

DATE March 7, 2021 THEME Seven Last Words - FORSAKEN

## God's People Gather

### Threshold Moment

#### Opening Song

*Lord, Why Have You Forsaken Me?*

Lord, why have You forsaken me,  
And why are You so far away  
From my complaint and my distress  
Poured out before You night and day?

Yet You are holy, and the songs  
Of praise of Israel are Your throne;  
When our ancestors called on You,  
You saved them, rescued all Your own.

Yet You, O lord, have been my God  
And only hope since I was born;  
Trouble is near me, none can help;  
My Savior, leave me not forlorn.

#### Call to Confession

Friends, in the cry of desolation that Jesus made as he died, we hear the desolation of the sin that separates us from God. But we know, because of Jesus, that separation is not permanent, because in Christ we have a way to God, a path to forgiveness, access to grace. Join me in faith and trust as we offer together our prayer of confession.

#### Prayer of Confession

Holy Jesus, on the cross you cried out that you were forsaken, and we confess that we have forsaken you time and time again. When we fail to recognize your image in the faces of those who are oppressed, we have forsaken you. When we remain silent in the face of injustice, we have forsaken you. We forsake you when we choose to ignore the struggles of those around us, pretending that if we are not affected, their struggles are

not a problem. Rather than look to you on the cross, we fix our gaze instead on earthly leaders, material things, on what the world calls "success." Forgive us! Help us to pay attention to what truly matters: the love, mercy, generosity and grace you give us, so that we will joyfully do your work in the world.

*Silence is Kept*

### **Assurance of Pardon**

Leader: Friends, believe the promises of scripture: God will be with you; and will not fail you or forsake you. Do not fear or be dismayed. Jesus will not leave us orphaned; because he lives, we also will live. God's mercy is from everlasting to everlasting, and God's grace in Jesus Christ is poured out for us. This is the good news:

**People: In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven. Thanks be to God! Amen.**

### **Response**

*Glory to God*

Glory to God,

Whose goodness shines on me,

And to the Son,

Whose grace has pardoned me,

And to the Spirit

Whose love has set me free.

As it was in the beginning

Is now and ever shall be. Amen.

World without end,

Without end. Amen.

World without end,

Without end. Amen.

World without end,

Without end. Amen.

As it was in the beginning

Is now and ever shall be. Amen.

## **Sharing the Peace of Christ**

### **Response**

*Peace Song*

Peace I leave with you my friends

Shalom my peace in all you do

Peace I leave with you my friends

I give to you so you can give to others too.

## **God's Word is Proclaimed**

### **Children's Time**

**Scripture** Matthew 27:45-49

From noon on, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. And about three o'clock Jesus cried with a loud voice, "Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?" that is, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" When some of the bystanders heard it, they said, "This man is calling for Elijah." At once one of them ran and got a sponge, filled it with sour wine, put it on a stick, and gave it to him to drink. But the others said, "Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to save him."

Psalm 22: 1-5, 14-18

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

Why are you so far from helping me, from the words of my groaning?

O my God, I cry by day, but you do not answer; and by night, but find no rest.

Yet you are holy, enthroned on the praises of Israel. In you our ancestors trusted; they trusted, and you delivered them. To you they cried, and were saved; in you they trusted, and were not put to shame.

I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint; my heart is like wax; it is melted within my breast; my mouth is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue sticks to my jaws; you lay me in the dust of death. My hands and feet have shriveled; I can count all my bones. They stare and gloat over me; they divide my clothes among themselves, and for my clothing they cast lots.

### **Sermon**

## **Responding to God's Word**

### **Sacrament of the Lord's Supper**

### **Invitation**

### **Great Prayer of Thanksgiving**

Leader: The Lord be with you.

**People: And also with you.**

Leader: Lift up your hearts.

**People: We lift them up to the Lord**

Leader: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**People: It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

Leader: It is indeed right to give you praise, O God. You created the world and all that is in it. The startling diversity of the Earth and its creatures were made by you and pronounced good. Called into life-giving partnership with each other and you, we chose instead, to seek dominance and bring about division. We have betrayed each other and denied your image, which is present in every person. But in each place of shadow and pain and in every divisive moment you have sought us out again, to reconcile us to one another and to you. Therefore with our parents in faith, from every time and place, we sing the fullness of your witness to your world saying:

**People: Holy holy holy Lord, God of power and might; God of meekness and service, Heaven and Earth are full of your glory, your presence, and your pain.**

**Our very bones cry out Hosanna, Hosanna,**

**Blest is the one who comes in the name of the Lord**

Leader: Holy are you, God of Grace, and blessed is Jesus Christ, your Son. Choosing to leave the shelter of heaven, he comes to gather us into a new family. Jesus came as a servant to feed us with the bread of life. We praise you for inviting us to serve one another without pride, to forgive one another as we have been forgiven, and to feast at his table as members of one household.

God of mystery: send your Holy Spirit upon us and on these gifts of bread and cup. Prepare us to receive your presence and to know your grace. May this one bread nourish our bodies and may It nourish the fullness of our lives. May this cup that we share wet our parched and silent throats and may It quench our deep and yearning thirst. Here at this table, may we remember the table in the upper room, tables of abundance many of us enjoy at home, the empty tables of the poor and hungry, and the banquet table in the Life to come. Let this meal reshape our every meal, so that the justice and mercy known here will become our way of life. May we become a people

for whom the hunger pangs of the poorest child will disrupt the feasting of the satisfied. There is enough food for all, enough peace for all, enough love for all, enough hope for all, enough grace for all. In this truth and in this hope we proclaim the mystery of our faith:

**People: Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again**

Leader: Until you appear again among us, we ask your Holy Spirit's presence and guidance in a broken world grasping for wholeness. May the church yearn to proclaim the good news of a world made new and a mercy wider than imaginations can span. Teach us to pray continually the prayer our Savior taught, saying:

### **The Lord's Prayer**

**ALL: 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 debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. AMEN.**

### **The Words of Institution**

### **Communion of the People**

### **Prayer after Communion**

**ALL: Compassionate God, you have met us in these acts at this table. In this sacrament we receive strength to walk with all your children in peace, and witness to the truth of your reconciliation and love. Amen**

### **Offering**

If you are able, please continue to send in your offering and pledge. If you are enrolled in electronic funds transfer, there is no need to do anything different. If you would like to give online using Paypal, click this link: [bit.ly/FPCsterling](https://bit.ly/FPCsterling)

### **Prayer of Dedication (Psalm 22: 28-31)**

Holy God, all the ends of the earth will turn to you one day, and every family worship you, for you rule with justice and mercy over all of creation. We want to live for you,

and so we ask that you bless these gifts, and use these gifts, to proclaim your goodness to all generations. We ask in Jesus name, Amen.

### **Pastoral Prayer and The Lord's Prayer (Unison)**

#### **God's People are Sent**

#### **Closing Song**

##### *Cares Chorus*

I cast all my cares upon You;  
I lay all of my burdens  
Down at Your feet.  
And anytime that I don't know  
what to do,  
I will cast all my cares upon You.

I cast all my cares upon You;  
I lay all of my burdens  
Down at Your feet.  
And anytime that I don't know  
what to do,  
I will cast all my cares upon You.

#### **Benediction**

Leader:....and let all God's people say...

**People: Alleluia! Amen!**