

naïve and sappy:

**Weeping may last for the night,  
But joy comes in the morning.** (Psalm 30:5)

In one of the psalms preached on awhile ago, David says he expects that God is gathering all of his tears (and ours?) in a bottle (Psalm 56:8). Why? Unless he's looking for the Lord to restore to his children every good thing we were robbed of, or never possessed, or squandered away; in other words, every sad thing we have cried over. This is why we can laugh now, even in our grief, and know that we're not just whistling in the dark. That's why we can identify with others in their need, even when it fills us with sorrow. We are to weep with others in their night. But the Man of Sorrows has seen to it that our Morning is coming; and its laughter and happiness will defy description.

—Ron Lutjens



We celebrate the Lord's Supper weekly—and in a circle, at the end of worship. A word of direction is given, and with this everyone stands and moves to the walls. The cup is passed in two forms: in a chalice and then in small individual cups. You are free to choose.

And as this is the Supper of the Lord Christ, please listen to the instructions we give as to what qualifies a visitor to participate. **But whether you intend to take communion or not, please join us in the circle.**



**Old Orchard Church**  
Fourth Sunday in Lent  
March 22, 2009 ♦ 10:15 to 11:45 a.m.

**He was despised  
and rejected by men,  
a man of sorrows,  
and familiar with suffering.  
Like one from whom  
men hide their faces  
he was despised,  
and we esteemed him not.**

—Isaiah 53:3

## Celebrating Jesus, Son of Man: A Man of Sorrows

A Man of Sorrows,  
Familiar with suffering,  
My Lord Jesus Christ:

Today I bring my sadness,  
The achings of my heart;  
I lay them on you, my Savior.  
Since before I was born you knew me,  
And carried every one of my sorrows  
To the cross with you.

There, in your pain,  
You took from my grief  
The power it has to ruin me;  
And your sorrow has become my joy.

O fill my fragile soul with confidence, with delight,  
As I worship you,  
And glimpse again by faith the Coming Day  
When sorrow and sighing will flee away.



### Today's Scripture

**Old Testament Lesson:** Isaiah 5:1-6

**Gospel Reading:** John 12:27-36

### Sermon Series on Matthew

“The Strange and Glorious Drama of the Coming Kingdom”

Matthew 22:23-33

*Ron Lutjens, senior pastor, preaching*

## Our Sorrows and Christ's

It might seem like a downer to focus our worship today on Jesus as the “Man of Sorrows.” Don’t we have enough of our own already? What with TV and internet stories and images, and the sad things we hear about from others and know in painful detail from our own families, it often feels like it's too much to take. Just think sensitively for a minute about one example: the rising number of Gulf War II veterans who are taking their own lives. That’s an incredibly sad thing.

So we say we need to laugh and have fun, a kind of compensation for our sorrow. When those around us who are oblivious to God do this, it is so often a mere whistling in the dark—as if there is evidence that we are moving toward some evolutionary utopia where everyone lives happily; as if you could sweep sadness under the rug and dance on it forever. Sooner or later the music stops, and the sadness creeps out.

But as Christians we really can laugh, and we can find our load lightened because we know that Christ cut the soul out of our sadness when he died. He **carried our sorrows**, as Isaiah put it in chapter 53, carried them to the cross. **He bore our griefs** to the place of Death, that there they might die.

Yet who of us, though we be resting in the finished work of Christ, does not still know deep sadness? Even in the best of times there can be an abiding sorrow underlining our fragile lives, one that a few thrown-around Bible verses will not chase away.

Though the problems of other believers often dwarf our own, each of us carries around a wounded heart. And sometimes the sadness we know goes so deep we can hardly make anybody understand it.

But what we celebrate today, the Lord's Day, is that Jesus understands it—every last bit of it, whatever it is, however deep it goes. He is the Man of Sorrows. He made your sorrows to be his sorrows. So the Scripture says about God, **In all their affliction, he was afflicted.** (Isaiah 63:9) He is our Sympathy. But we need Christ to be more to us than sympathy—however desperately we need sympathy—if we’re to carry on and not lose our confidence in the goodness of God. We need as well someone to defeat the brokenness that keeps breeding sorrow upon sorrow, in the world and in our own lives. And Christ did that for us when he died: he gutted sorrow. It has no power to destroy us now, however much it bruises our souls, and sometimes even our bodies. By carrying all our griefs to the cross he not only taught us that every last one of them is to be taken seriously; he also reassured us that no part of our created, human glory can be taken from us for good. All our sadnesses and sorrows and griefs were gathered up into that one greatest grief: our destruction as the guilty ones under the righteous wrath of God in the cruel murder of Jesus, the pure and perfect man.

But having gone under with Christ in his death, by faith, we emerge with him on the other side, the side of his resurrection—which is life and pure goodness forever, and therefore laughter. It is really because of the work of the Man of Sorrows at the cross that the ancient poetry of the psalmist, David, is not just  
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