

“It is finished.”

Words from the Cross

a lenten sermon series on the 7 last words of Christ



March 22, 2026, 10:30 am
5th Sunday in Lent

Welcome to worship! Led by the Holy Spirit, we glorify God, nurture the faith with each other, and witness the fullness of Christ's love in the world. Beyond the pews, we hope you will grow in faith with us on Sunday mornings and throughout the week. Our weekly announcements are e-mailed each Wednesday and posted online. Printed copies are available at the entrance.



Children are welcome in the Sanctuary throughout the service and are encouraged to visit our Worship Corner in the front of the Sanctuary for a variety of resources to help engage in worship. Childcare is available for infants through 4-year-olds in the nursery, which is located on the 1st floor of the Education Building.

Assisted listening devices are available at the Princess Anne Street side entrance. Restrooms are located underneath the Sanctuary, accessed via the stairs off the porch on the Princess Anne Street side or elevator, or in the Education Building next to the offices or kitchen, both with elevator access. Our service is livestreamed via YouTube.

We are glad you are here as we give glory to God together!

ORDER OF WORSHIP

✠We rise in body or spirit.
We say words in bold together.

Prelude

Meditation

Richard Blake

Welcome and Announcements

Gathering Prayer

Loving God, as we gather here to worship, we are tired, weary, and seeking solace. Assure us of your presence through the Holy Spirit, so we may hear your word and pledge ourselves to serve you, today and every day. Amen.

Introit

Open Now the Gates of Beauty (Hymn 403)

Call to Worship *based on Psalm 130*

Liturgist: Betsy Mathias

Out of the depths, we cry to the Lord.

We speak, believing that God is listening.

We lay out our lives, trusting that God's way is forgiveness.

We watch and wait, yearning for the dawn of a new day.

With God's arrival comes love and generous redemption.

Our hope is in the word of the Lord!

✠Hymn 53

O God, Who Gives Us Life

*O God, who gives us life and breath, who shapes us in the womb,
who guards our lives from birth to death, then leads us from the tomb:
deliver us from fears that kill the life we have from you.
Help us to know your Spirit still is making all things new.*

*O God, who calls your people out to venture and to dare,
to plumb the bleak abyss of doubt and find you even there:
when we despair in wandering through wastes of empty lies,
refresh us with the living spring of hope that never dies.*

*O God of covenant and law, revealed in cloud and flame,
your mighty deeds evoke our awe; we dare not speak your name.
Yet we by faith are drawn to you and will your people prove,
as on our hearts you write anew the covenant of love.*

✠Prayer of Confession

Faithful God, you promise us the gift of living water, but we confess that we have more faith in death than hope in your promise of abundant life. We abandon the hungry, sick, and dying with an insistence on scarcity instead of confidence that there is enough. We seek peace through war and find security in weapons. We doubt your Spirit and live in the dryness of the deserts of our own pessimism and criticism. Forgive us, Lord, and in your mercy renew us. Breathe new life into these weary bones that we may believe and proclaim your good news of resurrection once again . . . *silent prayers of confession* . . .

✠Sung Prayer (Hymn 227, sung twice)

***Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.
Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.***

✠Assurance of Pardon

In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven. **Thanks be to God.**

✠Peace and Greeting

The peace of Christ be with you. **And also with you.**

HEARING THE WORD OF GOD

Prayer for Illumination

Scripture Readings: *John 19:30*
Ezekiel 37:1-14

p. 139 in the pew Bible
p. 987 in the pew Bible

Moment with the Children

Anthem

My Jesus, I Love Thee

Dan Forrest, arr.

*My Jesus, I love Thee, I know Thou art mine.
For Thee all the follies of sin I resign.
My gracious Redeemer, my Savior art Thou,
If ever I loved Thee, my Jesus, 'tis now.
I'll love Thee in life, I will love Thee in death,
And praise Thee as long as Thou lendest me breath;
And say when the death dew lies cold on my brow,
If ever I loved Thee, my Jesus, 'tis now.
In mansions of glory, and endless delight,*

*I'll ever adore Thee in heaven so bright,
I'll sing with the glittering crown on my brow,
If ever I loved Thee, my Jesus, 'tis now.*

Scripture Reading: *John 11:17-44*

p. 128 in the pew Bible

Holy wisdom, holy word. **Thanks be to God.**

Sermon

The Weight of Grief

Rev. Elizabeth Lovell Milford

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

☒Hymn 250 *In the Bulb There Is a Flower (Hymn of Promise)*

*In the bulb there is a flower; in the seed, an apple tree;
in cocoons, a hidden promise: butterflies will soon be free!
In the cold and snow of winter there's a spring that waits to be,
unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see.*

*There's a song in every silence, seeking word and melody;
there's a dawn in every darkness, bringing hope to you and me.
From the past will come the future; what it holds, a mystery,
unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see.*

*In our end is our beginning; in our time, infinity;
in our doubt there is believing; in our life, eternity.
In our death, a resurrection; at the last, a victory,
unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see.*

☒Affirmation of Faith from *The Heidelberg Catechism*, Q&A 1

What is your only comfort in life and in death?

