or there may be a riot among the people." Then Judas Iscariot, who was one of the twelve, went to the chief priests in order to betray him to them.

When they heard it, they were greatly pleased and promised to give him money. So he began to look for an opportunity to betray him.

On the first day of Unleavened Bread, when the Passover lamb is sacrificed, his disciples said to Jesus,

Disciples: Where do you want us to go and make the preparations for you to eat the Passover?

Narrator: Jesus sent two of his disciples, saying to them,

Jesus: Go into the city, and a man carrying a jar of water will meet you; follow him, and wherever he enters, say to the owner of the house, 'The Teacher asks: Where is my guest room where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?' He will show you a large room upstairs, furnished and ready. Make preparations for us there.

Narrator: The disciples set out and went to the city and found everything as he had told them, and they prepared the Passover meal. When it was evening, he came with the twelve. And when they had taken their places and were eating, Jesus said,

Jesus: Truly I tell you, one of you will betray me, one who is eating with me.

Narrator: They began to be distressed and to say to him one after another,

Disciples: Surely, not I?"

Narrator: Jesus said to them,

Jesus: It is one of the twelve, one who is dipping bread into the bowl with

Reformation Lutheran Churches as they prepare for their Affirmation of Baptism (*especially Alex and Xavier*). Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

A: Almighty One, our times are in your hand. Be with us from day to day. Sustain us in discipleship throughout our lives and receive us into everlasting life. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

P: Accompany us on our journey, God of grace, and receive the prayers of our hearts, through Jesus Christ, our Savior. **Amen.**

Please be seated.

HOLY COMMUNION

GREAT THANKSGIVING

White Booklet page 3

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ, whose suffering and death gave salvation to all.

You gather your people around the tree of the cross, transforming death into life. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY

White Booklet page 4

You are indeed holy, almighty and merciful God. You are most holy, and great is the majesty of your glory. You so loved the world that you gave your only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but have eternal life.

We give you thanks for his coming into the world to fulfill for us your holy will and to accomplish all things for our salvation.

On the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and

Please be seated.

OFFERING

PRESENTATION OF GIFTS *Create in me a Clean Heart* WOV page 732

OFFERTORY *Ride On, Ride On in Majesty!* By Gilbert M. Martin

OFFERING PRAYER

God of good gifts, **receive these and all our offerings as we present them in faithful service for the sake of your gospel. Prepare our hearts to receive you in this meal as you pour out your very presence through Christ Jesus, the wellspring of eternal life. Amen.**

Please be seated.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

P: Trusting in God's promise to reconcile all things, let us pray for the church, the well-being of creation, and a world in need. *Brief silence.*

A: Blessed One, today the church sings glad hosannas as we enter Holy Week. Prepare us to bear witness to Christ's suffering and death endured for our sake. Gather your people around the cross and comfort us with resurrection hope. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

A: Renew your good creation and protect the balance of life on earth. Encourage the work of foresters, scientists, arborists, gardeners, and river keepers. We pray for the health of pollinating insects, songbirds, and native plants. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

A: Establish peace and justice among the nations. Hold to account any with authority to judge others. Grant that courts, legislatures, and local governments will serve with integrity and compassion. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

A: Bring hope to any who feel forsaken or forgotten. Make a way for refugees and asylum seekers. Reunite families enduring separation. We pray for any who are incarcerated, institutionalized, or in foster care, that they may know your love. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

P: Grant our pastor, worship leaders, and musicians creativity and strength in their ministries. Bless our confirmands at Grace and

me. For the Son of Man goes as it is written of him, but woe to that one by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been better for that one not to have been born.

Narrator: While they were eating, he took a loaf of bread, and after blessing it he broke it, gave it to them, and said,

Jesus: Take; this is my body.

Narrator: Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he gave it to them, and all of them drank from it. He said to them,

Jesus: This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many. Truly I tell you, I will never again drink of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God.

Narrator: When they had sung the hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives. And Jesus said to them,

Jesus: You will all fall away, for it is written, 'I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered.' But after I am raised up, I will go before you to Galilee.

Narrator: Peter said to him,

Peter: Even though all fall away, I will not.

