

First Presbyterian Church

410 Second Avenue | PO Box 441 | Sterling, IL 61081 | (815) 625-0452

“Were You There” was first published in a hymnal in 1899. Rev. David Bjorlin writes: “The series of questions that forms the basis of the song is obviously not meant to be taken literally; none of us were physically present at the passion of Christ. Rather, the questions are meant to function as a form of *anamnesis*. From the Greek, anamnesis literally means to remember. Yet, it is much more than simple mental recall of an event. It calls the community to re-member the past to the present, to bring these historic events to bear on the now and make them part of our story. When the Christian community celebrates the Lord’s Supper “in remembrance” (and the Greek word here is anamnesis!) of Christ, it is anamnesis.” Black theologian James Cone notes, “In the mystery of God’s revelation, black Christians believed that just knowing that Jesus went through an experience of suffering in a manner similar to theirs gave them faith that God was with them, even in suffering on lynching trees, just as God was present with Jesus in suffering on the cross.” In a spiritual way, we were indeed present at the cross, even as Jesus is present with us in our own suffering. Even as all humanity shares in responsibility for sin in the world, all humanity shares in sorrow and suffering, and all humanity receives the gracious gift of life through God’s love and grace, evidenced by Jesus willingly dying a humiliating death, and being raised to new life on Easter.



Pastor - Rev. Dr. Christina Berry

Ministers - All the People

April 10, 2022

God's People Gather

Welcome

***Call to Worship** Blessing of Palms

Song Hosanna, Loud Hosanna

Prayer of Confession Healing Grace

Silence is kept

Assurance of Pardon Healing Grace

***Sharing the Peace of Christ**

Leader: The peace of Christ be with you.

People: And also with you.

***Response** Peace Song

The Passion of Our Lord

First Reading The Last Supper Luke 22:14-22

Response An Upper Room Did Our Lord Prepare

Second Reading Jesus Prays in the Garden Luke 22: 39-46

Prayer

O God, what have we done? When we've been blind to your pain, when we've been asleep on the job you left us to get on with, when we are not willing to drink from your cup, forgive us. We do not understand the extent of what we do.

Sung response Kyrie

Third Reading Jesus is Arrested Luke 22: 47-53

Prayer

O God, what have we done? When we betray you with our hearts and with our lips, when we choose to respond with violence instead of understanding, when we

carefully claim to be with you only when and where it is safe, and then deny you when things get hard, forgive us. We do not understand the extent of what we do.

Sung response Kyrie

Fourth Reading Peter Denies Knowing Jesus Luke 22: 54-62

Offertory Give Me Jesus *(please hold your applause)*

Fifth Reading Jesus is Mocked and Tortured Luke 22:63 – Luke 23: 25

Prayer

O God, what have we done? Cruelty and callousness, anger and oppression, use and abuse of power – when we are guilty as sin of being unkind, when we take advantage of our advantages, forgive us. When we wash our hands even though keeping them in the mire might build a new and better outcome, forestall us. Christ, have mercy. We do not understand the extent of what we do.

Sung response Kyrie

Sixth Reading Jesus is Crucified Luke 23: 33-46

Prayer: O God, what have we done? We have watched at a distance and wrung our hands in ineffective sympathy, we've been far too ready to mock and judge, and we are so easily swayed. Christ, have mercy. We do not understand the extent of what we do ...

Sung response Kyrie

Pastoral Prayer and the Lord's Prayer

God's People Are Sent

***Closing Song** Were You There?

***Benediction**

People leave in silence

***Postlude**