That I am not my own, but belong – body and soul, in life and in death – to my faithful Savior, Jesus Christ. He has fully paid for all my sins with his precious blood, and has set me free from the tyranny of the devil. He also watches over me in such a way that not a hair can fall from my head without the will of my Father in heaven; in fact, all things must work together for my salvation. Because I belong to him, Christ, by his Holy Spirit, assures me of eternal life and makes me wholeheartedly willing and ready from now on to live for him.

Prayers of the People and the Lord's Prayer

. . . forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors . . .

Presentation of Offerings

Gifts, tithes, and offerings may be placed in the plates at the Sanctuary entrance. We also give thanks to God for offerings given via mail and online at fredericksburgpc.org/give.

✠Song of Praise (Hymn 223, verse 4)

***Were the whole realm of nature mine, that were a present far too small;
love so amazing, so divine, demands my soul, my life, my all.***

✠Prayer of Dedication

SENDING

✠Charge and Benediction

✠Hymn 822

When We Are Living

during the first verse, children are dismissed to the Ed Building for choir

*When we are living, it is in Christ Jesus,
and when we're dying, it is in the Lord.
Both in our living and in our dying,
we belong to God; we belong to God.*

*Through all our living, we our fruits must give.
Good works of service are for offering.
When we are giving, or when receiving,
we belong to God; we belong to God.*

*'Mid times of sorrow and in times of pain,
when sensing beauty or in love's embrace,
whether we suffer, or sing rejoicing,
we belong to God; we belong to God.*

*Across this wide world, we shall always find
those who are crying with no peace of mind,
but when we help them, or when we feed them,
we belong to God; we belong to God*

Annual Meeting of the Congregation (See handout)

✠Hymn 546

Lord, Dismiss Us with Your Blessing

Go in peace, holding quiet space for those who wish to reflect and pray.

*Lord, dismiss us with your blessing; fill our hearts with joy and peace;
let us each, your love possessing, triumph in redeeming grace.
O refresh us, O refresh us, traveling through this wilderness.*

*Thanks we give and adoration for your gospel's joyful sound;
may the fruits of your salvation in our hearts and lives abound.
Ever faithful, ever faithful to your truth may we be found.*

*Savior, when your love shall call us, from our struggling pilgrim way,
let no fear of death appall us, glad your summons to obey.
May we ever, may we ever reign with you in endless day.*



*The flowers on the pulpit are given to the glory of God
for the life of Carole Fariss by the Fariss family.*

Serving in Worship Today:

Choirmasters: Mary Ann & Larry Casey

Organist: Amy Shirk

Ushers: Sherman Brown, Ellie Crane

Elevator Assistant: Bill Stewart

Sanctuary Guild: Karen Johnson, Mary Lou Cramer

Videographer: Trey Talmadge

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O God, Who Gives Us Life—Text: Carl P. Daw Jr.; Music: English melody; arr. Arthur S. Sullivan, 1874; Hope Publishing Company ©1990

Jesus, Remember Me—Text and Music: Taize Community, ©1981; Les Presses de Taize (admin. GIA Publications, Inc.)

My Jesus I Love Thee—Text: Dan Forrest; Beckenhorst Press; ©2011

In the Bulb There Is a Flower (Hymn of Promise)—Text: Natalie Sleeth, 1986; Text and Music; Hope Publishing Company, © 1986

When I Survey the Wondrous Cross—Text: Isaac Watts, 1707; Music: Lowell Mason, 1824; Public Domain

When We Are Living—Text: Stanza 1, anon.; English trans. Elise S. Eslinger, 1983; stanzas 2–4, Roberto Escamilla, 1983; English trans.

George Lockwood, 1987; English trans. © 1989 The United Methodist Publishing House (admin. The Copyright Company)

Lord, Dismiss Us with Your Blessing—Text: attr. John Fawcett, 1773, alt.; stanza 3 alt. Geoffrey Thing, 1880, alt. Music: Sicilian melody,

18th cent.; Public Domain

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