Narrator: Jesus said to him,

Jesus: Truly I tell you, this day, this very night, before the cock crows twice, you will deny me three times.

Narrator: But he said vehemently,

Peter: Even though I must die with you, I will not deny you.

Narrator: And all of them said the same. They went to a place called Gethsemane, and Jesus said to his disciples,

Jesus: Sit here while I pray.

Narrator: He took with him Peter and James and John and began to be distressed and agitated. And he said to them,

Jesus: My soul is deeply grieved, even to death; remain here, and keep awake.

Narrator: And going a little farther, he threw himself on the ground and

prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him. He said,
Jesus: Abba, Father, for you all things are possible; remove this cup from me, yet not what I want but what you want.

Narrator: He came and found them sleeping, and he said to Peter,
Jesus: Simon, are you asleep? Could you not keep awake one hour? Keep awake and pray that you may not come into the time of trial; the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.

Narrator: And again he went away and prayed, saying the same words. And once more he came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were very heavy, and they did not know what to say to him. He came a third time and said to them,

Jesus: Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? Enough! The hour has come; the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Get up, let us be going. Look, my betrayer is at hand.

Narrator: Immediately, while he was still speaking, Judas, one of the twelve, arrived, and with him there was a crowd with swords and clubs, from the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders. Now the betrayer had given them a sign, saying, “The one I will kiss is the man; arrest him and lead him away under guard.” So when he came, Judas went up to him at once and said, “Rabbi”!

Narrator: and kissed him. Then they laid hands on him and arrested him. But one of those who stood near drew his sword and struck the slave of the high priest, cutting off his ear. Then Jesus said to them,

Jesus: Have you come out with swords and clubs to arrest me as though I were a rebel? Day after day I was with you in the temple teaching, and you did not arrest me. But let the scriptures be fulfilled.

Narrator: All of them deserted him and fled. A certain young man was following him, wearing nothing but a linen cloth. They caught hold of him, but he left the linen cloth and ran off naked. They took Jesus to the high priest, and all the chief priests, the elders, and the scribes were assembled. Peter had followed him at a distance, right into the courtyard of the high priest, and he was sitting with the guards, warming himself at the

Please stand as you are able.

HYMN OF THE DAY *Alas! And Did My Savior Bleed?*

CH #306

NICENE CREED

**We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.**

**For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary
and became truly human.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.**

**We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

Chief Priests: He saved others; he cannot save himself. Let the Messiah, the King of Israel, come down from the cross now, so that we may see and believe. Those who were crucified with him also taunted him.

Narrator: When it was noon, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. At three o'clock Jesus cried out with a loud voice,

Jesus: Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?"

Narrator: which means, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"³⁵ When some of the bystanders heard it, they said,

Crowd: Listen, he is calling for Elijah.

Narrator: And someone ran, filled a sponge with sour wine, put it on a stick, and gave it to him to drink, saying, "Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to take him down." Then Jesus gave a loud cry and breathed his last. And the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. Now when the centurion who stood facing him saw that in this way he breathed his last, he said,

Centurion: Truly this man was God's Son!

Narrator: There were also women looking on from a distance. Among them were Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the younger and of Jesus, and Salome, who followed him when he was in Galilee and ministered to him, and there were many other women who had come up with him to Jerusalem. When evening had come, and since it was the day of Preparation, that is, the day before the Sabbath, Joseph of Arimathea, a respected member of the council who was also himself waiting expectantly for the kingdom of God, went boldly to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate wondered if he were already dead, and summoning the centurion he asked him whether he had been dead for some time. When he learned from the centurion that he was dead, he granted the body to Joseph. Then Joseph bought a linen cloth and, taking down the body, wrapped it in the linen cloth and laid it in a tomb that had been hewn out of rock. He then rolled a stone against the door of the tomb. Mary Magdalene and Mary, the mother of Jesus saw where the body was laid.

This is the Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

fire. Now the chief priests and the whole council were looking for testimony against Jesus to put him to death, but they found none. For many gave false testimony against him, and their testimony did not agree. Some stood up and gave false testimony against him, saying,

Chief Priests: We heard him say, 'I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and in three days I will build another, not made with hands.'

Narrator: But even on this point their testimony did not agree. Then the high priest stood up before them and asked Jesus,

High Priest: Have you no answer? What is it that they testify against you?

Narrator: But he was silent and did not answer. Again the high priest asked him,

High Priest: Are you the Messiah, the Son of the Blessed One?" Jesus said,

Jesus: I am, and you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of the Power and coming with the clouds of heaven.

Narrator: Then the high priest tore his clothes and said,

High Priest: Why do we still need witnesses? You have heard his blasphemy! What is your decision?

Narrator: All of them condemned him as deserving death. Some began to spit on him, to blindfold him, and to strike him, saying to him,

Crowd: Prophecy!

Narrator: The guards also took him and beat him. While Peter was below in the courtyard, one of the female servants of the high priest came by. When she saw Peter warming himself, she stared at him and said,

Servant Girl: You also were with Jesus, the man from Nazareth.

Narrator: But he denied it, saying,

Peter: I do not know or understand what you are talking about.

Narrator: And he went out into the forecourt. Then the cock crowed. And the female servant, on seeing him, began again to say to the bystanders,

Servant Girl: This man is one of them.

Narrator: But again, he denied it. Then after a little while the bystanders again said to Peter,

Crowd: Certainly, you are one of them, for you are a Galilean, and you talk like one.

Narrator: But he began to curse, and he swore an oath,

Peter: I do not know this man you are talking about.

Narrator: At that moment the cock crowed for the second time. Then Peter remembered that Jesus had said to him, “Before the cock crows twice, you will deny me three times.” And he broke down and wept. As soon as it was morning, the chief priests held a consultation with the elders and scribes and the whole council. They bound Jesus, led him away, and handed him over to Pilate. Pilate asked him,

Pilate: Are you the King of the Jews?

Narrator: He answered him,

Jesus: You say so.

Narrator: Then the chief priests accused him of many things. Pilate asked him again,

Pilate: Have you no answer? See how many charges they bring against you.

Narrator: But Jesus made no further reply, so that Pilate was amazed. Now at the festival he used to release a prisoner for them, anyone for whom they asked. Now a man called Barabbas was in prison with the insurrectionists who had committed murder during the insurrection. So the crowd came and began to ask Pilate to do for them according to his custom. Then he answered them,

Pilate: Do you want me to release for you the King of the Jews?

Narrator: For he realized that it was out of jealousy that the chief priests had handed him over. But the chief priests stirred up the crowd to have him release Barabbas for them instead. Pilate spoke to them again,

Pilate: Then what do you wish me to do with the man you call the King of

the Jews?”

Narrator: They shouted back,

Crowd: Crucify him!

Narrator: Pilate asked them,

Pilate: Why, what evil has he done?

Narrator: But they shouted all the more,

Crowd: Crucify him!

Narrator: So Pilate, wishing to satisfy the crowd, released Barabbas for them, and after flogging Jesus he handed him over to be crucified. Then the soldiers led him into the courtyard of the palace (that is, the governor’s headquarters), and they called together the whole cohort. And they clothed him in a purple cloak, and after twisting some thorns into a crown they put it on him. And they began saluting him,

Soldiers: Hail, King of the Jews!

Narrator: They struck his head with a reed, spat upon him, and knelt down in homage to him. After mocking him, they stripped him of the purple cloak and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him out to crucify him. They compelled a passer-by, who was coming in from the country, to carry his cross; it was Simon of Cyrene, the father of Alexander and Rufus. Then they brought Jesus to the place called Golgotha (which means Place of a Skull). And they offered him wine mixed with myrrh, but he did not take it. And they crucified him and divided his clothes among them, casting lots to decide what each should take. It was nine o’clock in the morning when they crucified him. The inscription of the charge against him read, “The King of the Jews.” And with him they crucified two rebels, one on his right and one on his left. Those who passed by derided him, shaking their heads and saying,

Crowd: Aha! You who would destroy the temple and build it in three days, save yourself, and come down from the cross!

Narrator: In the same way the chief priests, along with the scribes, were also mocking him among themselves and saying,